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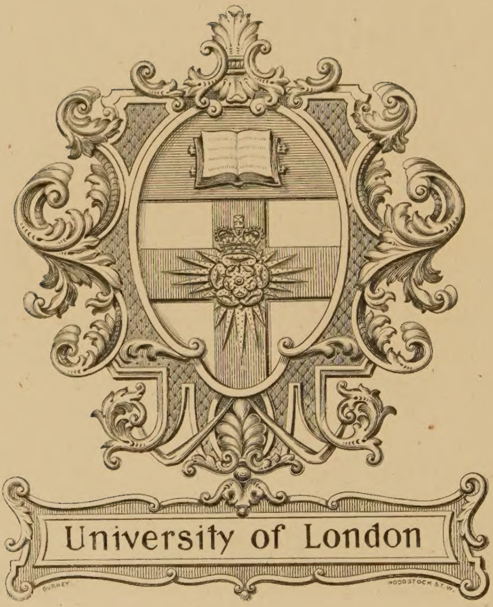

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THIRD SERIES:

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WILLIAM IV.

45° VICTORIÆ, 1882.

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TO

THE TWENTY-FOURTH DAY OF MARCH 1882.

Second Volume of the Session.

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Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 257, Noes 242; Majority 15.—(Div. List, No. 37:)—Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

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Mercantile Marine — The Pilgrim Ship "Jeddah"—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 454

Parliament—Public Business—Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill—Questions, Mr. Salt, Mr. R. H. Paget; Answers, Mr. Dodson 455

Criminal Procedure Amendment Bill (India)—Questions, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, The Marquess of Hartington 456

India (Revenue, &c.)—Sale of Intoxicating Drinks—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 456

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—The "Suspects" (Expenses)—Question, Mr. Fitzpatrick; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 457

Relief of Distress (Ireland)—Seed Potatoes—Questions, Mr. O'Connor Power, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland 458

Ireland—The Royal Irish Constabulary—Question, Mr. Redmond; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 458

Inland Revenue — Income Tax (Ireland)—Schedule A—Questions, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Mr. Gill; Answers, Lord Frederick Cavendish .. 459

Poor Law (Ireland)—Dr. J. E. Kenny—Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 459

Madagascar—Visit of Admiral Gore Jones to the Queen—Question, Mr. Gourley; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 460

Post Office—Telegraph Department—Secrecy of Telegrams—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 460

India—The Madras Civil Service—Question, Mr. Gibson; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 460

Gibraltar (Religious Dissensions)—Dr. Canilla — Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Mr. Courtney 461

Education Department—State School Education and Parish Relief—Question, Mr. P. A. Taylor; Answer, Mr. Mundella 461

State of Ireland—The Disturbance at Ballyragget—Question, Mr. P. Martin; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland.. .. 462

Irish Land Commission—Return of Judgments—Questions, Mr. J. N. Richardson, Mr. Gibson; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland 463

Tunis—The Enfida Estate—Question, The Earl of Bective; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 464

Post Office—International Parcels Post—Question, Mr. Whitley; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 465

France and Morocco—Alleged Conflict of Troops—Question, Mr. Montague Guest; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 465

Post Office—Colonial Money Orders—Question, Mr. Monk; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 465

China—Domestic Slavery at Hong Kong—The Papers—Question, Mr. A. M'Arthur; Answer, Mr. Courtney 466

Austro-Hungary—Arrest of Mr. Evans—Questions, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke 466

Currency—The Gold Coinage—Question, Sir John Lubbock; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 466

India—The Financial Statement—Question, Mr. Arthur Arnold; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 467

Parliament—Arrangement of Public Business—Questions, Baron De Ferrieres, Mr. Mac Iver; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 467

Army—The Report of the Inspector General for Recruiting—Question, Colonel Alexander; Answer, Mr. Childers 469

Relief of Distress (Ireland)—Seed Supply Act, 1880—Question, Mr. Gray; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 469

Attempt upon the Life of Her Majesty—Address to Her Majesty—

Message from *The Lords* 469

Ordered, That Mr. Gladstone, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, the Comptroller of the Household, and the Vice Chamberlain of the Household do go with The Lords mentioned in their Lordships' Message.

Message sent to *The Lords*.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Land Law (Ireland)—Operation of the Act—Resolution. Adjourned Debate. [Fourth Night]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [27th February]:—*Previous Question* again proposed, "That the Original Question be now put,"—(*Mr. Gibson*:)—Debate *resumed* 470

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Lewis*:)—Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

After long debate, *Previous Question* put, "That the Original Question be now put:"—The House *divided;* Ayes 303, Noes 219; Majority 84.—(Div. List, No. 41.)

Original Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 303, Noes 235; Majority 68.

Division List, Ayes and Noes 556

QUESTIONS.

Parliament—Arrangement of Public Business—Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone; Questions, Mr. Pell, Mr. Thomas Collins; Answers, Mr. Dodson 560

Army—The Report of the Inspector General for Recruiting—Question, Sir Walter B. Barttelot; Answer, Mr. Childers .. 561

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Boiler Explosions Bill [Bill 4]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress* 3rd *March*] 561

After some time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

Parish Churches Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Buxton, Mr. Courtauld, Mr. Cropper, Mr. Stanley Leighton, Mr. William Henry Gladstone*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 99] 576

LORDS, FRIDAY, MARCH 10.

Attempt upon the Life of Her Majesty—The Queen's Answer to the Address *reported* 577

South Africa—The Transvaal—Observations, Question, The Earl of Carnarvon; Reply, The Earl of Kimberley 577

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PUBLIC WORKS (INDIA)—ADDRESS FOR PAPERS—

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Copies or extracts of all correspondence between the Secretary of State for India and the Governor General in Council, from the 1st of January 1878 to the present time, respecting the prosecution, firstly, of productive public works by means of borrowed funds; secondly, of works designed for protection against famine and commonly described as protective works; and thirdly, of measures taken for the purpose of famine insurance,"—(*The Earl of Lytton*) 579

After short debate, Motion *agreed to.*

ARMY—MILITIA ADJUTANTS—Question, The Earl of Galloway; Answer, The Earl of Morley 581

Industrial Schools Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Earl Stanhope*); read 1ª (No. 34) .. 582

COMMONS, FRIDAY, MARCH 10.

PRIVATE BUSINESS

Metropolis Management, Building, and Floods Prevention Acts (Amendment) Bill (by Order)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir James M'Garel Hogg*) 582

Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

QUESTIONS.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. TOMAN—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 583

SPAIN—IMPRISONMENT OF MR. J. C. YOUNG—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 584

HIGHWAY RATES — LEGISLATION — Question, Mr. Hicks; Answer, Mr. Dodson 584

ARMY (INDIA)—MILITARY DRAFTS—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, Mr. Childers 585

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—LETTERS TO MR. PARNELL AND MR. DILLON—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 585

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—CHARGE OF POSTING UP A NOTICE—Question, Dr. Commins; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 586

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—CASE OF MR. W. F. MOLONEY—Questions, Mr. Redmond, Mr. Leamy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 587

PRISONS (IRELAND)—ARMAGH GAOL—Question, Mr. Redmond; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 587

LAW AND JUSTICE—THE FOUR ASSIZES—Question, Mr. Hicks; Answer, The Attorney General 588

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—RICHMOND PARK—Question, Mr. Hanbury-Tracy; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 588

THE KINGDOM OF SERVIA—RECOGNITION OF KING MILAN—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 589

TUNIS—THE CAPTURE OF SFAX—Questions, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke 589

SOUTH AFRICA—BASUTOLAND—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Courtney 590

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South Africa (Natal)—Indabezimbi—Question, Mr. R. N. Fowler; Answer, Mr. Courtney 590

Removal of the Elephant "Jumbo"—Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Gill; Answers, Mr. Evelyn Ashley 591

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Mr. Mahoney—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster.. .. 592

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Mr. N. J. Barrett—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Fawcett .. 593

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Mr. Lyne—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 593

Post Office—The "Irish World" Newspaper—Questions, Mr. Healy, Mr. Lewis; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster; Question, Mr. Redmond; [No answer] 593

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Arrest of Mr. John Rorke—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 595

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Healy:*)—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 16, Noes 147; Majority 131.—(Div. List, No. 43.)

South Africa—Basutoland and the Transvaal—Question, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answer, Mr. Courtney 623

Customs—The New Warehousing Scheme—Questions, Mr. Schreiber, Mr. Ritchie; Answers, Lord Frederick Cavendish 623

Attempt upon the Life of Her Majesty—Her Majesty's Answer to the Address *reported* 625

Army — The Report of the Inspector General for Recruiting — Observations, Mr. Childers 625

Navy—The Board of Admiralty—Constitution of the Board—Question, Sir John Hay; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 626

South Africa—The Transvaal—Reported Defeat of the Boers—Questions, Mr. Gorst, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach; Answers, Mr. Courtney 626

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Supply—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

Law and Justice—Dormant Funds in Chancery—Resolution—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "future lists of the Dormant Funds in Chancery be strictly alphabetically arranged, with cross references to the sub-titles, together with the names and last-known addresses of the persons originally entitled, the date of the last decree or order, and the amount unclaimed,"—(*Mr. Stanley Leighton,*)—instead thereof .. 628

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 47, Noes 28; Majority 19.—(Div. List, No. 44.)

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

Acquisition and Control of Irish Railways — Observations, Mr. Blennerhassett; Reply, Mr. Evelyn Ashley:—Debate thereon .. 635

Superintendent of Roads (South Wales)—Observations, Viscount Emlyn; Reply, Mr. Dodson:—Debate thereon 656

Gibraltar (Religious Dissensions)—Dr. Canilla—Observations, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Reply, Mr. Courtney:—Debate thereon .. 664

State of Ireland—Police Protection for Caretakers—Observations, Mr. Gorst; Reply, Mr. W. E. Forster:—Debate thereon .. 667

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

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SUPPLY — *considered* in Committee — CIVIL SERVICE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1881-2—

(In the Committee.)

CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £7,772, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1882, for the Salaries, Allowances, and Expenses of various County Court Officers, and of Magistrates in Ireland, and of the Revising Barristers of the City of Dublin" .. 684
After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

(1.) £636, Royal University of Ireland.

NAVY ESTIMATES.

(2.) £50,000, Army Department (Conveyance of Troops).—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 686

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next; Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

SUPPLY—REPORT—Postponed Resolution [3rd March] *further considered* .. 687
Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution:"—After debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Sexton*:)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.
Original Question put, and *agreed to*:—Resolution *agreed to*.

Turnpike Roads (South Wales) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Dodson, Mr. Hibbert*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 101] 706

LORDS, MONDAY, MARCH 13.

SOUTH AFRICA—BASUTOLAND—Question, The Earl of Carnarvon; Answer, The Earl of Kimberley 706
BRITISH NORTH BORNEO COMPANY (CHARTER) — Observations, Lord Lamington; Reply, Earl Granville:—Debate thereon 708
THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—Question, Observations, Lord Oranmore and Browne; Reply, Lord Carlingford 725

CLAIMS OF PEERAGE, &c.—MOTION FOR PAPERS—
Moved, That there be laid before this House, Copies of the Scottish Acts of Parliament of 1567, entitled "Ratification of the Erledom of Mar," "Ratification of the Baronie of Blyth;" also Copies of the Scottish Act of 1587 entitled "An Act in favor of the Erle of Mar," as well as all other Scottish Acts ratifying grants or *re*-grants of Peerages with lands under Royal Charter, with a view to their being translated into modern English for the use of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the state of the law respecting the claims and assumptions of titles of Peerages in Scotland, &c.
That the Act 10th and 11th Vict., chap. LII. (52.) (passed 25th June 1847), in reference to "dormant or extinct" Peerages in Scotland, be re-printed with a view to the correction of a misprint in line 10 of the preamble on the first page, which recites erroneously the words of intitulation of the Act 6th Anne, chap. 23,—(*The Earl of Galloway*) 727
After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn*.

COMMONS, MONDAY, MARCH 13.

QUESTIONS.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—THE MODEL SCHOOLS—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 731
THE NATIONAL EXHIBITION (IRELAND)—SUBSCRIPTION FOR SHARES—Question, Mr. Redmond; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 732

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PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. J. M. MURRAY—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 732
THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—STAMPED AGREEMENTS—Question, Mr. Macartney; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 732
STATE OF IRELAND—ST. PATRICK'S DAY IN DERRY—Questions, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Sexton, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 733
THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES AND THE ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND—Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 734
PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. MANGAN—Question, Mr. Redmond; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 735
NAVY — ROYAL MARINE ARTILLERY AND ROYAL MARINES—Question, Colonel Makins; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 735
IRELAND—RESIGNATIONS IN THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—Questions, Mr. Redmond; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 736
EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—ESTATES OF THE IRISH SOCIETY—Questions, Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 737
AUSTRIA AND TURKEY—THE HERZEGOVINA—TURKISH TROOPS AT NOVI BAZAR—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke .. 738
ARMY—MILITARY TACTICS — THE FIELD EXERCISES—Question, Colonel Alexander; Answer, Mr. Childers 738
ARMY—REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON RIFLE PRACTICE—Questions, Sir Robert Loyd Lindsay; Answers, Mr. Childers 739
LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—JUDICIAL RENTS—Question, Mr. Molloy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 740
PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARRESTS UNDER THE ACT—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 740
PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—THE ELECTRIC LIGHT — Question, Mr. Donaldson-Hudson; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre 741
INDIA—CONSUMPTION OF RUM—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 741
CRIMINAL PROCEDURE AMENDMENT BILL (INDIA)—THE INDIAN PENAL CODE—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 742
STATE OF IRELAND—POLICE PROTECTION (CARETAKERS)—Questions, Mr. Fitzpatrick, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 743
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—THE NEW CODE—Questions, Sir Massey Lopes, Lord George Hamilton, Sir Herbert Maxwell; Answers, Mr. Mundella 744
CRIMINAL LAW—AGGRAVATED ASSAULTS — PUNISHMENT OF FLOGGING——LEGISLATION—Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 746
POST OFFICE—SEIZURE OF THE "IRISH WORLD" NEWSPAPER—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster, The Attorney General for Ireland 746
ARMY—"PURCHASE COLONELS"—Question, Colonel Milne Home; Answer, Mr. Childers 747
RELIEF OF DISTRESS (IRELAND)—SEED SUPPLY ACT, 1880—THE SEEDS LOAN RATE—RIGHT OF VOTING AT POOR LAW ELECTIONS—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 748
SOUTH AFRICA—THE BASUTOS—Question, Mr. O'Donnell; Answer, Mr. Courtney 748
COLLECTOR GENERAL OF RATES (DUBLIN), MR. SCOTT BYRNE—Question, Mr. Gill; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 748
CRIMINAL LAW—CLOTHING OF DISCHARGED PRISONERS—Question, Sir Baldwyn Leighton; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 749
RIVERS CONSERVANCY AND FLOODS PREVENTION BILL—Question, Sir Baldwyn Leighton; Answer, Mr. Dodson 749
INLAND REVENUE—INCOME TAX, SCHEDULE B—AGRICULTURAL DEPRESSION —Question, Mr. Fraser-Mackintosh; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 750

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INLAND REVENUE — THE RAILWAY PASSENGER DUTY—Question, Mr. Buxton; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 751

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—"ADAMS v. DUNSEATH"—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 751

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—THE PURCHASE CLAUSES—Question, Mr. W. H. Smith; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 752

TURNPIKE ROADS (SOUTH WALES) BILL—Question, Viscount Emlyn; Answer, Mr. Dodson 752

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS—Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. O'Donnell, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Mr. W. H. Smith, Sir Stafford Northcote, Mr. Gorst, Mr. Joseph Cowen; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Childers 753

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Gorst:*)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—Observations, Mr. Courtney; Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, Mr. Courtney 762

GIBRALTAR (RELIGIOUS DISSENSIONS)—DR. CANILLA—Questions, Sir H. Drummond Wolff, Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Macartney; Answers, Mr. Courtney 763

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

EGYPT (INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNALS)—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is inexpedient to make, or renew on expiry, engagements by which Foreign Governments may have a claim to insist on the enforcement of private debts against natives of Egypt, the transfer of lands, vexatious sanitary regulations, and other demands, in supersession of the autonomous legislation and government of the country; excepting only provision for the free use of the Suez Canal as an International commercial waterway," — (*Sir George Campbell,*)—instead thereof 763

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," again proposed:—

ARMY—DRESS OF THE ARMY—Observations, Colonel Barne, Lord Elcho; Reply, Mr. Childers 781

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PRISONERS UNDER THE ACT—Observations, Mr. Redmond; Reply, Mr. W. E. Forster:—Debate thereon 785

SOUTH AFRICA—BASUTOLAND—Observations, Mr. O'Donnell; Reply, Mr. Courtney; Observations, Mr. R. N. Fowler 815

GIBRALTAR (RELIGIOUS DISSENSIONS)—DR. CANILLA—*Moved*, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff*) .. 824

After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

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SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—ARMY ESTIMATES—DEPARTMENTAL STATEMENT—

(In the Committee.)

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 132,905, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883,"—(*Mr. Childers*) 827

After debate, *Moved*, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Warton*:)—Question put, and *negatived*:—Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £4,162,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge of the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of Her Majesty's Land Forces at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883" 860

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Viscount Folkestone*:)—Question put:—The Committee *divided*; Ayes 33, Noes 69; Majority 36.—(Div. List, No. 45.)

Original Question again proposed 861

Moved, "That the Chairman do now leave the Chair,"—(*Colonel Alexander*:)—Question put:—The Committee *divided*; Ayes 31, Noes 69; Majority 38.—(Div. List, No. 46.)

Original Question again proposed 862

Moved, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Captain Aylmer*:)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

Original Question again proposed 868

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum, not exceeding £3,162,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge of the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of Her Majesty's Land Forces at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883,"—(*Mr. O'Donnell*:)—The Committee *divided*; Ayes 9, Noes 72; Majority 63. —(Div. List, No. 47.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to*.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow*; Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday*.

MOTIONS.

Parochial Charities (London) Bill and London Parochial Charities Bill—

Ordered, That the Report of the Commissioners appointed by Her Majesty to inquire into the Parochial Charities of the City of London, which was presented to this House in the year 1880, be referred to the Select Committee on the Parochial Charities (London) Bill and the London Parochial Charities Bill.

Imprisonment for Debt Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Anderson, Mr. Michael Bass, Sir Henry Wolff, Mr. Broadhurst*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 102] .. 869

LORDS, TUESDAY, MARCH 14.

PARLIAMENTARY DECLARATION BILL—Petition presented, The Earl of Redesdale 869

Conveyancing Bill (No. 20)—

House in Committee (according to Order) 870

After short debate, Bill *reported* without amendment; amendments made; and Bill to be read 3ª on *Thursday* next.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES)—REPORTED MAGISTRATES—MACCLESFIELD—THE CASE OF CAPTAIN PEARSON—Question, Observations, Lord Stanley of Alderley; Reply, The Lord Chancellor 871

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QUESTIONS.

Brazil—Emancipation of Slaves—Question, Mr. Dillwyn; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 877
Inland Revenue Department—Unlicensed Dealing in Plate—Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, The Lord Advocate 878
Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Persons Arrested under the Act—Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Gray, Mr. Healy, Mr. Redmond; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 879
Metropolitan Improvements—Shifting of the Population—Question, Mr. Firth; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 881
Parliamentary Representation—The Vacant Seats—Questions, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Onslow; Answers, The Attorney General 881
Post Office—Article 6—Postal Convention of Paris—Seizure of Articles Passing through the Post—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 882
South Africa—The Basutos—Question, Mr. Dillwyn; Answer, Mr. Courtney 883
Navy—Armament of H.M. Ships—Question, Captain Price; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 884
Relief of Distress (Ireland)—Seed Supply Act, 1880—The Seed Rate—Loss of Franchise by Non-Payment—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland; Question, Mr. O'Donnell; [No answer] 884
Gibraltar (Religious Dissensions)—Dr. Canilla—Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Mr. Courtney 885
Army (India)—Bengal Staff Corps—Captain J. B. Chatterton—Question, Mr. Grantham; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington .. 886
Navy—The Channel Squadron—Question, Captain Price; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 888
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Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—John McMorrow—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 889
The Navy Estimates—Questions, Mr. Gorst, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 890
Parliament—Business of the House—The New Rules of Procedure—The Clôture—Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Mr. Gladstone .. 891
State of Ireland—Police Protection (Caretakers)—Question, Mr. Gibson; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 892
State of Ireland—Arrest of Patrick Masterson—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 892
Parliament—Rules of Debate—Rights of Seconders—Observations, Question, Viscount Folkestone; Reply, Mr. Speaker 893
Russia and Persia—The Boundary Treaty—Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 894
Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Treatment of Persons Arrested under the Act—Question, Mr. Joseph Cowen; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 895
Parliament—Public Business—"Counts Out"—Questions, Mr. Monk, Mr. Onslow, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 895
The Commercial Treaty with France—The Negotiations—Questions, Mr. Mac Iver; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke 896
Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Dr. J. E. Kenny—Questions, Mr. Redmond; Answers, Sir William Harcourt .. 897
Coal Mines—The Lumley Colliery Accident—Question, Mr. Burt; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 898

MOTIONS.

NAVY—FITTERS IN HER MAJESTY'S DOCKYARDS—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, it is detrimental to the public service, fatal to the efficiency of our war ships, and unjust to the Fitters in Her Majesty's Dockyards, that superintending leading men should be placed in authority over workmen with whose trades they have no practical acquaintance, or that men should be put to execute work for which they are unsuited either by training or experience,"—(*Mr. Broadhurst*) 898

After debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*.

METROPOLITAN FIRE BRIGADE—Resolution, Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson .. 915

[House counted out.]

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

Municipal Franchise (Ireland) Bill [Bill 6]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. M'Coan*) .. 917

After debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow*.

County Courts (Ireland) Bill [Bill 18]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Findlater*) .. 938

Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Gibson*:)—After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Debate *adjourned* till *Wednesday* 5th April

Judgments (Inferior Courts) Bill [Bill 44]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Monk*) .. 944

After short debate, Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Callan*.)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After further short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*.

Main Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Friday*.

Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment (No. 3) Bill—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Findlater*) .. 952

After debate, *Moved*, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Mitchell Henry*:)—After further debate, Question put:—The House *divided*; Ayes 171, Noes 86; Majority 85.—(Div. List, No. 48:)—Debate *adjourned* till *Wednesday* 10th May.

Patents for Inventions (No. 2) Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir John Lubbock*, *Mr. William Henry Smith*, *Mr. Compton Lawrance*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 104] .. 984

School Boards Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Reginald Yorke*, *Colonel Kingscote*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 103] 985

LORDS, THURSDAY, MARCH 16.

PARLIAMENT—CLAIMS TO VOTE FOR REPRESENTATIVE PEERS FOR IRELAND—STANDING ORDER LXXX.—MOTION—

Moved, "That Standing Order No. LXXX. be amended by inserting after the words ('admitted by the House of Lords') the following words; viz., ('or by virtue of

Parliament — Claims to Vote for Representative Peers for Ireland — continued.
any Peerage in which the limitations in the Irish Patent, the Petitioner being a Peer of England, Great Britain, or the United Kingdom, shall be the same as the limitations in the Patent in right of which the Petitioner sits in the House of Lords as a Peer of England, Great Britain, or the United Kingdom,")—(*The Earl of Redesdale.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Egypt—Foreign and European Residents and Employes—Question, Observations, Earl De La Warr; Reply, Earl Granville .. 985

Payment of Wages in Public-houses Prohibition Bill [H.L.]—*Presented* (*The Earl Stanhope*); read 1ª No. 41) 986

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

MAJOR BOND, STIPENDIARY MAGISTRATE (IRELAND)—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House regrets that the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland did not exercise more care and better discretion in appointing Major Bond to the responsible office of a stipendiary magistrate in Ireland,"—(*Mr. Callan*,)—instead thereof 1030

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 78, Noes 14; Majority 64.—(Div. List, No. 49.)

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

NAVY—VICTUALLING—THE ROYAL MARINES—Observations, Sir Herbert Maxwell, Sir Henry Fletcher, Colonel Makins, Sir John Hay; Reply, Mr. Trevelyan 1052

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TRADE AND COMMERCE—THE FRENCH TREATY—Observations, Mr. Mac Iver, Mr. Chamberlain; Reply, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1079

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—NAVY ESTIMATES—DEPARTMENTAL STATEMENT—

(In the Committee.)

(1.) 57,500 Men and Boys, including 12,400 Marines 1085

After debate, *Moved*, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff*:)—Motion, by leave, *withdrawn*:—Vote *agreed to.*

(2.) £2,631,498, Wages, &c. to Seamen and Marines.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;* Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

Bills of Sale Act (1878) Amendment Bill [Bill 8]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress 13th March*] 1113

After some time spent therein, Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

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ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACT, 1869, AND AMENDING ACTS — BEDINGFIELD'S CHARITY—MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS—

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to refuse Her Assent to the Scheme of the Charity Commissioners for the management of Bedingfield's Charity for the benefit of the parishes of Lyminge, Dymchurch, and Smeeth, all in the county of Kent,"—(*The Lord Brabourne*) 1126

After short debate, Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

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SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

BRITISH NORTH BORNEO COMPANY (CHARTER)—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that Her Majesty will be graciously pleased to revoke or alter so much of the Charter as gives an implied sanction to the maintenance of slavery under the protection of the British flag,"—(*Mr. Gorst,*)—instead thereof 1148

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 125, Noes 62; Majority 63.—(Div. List, No. 51.)

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," again proposed:—

Question, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke .. 1230

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—CIVIL SERVICE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1881-2—

(In the Committee.)

CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £7,772, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1882, for the Salaries, Allowances, and Expenses of various County Court Officers, and of Magistrates in Ireland, and of the Revising Barristers of the City of Dublin" .. 1230

After short debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 124, Noes 6; Majority 118.—(Div. List, No. 52.)

(2.) £135,000, Zulu, &c. Wars.—After short debate, Vote *agreed to* 1238

CIVIL SERVICES (EXCESSES).

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £19,830 14*s.* 10*d.*, be granted to Her Majesty, to make good Excesses on certain Grants for Civil Services, for the year ended on the 31st day of March 1881" 1242

[Then the several Services are set forth.]

After short debate, *Moved,* "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Onslow:*)—After further short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed 1249

After short debate, Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next; Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

Army (Annual) Bill—Resolutions [March 16] *reported,* and *agreed to:*—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Secretary Childers, The Judge Advocate General, Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 105] 1253

WAYS AND MEANS—

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) *Resolved,* That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the years ending on the 31st days of March 1881 and 1882, the sum of £424,844 14*s.* 10*d.* be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

(2.) *Resolved,* That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, the sum of £6,793,498 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next; Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

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ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PUTTING THE QUESTION)—RESOLUTION. ADJOURNED DEBATE. [SECOND NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [20th February],

"That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, to be the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House, or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members,"—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

And which Amendment was,

To leave out from the first word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "no Rules of Procedure will be satisfactory to this House which confer the power of closing a Debate upon a majority of Members,"—(*Mr. Marriott,*)—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words 'when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker,' stand part of the Question:"—Debate *resumed* .. 1301

After long debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Beresford Hope:*)—Question put, and *agreed to:*—Debate *further adjourned* till *Thursday.*

SUPPLY—REPORT—Resolutions [17th March] *reported* 1398

After short debate, Resolutions *agreed to.*

Bills of Sale Act (1878) Amendment Bill [Bill 8]—

Bill *considered* in Committee [*Progress* 16*th March*] 1398

After some time spent therein, Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Monday* next.

General Police and Improvement (Scotland) Bill [Bill 77]—

Bill *considered* in Committee 1416

Bill *reported,* without Amendment; to be read the third time *To-morrow.*

WAYS AND MEANS—
Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill }

Resolutions [March 17] *reported,* and *agreed to:*—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Playfair, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Lord Frederick Cavendish*); *presented,* and read the first time 1416

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PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Swansea, Oystermouth, and Mumbles Railway Bill (by Order)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Dodds*) .. 1418

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months,"—(*Mr. Hussey Vivian.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 55, Noes 161; Majority 106.—(Div. List, No. 54.)

Words *added:*—Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to:*—Second Reading *put off* for six months.

QUESTIONS.

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Treatment of Persons Arrested under the Act—Questions, Mr. Redmond, Mr. Sexton; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 1428

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Redmond:*)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

The Royal Irish Constabulary—Promotion—Questions, Major O Beirne, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 1434

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Outdoor Relief to Families of Prisoners Confined under the Act—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1435

The Royal Irish Constabulary—Case of Sub-Constable Walsh—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 1436

State of Ireland—Seizure of the "Irish World" Newspaper—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 1436

Peace Preservation Acts (Ireland) 1848 to 1882—Number of Prisoners at any one Period—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1437

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Arrest of Mr. Thomas Mahoney—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster 1437

Education Department—Training Colleges—Question, Mr. Lyulph Stanley; Answer, Mr. Mundella 1438

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Arrest of Mr. Edmund Burke, Mr. William Hynes, and Mr. Thomas M'Mahon—Questions, Mr. O'Shea; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster .. 1438

New Zealand—Destruction of Growing Crops of the Maories by the Police—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Mr. Courtney .. 1439

Lighthouse System of the United Kingdom—Method of Advertising for Requirements—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1440

State of Ireland—Reported Outrages on Sunday—Questions, Mr. Macartney; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster 1440

Science and Art Department—Dr. Aveling and Mrs. Besant—Question, Sir Henry Tyler; Answer, Mr. Mundella 1441

Supply—The Army Estimates—Question, Colonel Alexander; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1441

Marriage of His Royal Highness Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany—Message from Her Majesty—Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, Mr. Speaker:—Short debate thereon 1442

MOTIONS.

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM—RESOLUTIONS—

Moved, "1. That, in the opinion of this House, it would be desirable, so soon as the state of public business shall permit, to establish Uniformity of Franchise, throughout the whole of the United Kingdom, by a Franchise similar in principle to that established in the English boroughs,"—(*Mr. Arthur Arnold*) 1443

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the first word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "no change should be made in the Electoral Franchise or the distribution of political power until full and accurate information has been laid before this House with respect to the relative advantages of various systems of Election, including proportional representation, the Cumulative Vote, and the Limited Vote, and that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire what system of Election is best calculated to secure the just representation of the opinions of all classes of Electors,"—(*Mr. Blennerhassett,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Salt:*)—After further debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 137, Noes 192; Majority 55.—(Div. List, No. 55.)

Original Question again proposed 1532

Moved, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. G. W. Elliot:*)—After short debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed 1533

After short debate, Motion *agreed to:*—Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

COUNTY CESS (IRELAND)—MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE—

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the manner in which a County Cess of 8*s.* 1½*d.* in the pound was imposed at the summer assizes on the townlands of Ballintubber, Brackloon, and Brockagh, in the county of Galway, and the manner in which a heavy County Cess was imposed on Cool, Raheen, and other townlands in Queen's County,"—(*Colonel Nolan*) 1533

After debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 25, Noes 79; Majority 54.—(Div. List, No. 56.)

ORDER OF THE DAY.

Parish Churches Bill [Bill 99]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. A. Grey*) .. 1548

After debate, Motion *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

Metropolis Management and Building Acts Amendment Bill—*Ordered* (*Sir James M'Garel-Hogg, Admiral Sir John Hay, Sir Andrew Lusk*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 107] 1560

COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

University Education (Ireland) Bill [Bill 9]—

Moved "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. William Corbet*) 1560

After debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Sir Joseph M'Kenna:*)—[There being no Seconder, the Motion was not put.]

Question put, "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—The House *divided;* Ayes 35, Noes 214; Majority 179.—(Div. List, No. 57.)

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MOTIONS.

Burglary Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Thomas Collins, Mr. Hinde Palmer, Mr. Paget*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 109] 1620

Metropolis (Rating of Footways) Bill—*Ordered* (*Mr. Torrens, Sir Andrew Lusk, Sir James Lawrence, Mr. William M'Arthur, Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Boord*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 110] 1620

LORDS, THURSDAY, MARCH 23.

South Africa—The Transvaal—The Boers—Observations, The Earl of Carnarvon; Reply, The Earl of Kimberley 1621

Marriage of His Royal Highness Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany—Her Majesty's Most Gracious Message of Tuesday last *considered* (according to order) 1622

Moved, "That a humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, to thank Her Majesty for the most gracious communication which it has pleased Her Majesty to make to this House respecting the approaching marriage between His Royal Highness Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, and Her Serene Highness Princess Helen of Waldeck and Pyrmont, and to assure Her Majesty that this House, always feeling the most lively interest in any event which will contribute to the happiness of the Royal Family, will concur in those measures which may be proposed for the consideration of this House to make such a provision for His Royal Highness as may be suitable to the dignity of the Crown."

Address ordered *nemine dissentiente* to be presented to Her Majesty. The said Address to be presented to Her Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

Parliamentary Declaration Bill (No. 32)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a,"—(*The Earl of Redesdale*) .. 1624

Previous Question *moved* (*The Earl of Shaftesbury*:)—After debate, Previous Question put, Whether the said question shall be now put? *Resolved* in the *negative*.

COMMONS, THURSDAY, MARCH 23.

QUESTIONS.

Russia and Persia—The Frontier Question—Sarakhs—Question, Mr. Jerningham; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1647

Gibraltar (Religious Dissensions)—Dr. Canilla—Questions, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, Mr. Courtney 1648

Army (Auxiliary Forces)—The Artillery Volunteers—The Permanent Staff—Question, Colonel Walrond; Answer, Mr. Childers .. 1649

India—The Indian Council—The Vacancy—Question, Mr. Onslow; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1649

Army—Army Chaplains on Board Troopships—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1649

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Treatment of Persons Arrested under the Act — Question, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1650

Criminal Law (Ireland)—Case of Peter Dunne—Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 1650

State of Ireland—The City of Waterford—Question, Mr. R. Power; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1651

Board of National Education (Ireland)—Mr. Boylan and Captain L'Estrange—Question, Mr. Redmond; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1652

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Law and Police (Ireland) — Constable Molloy — Question, Mr. Redmond; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1652

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881—Judicial Rents—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1652

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Cases of Messrs. Ryan and Egan—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1653

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Treatment of Persons Arrested under the Act—Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland 1653

Post Office (Ireland)—Telegraph Office Superintendents—Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, Mr. Fawcett 1654

The Magistracy (Ireland)—Carlow County—Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1655

State of Ireland — Seizure of Irish Newspapers — Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 1656

Tunis—Treaty Rights—Question, Mr. Macfarlane; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1656

Post Office (Ireland)—The Postmastership of Bohermeen—Question, Mr. Metge; Answer, Lord Richard Grosvenor 1657

Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act, 1881—Mr. Kennedy —Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland.. 1658

Navy—Greenwich Hospital School — Report of the Committee— Question, Sir Massey Lopes; Answer, Sir Thomas Brassey .. 1658

Law and Justice—Blasphemous Publications—Questions, Sir Henry Tyler, Mr. Healy; Answers, Sir William Harcourt 1658

Navy—Gunpowder Hulks in the Mersey—Question, Mr. Caine; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1659

State of Ireland—Evictions, &c. (Viscount Gormanston's Estate)—Viscount Gormanston's Agent—Question, Mr. Metge; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1660

Affairs of Egypt—The Papers—Question, Mr. Bourke; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1660

Education Department—The New Education Code—Question, Mr. J. G. Talbot; Answer, Mr. Mundella 1661

Russia—Persecution of the Jews—Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1661

Gibraltar—Appointment of Governor—Question, Mr. Biggar; Answer, Mr. Childers 1662

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881—"Adams *v.* Dunseath"—Questions, Mr. Healy, Lord Elcho; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1662

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881—Section 21 (Leases)—Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1665

Inland Revenue—Land Tax Redemption—Question, Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 1667

Inland Revenue—The Income Tax—Question, Mr. Puleston; Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer 1667

Board of Trade—Tests for Sight and Colour-Blindness in Seamen and Railway Officials—Question, Mr. Gibson; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1668

India — The New Inland Emigration Act — Labourers in the Tea Districts—Question, Sir George Campbell; Answer, The Marquess of Hartington 1668

Messages from the Crown—Rule 298—Observations, Questions, Mr. Lewis, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Mr. Speaker 1669

Navy—Launch of H.M.S. "Edinburgh"—Question, Sir Edward Reed; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1670

Parliament—Business of the House—The Proposed Call of the House —Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Gladstone 1671

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

MARRIAGE OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE LEOPOLD, DUKE OF ALBANY—Message from Her Majesty [21st March]—*considered* in Committee .. 1671

(1.) *Moved*, "That the annual sum of ten thousand pounds be granted to Her Majesty, out of the Consolidated Fund of Great Britain and Ireland, towards providing for the establishment of His Royal Highness Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, and of Her Serene Highness Princess Helen of Waldeck and Pyrmont, the said annuity to be settled on His Royal Highness for his life, in such manner as Her Majesty may think proper, and to commence from the date of the Marriage of His Royal Highness with Her Serene Highness Princess Helen, and to be in addition to the annuity now enjoyed by His Royal Highness under the Act of the thirty-eighth year of Her present Majesty,"—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

After debate, Question put:—The Committee *divided;* Ayes 387, Noes 42; Majority 345.—(Div. List, No. 58.)

(2.) *Moved*, "That Her Majesty be enabled to secure to Her Serene Highness Princess Helen of Waldeck and Pyrmont, for the support of her dignity, in case she shall survive His Royal Highness, Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, an annual sum not exceeding six thousand pounds during her life,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*) 1703

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PUTTING THE QUESTION)—RESOLUTION—ADJOURNED DEBATE [THIRD NIGHT]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [20th February]:—Question again proposed, "That the words 'when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker' stand part of the Question:"—Debate *resumed* 1704

After long debate, *Moved,* "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Sir Hardinge Giffard:*)—After further short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Debate *further adjourned* till *Monday* next.

Arklow Harbour Bill [Bill 96]—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Mr. Herbert Gladstone*) 1768

After short debate, Motion *agreed to:*—Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

MOTIONS.

PARLIAMENT—CALL OF THE HOUSE—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That this House be called over on Thursday, the 30th March," (*Mr. Sexton*) 1770

After short debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 22, Noes 90; Majority 68.—(Div. List, No. 59.)

Public Offices Site Bill—

Motion for Leave (*Mr. Shaw Lefevre*) 1783

After short debate, Motion *agreed to:*—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Lord Frederick Cavendish*); *presented,* and read the first time [Bill 111.]

LORDS, FRIDAY, MARCH 24.

PRIVATE BILLS—

Ordered, That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after *Thursday* the 15*th day of June* next [and other Orders] .. 1784

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—RESOLUTION—

Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, the sittings for public business should commence at Four P.M. instead of at Five P.M,"—(*The Earl of Camperdown*) .. 1784

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—RESOLUTION—*continued.*

After short debate, Motion amended, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, the sittings for public business should commence at a quarter past Four P.M., instead of at Five P.M.

THE NEW PUBLIC OFFICES—THE SITE AND PLANS—Question, Lord Lamington; Answer, Lord Sudeley; Observations, The Earl of Redesdale; Question, Earl Stanhope; Answer, Lord Sudeley .. 1794

Consolidated Fund (No. 2) Bill—Read 1ª; to be read 2ª *To-morrow;* and Standing Order No. XXXV. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with,—(*The Earl Granville.*)

COMMONS, FRIDAY, MARCH 24.

PRIVATE BUSINESS

Lower Thames Valley Main Sewerage Board Bill (by Order)—

Moved, "That the Bill be now read the third time,"—(*Mr. Dodds*) .. 1798

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to:*—Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

METROPOLIS—ELECTIONS TO APPOINTMENTS IN THE CITY OF LONDON—Question, Mr. Firth; Answer, Sir William Harcourt 1806

RAILWAYS (7 & 8 VICT. c. 85)—ARTIZANS' TRAINS—Question, Mr. Buxton; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain 1807

STATE OF IRELAND—THE COUNTY OF WATERFORD—Question, Mr. R. Power; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1807

WATER SUPPLY (METROPOLIS)—Question, Mr. Firth; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1808

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—PATRICK MURPHY—Questions, Mr. Sexton, Mr. Arthur O'Connor; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland 1808

STATE OF IRELAND (WICKLOW CO.)—CARRICKBYRNE LODGE—Questions, Mr. Redmond; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 1809

RIVERS CONSERVANCY AND FLOODS PREVENTION BILL—Question, Mr. Heneage; Answer, Mr. Dodson 1810

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—SUB-CONSTABLE FORBES—Questions, Mr. Metge; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 1810

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—OWEN BREHENY—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1811

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND ACT, 1881—JOHN RYAN—Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland .. 1812

STATE OF IRELAND—ALLEGED IMPRISONMENT OF A BOY FOR PURCHASING A COPY OF "UNITED IRELAND"—Questions, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland 1813

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—SASINE OFFICE CLERKS—Question, Mr. Dick Peddie; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish 1814

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—Question, Mr. M'Coan; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish 1814

ARMY—COLONELS OF ARTILLERY AND ENGINEERS—Question, Mr. Maclıver; Answer, Mr. Childers 1815

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—RETIREMENT OF VOLUNTEER OFFICERS—Question, Mr. Maclıver; Answer, Mr. Childers 1815

SPAIN—QUARANTINE—Questions, Colonel Owen Williams; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1815

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT—Question, Mr. Leamy; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke 1816

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CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT, 1878—SLAUGHTER OF FOREIGN CATTLE AT CREWE—INTENDED ABATTOIRS AT CREWE—Question, Mr. Henry Tollemache; Answer, Mr. Mundella 1816

GIBRALTAR (RELIGIOUS DISSENSIONS)—DR. CANILLA—Question, Mr. A. J. Balfour; Answer, Mr. Courtney 1817

PARLIAMENT—THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT—MEETING OF THE REFORM CLUB—Question, Captain Aylmer; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre .. 1817

ENGLAND AND FRANCE—THE CHANNEL TUNNEL SCHEME—Questions, Sir Harry Verney; Answers, Mr. Gladstone 1818

NAVY—LAUNCH OF H.M.S. "EDINBURGH"—Question, Mr. Wilbraham Egerton; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan 1818

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. ANCKETELL—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1818

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1819

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND) — MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD — Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1820

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. R. HODNETT—Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, The Attorney General for Ireland 1820

PARLIAMENT—PRIVILEGE—NEW WRIT FOR NORTHAMPTON (MR. BRADLAUGH)—Questions, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, Mr. Speaker; Explanation, Mr. Thomas Collins 1820

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—Order for Committee read; Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair:"—

BRITISH TRADE (FOREIGN TARIFFS)—RESOLUTION—

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the effects which the Tariffs in force in Foreign Countries have upon the principal branches of British Trade and Commerce, and into the possibility of removing, by Legislation or otherwise, any impediment to the fuller development of the manufacturing and commercial industry of the United Kingdom,"—(*Mr. Ritchie,*)—instead thereof .. 1823

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question:"—After long debate, Question put:—The House *divided;* Ayes 140, Noes 89; Majority 51.—(Div. List, No. 60.)

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee—CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS—

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £3,631,600, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charge for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883" 1917

[Then the several Services are set forth.]

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £3,431,600, be granted, &c.,"—(*Lord George Hamilton*:)—After short debate, *Moved,* "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor*:)—After further debate, Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Question again proposed:—Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution to be reported upon *Tuesday* next, at Two of the clock; Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

[*March* 24.] *Page*

Partnerships Bill [Bill 27]—

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [22nd February], "That the Bill be now read a second time:"—Question again proposed:—Debate *resumed* 1958

After short debate, Question put, and *agreed to*:—Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

Duke of Albany (Establishment) Bill—Resolutions [23rd March] *reported*, and *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* (*Mr. Playfair, Mr. Gladstone, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, Lord Frederick Cavendish*); *presented*, and read the first time [Bill 112] .. 1958

MOTIONS.

Arklow Harbour Bill—

Moved, "That the Select Committee on the Arklow Harbour Bill do consist of Five Members, Three to be nominated by the House and Two to be nominated by the Committee of Selection,"—(*Lord Frederick Cavendish*) 1958

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "Five," in order to insert the word "Six,"—(*Mr. Redmond,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'Five' stand part of the Question:"—After short debate, Amendment and Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Moved, "That the Select Committee on the Arklow Harbour Bill do consist of Seven Members,"—(*Mr. Redmond*:)—Motion *agreed to.*

Ordered, That the Select Committee on the Arklow Harbour Bill do consist of Seven Members, Five to be nominated by the House and Two to be nominated by the Committee of Selection:—List of the Committee 1960

STATIONERY OFFICE (CONTROLLER'S REPORT)—

Resolutions, Lord Frederick Cavendish 1960

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE—

Resolved, That whenever the House shall meet at Two of the Clock, the Sittings of the House shall be held subject to the Resolutions of the House of the 30th day of April 1869,—(*Lord Frederick Cavendish.*)

TWENTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT OF THE UNITED KINGDOM.

LORDS.

NEW PEER.

Thursday, March 9.

William Ulick Tristram Earl of Howth in the peerage of Ireland, created Baron Howth of Howth in the county of Dublin in the peerage of the United Kingdom.

COMMONS.

NEW WRITS ISSUED.

Tuesday, March 14.

For *Carnarvon District*, *v.* William Bulkeley Hughes, esquire, deceased.

Monday, March 22.

For *East Cornwall*, *v.* the Hon. Thomas Charles Agar-Robartes, called up to the House of Peers.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Thursday, March 9.

Malmesbury—Charles William Miles, esquire.

HANSARD'S

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

IN THE

Third Session OF THE *Twenty-Second Parliament* OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF *Great Britain* AND *Ireland*,
APPOINTED TO MEET 29 APRIL, 1880, IN THE FORTY-THIRD
YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN VICTORIA.

SECOND VOLUME OF SESSION 1882.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 3rd March, 1882.

FAIRS (IRELAND).

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON rose to ask the Lord Privy Seal, Whether the Government are prepared to regulate the holding of fairs in Ireland; and, if not, whether they will introduce a measure for the regulation of fairs and markets? The noble Viscount said, that for many years over the whole South and West of Ireland fairs had been held in the different country towns at which the greater part of the general trade of the district was carried on. Those fairs were usually held under patents granted by the Crown, and were either under the management of the descendants of the original grantees, or under the management of lessees, to whom the right of collecting the tolls had been demised. In some few instances they were held under the management of the Town Commissioners, who had taken leases from the owners. During the course of last summer a very considerable number of these fairs were supplanted by what were called Land League fairs. Notices were posted up in the different districts announcing that fairs would be held on the same day upon which the fairs were usually held; but that instead of being held in the fair field, where they were held usually, they would be held in the streets, or some other place appointed by the Land League. In several instances that had been done, and cattle had been sold in the streets and lanes of the towns under the auspices of the Land League. The first instance in which it occurred was in Dunmanway, in West Cork, and subsequently fairs of a similar description were held in Midleton and other places. There were three different classes who were seriously inconvenienced by this change. In the first place, the inhabitants of the towns were put monthly to the inconvenience of having the streets crammed with cattle, and the flagways and paths left in a very filthy state. Then the buyers were inconvenienced by not knowing, as they did previously, where to get the description of stock they wanted, they being forced to wander through the streets and into the lanes to find out the cattle that suited them. The sellers also found that, under such circumstances, the prices they obtained for their cattle were very much lower, and that whenever such fairs had been removed they had been seriously injured. The last class injured were the owners of the tolls. He fancied that the original object of the Land League was, in the first place, to please the publicans, who were the only class benefited by the alteration; and, in the second place, to divert a certain portion of the revenue which accrued to the landlords. Considering the small tolls charged and the expense of keeping the fair grounds in order, and of managing the fairs, the profit derived by the owners was much smaller than the Leaders of the Land League supposed. The question then arose how this evil was to be remedied. He believed it would be possible for any inhabitant of the town to bring an action for obstruction against any party so offending for wilfully obstructing the street. He believed, also, it was possible for the owners of the tolls to bring an action against those who exposed cattle for sale other than in the authorized place for disturbance of the rights of his fair. But that would be compelling private individuals to remedy what, in reality, was a public nuisance. He had seen an opinion of Mr. Justice O'Hagan before his elevation to the Bench; and his advice on this point, in reference to which he had been consulted, was that the Town Commissioners should be compelled by mandamus to clear the streets, which it was their undoubted duty to do. Unfortunately, in many instances, the Town Commissioners owed their election to the persons interested in holding these illegal fairs, and they were loth to take any action in the matter. The question then arose who should apply for the mandamus, and Mr. Justice O'Hagan was of opinion that it should be applied for by the public authority. The public authority in Ireland was the Local Government Board, represented either by the Chief Secretary, as *ex-officio* President, or by the Under Secretary, who was his representative. The powers possessed by the Local Government Board seemed to be ample in this respect. The Towns Improvement Act of 1854 expressly mentioned the exposing for sale of cattle, horses, sheep, &c., in any place otherwise than in the authorized fair field as an offence against the Act; and provided, further, that wherever that offence was committed within view of any constable or officer appointed under the Act, that constable or officer should, without warrant, take into custody and convey before the magistrates sitting at Petty Sessions any person guilty of an offence. Indeed, words could hardly be clearer than they were. If there was any difficulty from a legal point of view, it was amply provided for by the 10th section of the Local Government Board Act, 1874, which gave the Board full power to make any alterations that were necessary at the places where fairs were held. He contended that it was most important that it should be known who were the authorities who could move in the matter, and that it should not be left to private individuals to take action against offenders. In cases where fair greens were furnished with all proper means and appliances for holding fairs, should not orders be given to the Constabulary to clear the streets if it were attempted to hold a fair in them, as being illegal and inconvenient to the inhabitants? The holding of such fairs was a lawless proceeding, and intended so to be by the parties who attended the fairs. He hoped that the Government would say that they had sufficient powers; and, if not, that they would bring in a measure for the purpose of regulating all markets and fairs in Ireland. The law should, at any rate, be enforced by the Government, and it should not be left in the hands of private persons who might desire to take action as a matter of public duty. Fairs held in streets was an offence against the law, and they should be put down by the law.

Lord CARLINGFORD said, he was afraid that he could not give the noble Lord an answer which would be considered satisfactory. The noble Lord had called his attention to what occurred at Midleton, and there were other similar cases. There had been a careful inquiry into the matter, and the Irish Government were instructed that they had no power to regulate the holding of fairs and markets in Ireland. As to the cases where there were fair greens, it rested with the legal owner of any fair to pursue his private right of action against the parties who held a fair in an unauthorized place. The noble Lord said he could not understand why the Constabulary did not do more to prevent these proceedings in the streets; but he (Lord Carlingford) was informed that the Constabulary in the South of Ireland had, in some cases, cleared the streets and prevented any sale of cattle in them. That was the case at Dunmanway. There was this difference between the circumstances of that place and of Midleton—that the former did not enjoy the advantage of having Town Commissioners, whereas Midleton did. In the latter town the Constabulary wished to know what they should do in respect of preventing sales in the streets; and they were advised that they could not act without being called upon to do so by the Town Commissioners, and that body would not move in the matter. That made it impossible for the Constabulary to render any service, though, if they did act, he doubted whether they could restore the noble Lord's fair to its original condition, which was the object to be aimed at. As to the power of the Local Government Board, he was surprised to hear the noble Lord say that there was a clause in the Act of 1874 which enabled them to do certain things; because he had heard from the Board that they had looked into the Act, and they had not found that they had any power which would enable them to interfere to prevent the holding of any fair in an unauthorized place. After what had been stated he would make further inquiry into the matter. As to a Bill for the purpose of regulating fairs and markets in Ireland, no doubt such a measure would be very useful, but it would necessarily be one of considerable complication and difficulty, and it was quite impossible for him to give any pledge on the part of the Irish Government that they would introduce such a Bill, at any rate, at present. He could only say, with respect to the action of the Local Government Board, that he should take care to inquire into the matter.

House adjourned at half past Five o'clock, to Monday next, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 3rd March, 1882.

MINUTES.] — SELECT COMMITTEE — Law of Distress, *appointed.*

SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1881-2—Class III.—LAW AND JUSTICE; Class IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART; Class V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES; Class VII.—MISCELLANEOUS; POST OFFICE; POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS.

PRIVATE BILLS (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway and Cheshire Lines*; Northampton Corporation*.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Committee*—Boiler Explosions [4]—R.P.

Committee—Report—Consolidated Fund (No. 1)*.

Third Reading — Slate Mines (Gunpowder) * [68], and *passed.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

MANCHESTER, SHEFFIELD, AND LINCOLNSHIRE RAILWAY AND CHESHIRE LINES BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

SIR CHARLES FORSTER moved that the Bill be now read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Sir Charles Forster.*)

MR. MONK said, that he had placed a Notice on the Paper of his intention to move the rejection of this Bill; and he wished to call the attention of the House to one of the provisions contained in it. It was a Bill brought in by the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company for the purpose of conferring additional powers upon that Company and upon the Cheshire Lines Railway Company, and for other purposes. Among those purposes he found a clause—No. 15 in the Bill—

which altogether altered the law in regard to grouping. It allowed the Companies to group certain collieries or coal pits on their line, within a radius of 20 miles, and permitted them to charge exactly the same amount for the conveyance of coal from all the collieries, although some were 20 miles further away from the common destination than other pits. Now, the law with regard to grouping had been laid down in the Denaby Main Case by the decision of the Railway Commissioners. The Commissioners said—

> "The reasons given in this case do not justify the exceptional way in which the rates are charged. The pits are grouped because they all work the same bed of coal; but the grouping seems to us to be carried too far when it is applied compulsorily to a coal field extending 20 miles, and covering an area in which the pits may be that distance apart."

He would only read from the decision of the Commissioners one more sentence, in which they said—

> "We come, on the whole, to the conclusion that the grouping system, as it affects the applicant, does subject him to undue and unreasonable prejudice."

The Commissioners ruled accordingly. The Bill now before the House proposed to alter the law in regard to that case. When he discovered that it did so he gave Notice last Monday that he would move the rejection of the second reading of the Bill. Since that time he had seen the parties who were responsible for the Bill, and they had given an undertaking that Clause 15 should be withdrawn entirely. Under these circumstances, he should not have considered it necessary to do more than state the reasons which had induced him to place a Notice of Opposition against the Bill, if it were not for a circumstance which had since come to his knowledge—namely, that some colliery owners intended in Committee to move the re-insertion of the very clause which had been agreed to be struck out by the promoters of the Bill. He had only to add that if the clause was re-inserted by the Committee the Bill would have his most determined opposition when it came down for a third reading. As the matter now stood, he did not intend to move the rejection of the second reading.

SIR CHARLES FORSTER said, that the promoters of the Bill would meet the objections of his hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) by striking out Clause 15 and altering the Preamble accordingly.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND JUSTICE (INDIA)—CASE OF JADAVRAI HARISHANKAR.

MR. R. N. FOWLER asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether he will cause Jadavrai Harishankar, an advocate at the Indian Bar, now undergoing imprisonment in gaol in the Bombay Presidency, to be furnished with copies of the Reports of Mr. Aston, C.S., recently Judicial Assistant to the Political Agent in Kattiawar, which Reports were forwarded to that Agency under date April 7th 1881; Report or Reply of Mr. E. T. Candy, C.S. on the above Reports, forwarded under date of May 4th 1881, together with a Memorandum by Mr. Aston, also a Report by Mr. Candy on Jadavrai's petition; and, whether, considering the statements contained in these Papers, the Bombay Government would consider whether they might liberate Jadavrai and remit the fine of Rs.24,000 imposed upon him by the Kattiawar Political Agency Courts?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I answered a Question on this subject put to me by the hon. Member for Haddington (Sir David Wedderburn), on the 4th August last, and have only to add that I have since ascertained privately from the Governor of Bombay that in March, 1881, the Governor visited the gaol where the prisoner was confined, and on his making a fresh appeal and presenting a Petition, the Governor sent for all the Papers and himself went through them carefully, with the result that he was convinced that the conviction was right; and, at the same time, Mr. Justice Kemball, one of the Judges of the Bombay High Court (who was then acting as member of the Council of the Governor), also read all the Papers at the request of the Governor, and arrived at the same conclusion—namely, that there was no doubt the conviction was right. It is clear that the case has received the fullest and repeated consideration; and, under the circumstances, there is no ground whatever for interfering in the matter. The documents asked for are confidential Papers to which the prisoner has no sort of right, and cannot be furnished to him.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. J. A. ENNIS.

MR. REDMOND asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If it is a fact that Mr. James A. Ennis, of Woodgraigne, county Wexford, was arrested at 10 o'clock, p.m. on 8th November last, and driven about from one police station to another until 7.30 a.m. the next morning, when he was placed in a train and conveyed to Kilmainham Prison, which he reached at 12 o'clock, having been fourteen hours upon the journey; whether he was kept the entire time without food or refreshment of any kind; and, whether, if so, care will be taken for the future that no unnecessary hardships of this kind be inflicted upon persons arrested under the Coercion Acts?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Including a lengthened stoppage at Wellington Bridge Police Station, about 14 hours in all elapsed between the time of Mr. Ennis's arrest and his arrival in Dublin, although he was conveyed by the earliest train. He had refreshment on the journey. Of course, the Chief Secretary will repeat his directions that all unnecessary hardship shall be avoided in these cases.

MR. REDMOND: The refreshments were supplied by some friends, not by the authorities.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): I have not stated that they were supplied by the authorities.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE (ENGLAND)—DOMICILED SCOTCHMEN.

MR. JAMES COWAN asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the hardships inflicted upon domiciled Scotchmen by suing them in the High Court of Justice in London for small sums; and, whether he purposes to bring in a Bill to remedy the grievance?

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): My attention has been called to this matter. The service of the writs under which domiciled Scotchmen have been summoned to the English Courts has been allowed under rules framed by the English Judges with reference to the Judicature Act of 1875. Representations are now being made in the proper quarter on the subject.

STATE OF IRELAND—CASTLECOMER LADIES' LAND LEAGUE.

MR. REDMOND asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If it is a fact that the Minute Book of the Castlecomer Branch of the Ladies Land League was seized and taken away by the police some weeks since; and, whether it contains any criminal or illegal matter to justify its confiscation; and, if not, whether he will at once direct the police to return it to its owners?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): The Minute Book of this branch of the Ladies' Land League was taken possession of by the police some weeks since. Some of its contents are open to serious objection in point of law; but, upon the whole, I see no objection now to its being given up if it is asked for.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. M. J. KELLY.

MR. BARRY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If Mr. Michael James Kelly, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, was arrested whilst visiting at Warren Point on a warrant issued against a person named "J. J. Kelly, of Newry," Mr. Michael J. Kelly never having resided at Newry; whether he is still detained in Armagh prison; and, whether any steps are to be taken to have "J. J. Kelly, of Newry," arrested; and, if he be arrested, whether steps will be taken to have Mr. M. J. Kelly, of Newcastle-on-Tyne, released?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): I am informed that the person intended to be arrested, and arrested, is known as Mr. J. J. Kelly, of Newry, and he is now detained in the prison at Armagh.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—THE NEWRY UNION—MR. THOMPSON COOKE.

MR. BARRY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If it is true that in

November last Mr. Thompson Cooke, master of the Newry Union, along with two men, John Rodney and Bernard Rodney, was arrested on a charge of having conspired to utter a forged document purporting to be the will of Mr. Edward Graves Howard, of Damolly Park, Newry, then deceased; whether Mr. Cooke has been permitted by the Local Government Board to continue the discharge of his functions as master of the workhouse; and, if the Local Government Board will retain him in his position whilst such a grave criminal charge is pending?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Mr. Cooke was arrested on a charge of being concerned in an alleged will forgery, and was admitted to bail. The case has not yet been tried. The Board of Guardians, after full consideration of the circumstances, decided to retain Mr. Cooke in his position pending the trial, and the Local Government Board have not considered it necessary to interfere with the decision of the Guardians.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND) — SENTENCES OF PENAL SERVITUDE ON CHILDREN.

DR. CAMERON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the cases of Robert Crawford and Francis Hill, boys aged 14, and repeatedly referred to as "children" by the Judge who sentenced them, condemned by Lord Deas, at the Glasgow December Circuit, to five years penal servitude for the thefts of letters; and, whether, taking into consideration the tender age of the prisoners, and the fact that Lord Deas stated, as his reason for pronouncing so heavy a sentence, that the Law did not permit him to award a lighter one, he will consider the propriety of mitigating the punishment?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to say that it was so obvious that penal servitude was altogether inappropriate punishment for children of these tender years, that I directed at once that they should be kept in ordinary imprisonment until I could communicate with the Judges. I have done so, and have arranged that they should be released after a period of six months of ordinary imprisonment.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—SEC. 58—TOWN PARKS.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If he will inform the House on what principle certain lands are held to be town parks under the Land Law Act, thereby excluding the tenants of those lands from the benefits of that measure; whether it is possible, in defining a town park, to determine what is a town; whether lands adjacent to villages or small places having no town board or other local public authority, and with a population of less than 3,000 persons, ought to be included in the category of town parks; and, whether the Government intend to propose any amendment of the Land Law Act for the purpose of removing the uncertainty in which the Law in respect of this matter is involved?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): In reply to the first inquiry in this Question, four conditions must be fulfilled in order that a holding should be a town park within the 2nd sub-section of the 58th section of the Land Act of 1881. (1.) It must be of that character which is ordinarily termed a town park. (2.) It must adjoin or be near a city or town. (3.) It must bear an increased value as accommodation land above its ordinary letting value if occupied as a farm. (4.) It must be occupied by a person residing in the city or town or its suburbs for the accommodation of his residence there. In reply to the second inquiry, what constitutes a town within the Act is a circumstance to be determined by the facts of each case; and I doubt whether a hard-and-fast definition would not be open to considerable difficulty. In reply to the third inquiry, if the town is under Commissioners or other municipal body, there is no difficulty in concluding that it is a town within the Act; but calling a place a town will not make it a town, and, as a general rule, I should say that holdings adjoining or near villages or small places are not town parks within the Act. As a matter of opinion merely, I should doubt the prudence of a statutory definition that no place is a town if its population does not exceed 2,999, which is, I take it, the gist of this inquiry. As to the last inquiry, it is a matter of policy, and should be addressed to the Prime Minister; but, so far as I have seen, the Act is working smoothly in this respect. The small holdings adjoining the city of Limerick, some of which are within the borough boundary, were held not to be town parks, because they did not answer the whole four conditions I have mentioned; and in another place the attempt to turn a village into a town, by getting up a market or fair, so as to call the adjoining holdings town parks, and exclude them from the Act, was rejected by the Sub-Commissioners, who held that, by such contrivance, the place did not become a town, or the holdings town parks.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER said, he was very much obliged to the Attorney General for Ireland for the answer he had given; and he would now give Notice that, if the opportunity presented itself on Monday, he would call attention to the subject.

MR. HEALY asked if it was not a fact that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had been unable last year to give any Return of the exact amount of acreage in Ireland covered by town parks?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, such was the case. They had tried to get the Return, but found it was impracticable to do so.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—WARRANTS AGAINST MEMBERS OF THIS HOUSE.

MR. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If he has any objection to laying upon the Table copies of the warrants issued against the senior and junior Members for Queen's County, and the Member for Wexford Borough, under the Coercion Act?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, I am informed that there is no warrant against the senior Member for the Queen's County. With reference to the rest of the Question, the copies asked for cannot be given.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I think, Sir, I have a right to ask, as a matter of Privilege, whether Her Majesty's Government have thought fit to issue a warrant for my apprehension? I think I can ask this as a matter of Privilege; because, as a Member of this House, it is necessary that both me and my constituents should know whether I am at liberty to proceed to the county which I represent in this House for the purpose of addressing them, and of obtaining from them an expression of their feelings on any subject before the House. I wish to ask you, Sir, whether I have not the right to put this Question as a matter of Privilege; and whether the refusal of the Government to answer it would not be a breach of the Privilege of this House?

MR. SPEAKER: I consider the Question proposed to be put by the hon. Member is governed by the same Rule as other Questions put to Ministers of the Crown.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I do not understand that, practically, any answer was given to the Question of my hon. Friend.

MR. SPEAKER: It must be obvious to the hon. Member that an answer cannot be forced from a Minister; and that if a Minister thinks that, in the interests of the Public Service, no answer should be given to a particular Question, he has a right to refuse to give one.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I consider it of very great moment to my constituents that I should endeavour to obtain an answer from the Government on this point, and to put myself in Order I will conclude with a Motion. I am sorry that this question has been, to a certain extent, sprung upon me, for I did not anticipate that the answer my hon. Friend had received would be given; but, under the circumstances, I think I am justified in interrupting the course of Business this afternoon until I have obtained some statement from the Government as to whether I am at liberty to go to my constituents as every Member of this House goes to his. I have reason to believe that there was a warrant issued against me in Ireland, and I received an intimation of it only a few nights ago.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Allow me to explain that the Question that the hon. Member put was one which involved what he wanted to know. ["Order, order!"] What is out of Order? The hon. Member asked whether he could have a copy of a particular warrant. I merely told him he could not have a copy. Of course, the warrant must have existed or there could not have been a copy.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Then, Sir, I would ask what that warrant is, and what is the charge which is brought by Her Majesty's Government against me? I care not what that charge may be—I am prepared to meet it anywhere —and if Her Majesty's Government say that any charge can be preferred against me only in Ireland, and can be tried by law in Ireland, I am perfectly prepared to abide by the verdict of an English jury if any such similar charge shall be brought against me in England. On my return from Ireland some months ago there was, as I am informed on good authority, a warrant issued for my apprehension in England by the Home Secretary, or the Home Office; and I am assured that warrant was in the hands of the police in Scotland Yard for some time. I had an inkling of something of the sort at the time, and I accordingly returned from Paris to London, at great inconvenience to myself, to give the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary, or those who act with him, an opportunity, if they thought fit, of arresting me. I remained in London for some time, at great inconvenience to myself, in order to afford the Government an opportunity of arresting me. I was anxious that they should do so, and for this reason. I knew if they did so they would be obliged to do what they are not obliged to do in Ireland—substantiate that charge, if they could, before a jury of 12 men; and I was not only willing, but anxious, to go before a jury and abide by the decision of any 12 men with whom the Government might pack a jury-box. I knew a jury would be obliged to acquit me of any charge that might be brought against me; and I knew also that if I were acquitted the whole foundation of misrepresentation on which the Government had obtained the Coercion Act from this House would fall through. It would have been proved that there was not sufficient evidence of treasonable practice on the part of any of those who had been arrested under the Act, and there would then have been no justification for the further detention of the three Members of Parliament and the 500 other persons who are in prison. Now, the Government has been challenged to say what charge they have thought fit to bring against me in Ireland. They dare not state it. They know they have no ground whatever for charging me with treasonable practices; and, therefore, in the face of this House, I challenge them to proceed against me by any means in their power. I am perfectly willing to go over to Ireland to-night if they will guarantee that they will proceed against me in Ireland and bring me to trial. If they accept that challenge, well and good; we shall see what sort of case they are able to make against me or against anyone in Ireland. If they refuse the challenge, then I impeach them for double dealing. I say they are utterly unfit for the position they occupy; and I say the people of Ireland will be perfectly justified in maintaining their present opinion—namely, that every charge on which these 500 men and more are imprisoned in Ireland is a false charge, known to be false by those who have signed the warrants. I beg to move the adjournment of the House.

Mr. HEALY, in seconding the Motion, expressed his astonishment at the answer which the Government had given. He had asked for copies of the warrants issued against himself and his hon. Friends, and the Attorney General for Ireland had informed the House that he could not lay copies on the Table; but he (Mr. Healy) supposed they only contained the usual charges that A induced B to intimidate C not to pay his rent to D. What injury could be done to the Public Service by allowing those warrants to be produced? He was surprised at the want of candour shown by the Government in refusing to satisfy the legitimate curiosity of those against whom charges were brought. The Easter Recess would be upon them in a few weeks, and it was part of the Constitutional procedure of Members of the House to go down to their constituents and take the opportunity of addressing them on public affairs. He was desirous, as he had intended to do, to visit his constituency in Ireland, and to address it on various matters of public interest; and he was anxious to know what precise charge the Government had against him in the pigeon holes of Dublin Castle. He was in London when Mr. Parnell was arrested, and he took the train to Holyhead; but he was met as he was going to the steamer by a messenger from Mr. Parnell, who told him not to go to Ireland. He should be perfectly happy to be in Kilmainham; as far as he was personally concerned he did not care a row of pins whether he was in gaol or in the House of Commons. What he did conceive, in the interests of the public, was that it was an important matter that they, the Constitutional Representatives of the Irish people, should be deprived of the opportunity of going before their constituencies and consulting with them on the various important matters that came before the House. There was a Constitutional crisis before the House just now, and there were other important Constitutional matters which it was desirable that they should discuss with their constituents. In these circumstances, they were entitled to ask what was the precise nature of the charge against them. He could hardly think that the Attorney General for Ireland had conceived the importance of this question, and that he had asked the opinion of his Colleagues with regard to it. He had given the answer furnished him from Dublin Castle. He should, therefore, on a future date, renew the Question to the Attorney General for Ireland, in order that he might have the opportunity of consulting his Colleagues; and he (Mr. Healy) would ask him whether Members of that House, in the exercise of their Constitutional duty, who might desire to go before their constituents during the Recess, were to be subjected to the provisions of the Coercion Act by the right hon. and learned Gentleman?

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I rise to take notice of what I understood the hon. Member for Queen's County to say. He was under the impression that there had been some warrant in existence in England affecting him of which the Home Office and the police had cognizance. [MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: So I was informed.] The hon. Member has been misinformed on that subject. I have no cognizance of anything of the kind; it is the first time I have heard of anything of the sort; I have no cognizance of any proceeding in England against the hon. Member.

MR. CALLAN said, he hoped a distinct answer would be given to the serious Constitutional question that had been raised, and in which he was personally greatly concerned. During the past Recess he was anxious to address his constituents. A Member of the House, an unflinching supporter of the Government, aware of his wish to go to Ireland, advised him not to go, and said—"If you go Forster is sure to arrest you." He replied that the arrest, if made, would be due to personal pique, and the answer was—"In the present state of the country the House of Commons could not enter into the question; it would be quite sufficient if we were told that you were arrested for reasons of State." Not exactly wishing to be incarcerated during the cold weather in Kilmainham, he abstained from visiting Ireland. He believed discretion to be the better part of valour, and thought that even a unit in the House might be of importance in administering blows against the coercive and unconstitutional Executive in Ireland. Were the Representatives of the Irish people to be prevented from addressing their constituents during the Easter Recess by a covert threat that if they did they would be arrested and put in Kilmainham Gaol, while the Chief Secretary went with armed escorts to the West of Ireland? He had a natural objection to detention under any circumstances, and more especially under "reasonable suspicion," for Dublin Castle had "reasonable suspicion" of every honest man, and of every man who had the courage of his opinions. He thought it behoved independent Members on both sides of the House, in addition to the Irish Members, to ask the Government and the Prime Minister whether he would, with the authority of his high station, tell them that they were safe to go to Ireland, and that if they went to Ireland now, they would not be arrested because of the "reasonable suspicion" of the Chief Secretary? He believed that every Irish Member who had not eternal hostility to the present Irish Administration was unfit to represent an Irish constituency; and he believed, further, that no Irish Member could go to Ireland at the present moment, except at the risk of the "reasonable suspicion" of Dublin Castle. He hoped the Prime Minister would avail himself of this opportunity and challenge to make some statements as to the position occupied by Irish Members in the view of the Government.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I accept the challenge of the hon. Member who has just sat down. I am sorry I can only accept it to the extent of stating on my responsibility that no further information on the subject of the Question can, or will, be given. The tendency of this conversation appears to me to lead towards the setting up of some description of privilege or immunity for Members of Parliament, as compared with the rest of Her Majesty's subjects—either an immunity—an absolute immunity—from being made the subject of a warrant under the Protection of Person and Property Act, or else having an immunity to this extent—that if a warrant should be issued against a Member of Parliament, and from any circumstance it should not take effect, that warrant may be called for, and produced, and made a matter of public and Parliamentary cognizance, although no such thing could take place in the case of any other less favoured individual, not being a Member of Parliament. Now, Sir, we are not prepared to accede to any proposition, or to give an answer to any Question in the direction of setting up such an immunity; and in so doing I apprehend we are giving effect to the clear intention of the House. I have not had time since I took my place on this Bench to refer to debates on that Act, when it was a Bill under discussion in this House; but, according to the clear recollection of myself and of my Friends near me, we did debate this very question, whether there was to be an immunity of any kind on the part of Members of Parliament, and the judgment of the House was—and the Bill was framed on that judgment—that they were to stand in the eye of that law, as in the eye of other laws, in precisely the same position as the remainder of the subjects of Her Majesty. I have never heard of any claim made upon the Government to state whether there is a warrant out against A B or C D, not being Members of Parliament, and whether such warrant can be produced, which is the challenge now made. [Mr. Healy: I have raised the question.] Well, that has escaped my memory; I do not doubt the correctness of what the hon. Member says; but I think he will bear me out in my saying that not the slightest concession has been made to that claim. Consequently, the statement he has just now made is confirmatory of what I have been saying, and shows the consistency of the former proceedings and their conformity with the letter and spirit of the law, and obliges me to adhere to the declaration with which I commenced—that, whatever course natural courtesy may dictate to my right hon. and learned Friend, we are not able to enter further upon this matter, or to give any more information with regard to it.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he did not propose to discuss with the Prime Minister the question of the immunity of Members of Parliament, although he believed there were some immunities given by law which distinguished a Member of Parliament from any ordinary member of the community. As regarded this question of arrest, there ought not to be any distinction whatever in favour of any class. He would not claim for a Member of Parliament any immunity under the law which he could not also claim for the very humblest of his countrymen. He would suggest to his hon. Friend the Member for the Queen's County (Mr. A. O'Connor), although he had that day made to that House a most manly and straightforward statement, that it would be as well for him not to enter into any compact whatever with the Government. He would suggest to him, and, indeed, to all his hon. Friends near him, that if they had business to transact in Ireland they should go to Ireland, without making any suggestion or offering any compact to the Government. It was perfectly certain that no amount of consciousness on a man's own part of his innocence of all conspiracy, or of his want of sympathy with crime, could save him from the chance of a warrant issued under the Coercion Act; just as no clear consciousness in a man's own mind that he was not guilty of any conspiracy could save that man from being denounced in that House again and again by the Prime Minister as a conspirator. He would therefore advise his hon. Friends to take those two liabilities as part of the difficulties and responsibilities which were attached to an Irish Member of Parliament now, and to go across to Ireland and to return from it when business made that necessary, with a manifestation of total indifference as to what Her Majesty's Government might do.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN said, he was not in the least surprised that Her Majesty's Government had refused to lay those warrants on the Table of the House. The reason of their refusal was perfectly simple. It was this—that if those warrants were laid before the House the Members concerned would have an opportunity of defending themselves, which was the ordinary right of any accused person. It was much more convenient for the Government not to produce those warrants. It would be much more convenient that they should first arrest the person, and then, with his mouth closed so that he could not defend himself, they would be perfectly safe from having their statements challenged or refuted. The Irish Law Officers of the Crown could then come into that House and try the person they had imprisoned, behind his back. They would make cowardly charges against him; they would make charges which were extravagant and absurd. They would tell the House, as he had heard them allege, that this prisoner and that prisoner, whose mouth they had shut, was steeped to his lips in treason. Gentlemen opposite were not ashamed to come before an assembly of English Gentlemen and make such serious charges against absent men, having first taken care they should not have any opportunity of defence. Was that what was called "English fair play?" Would it not rather be English fair play to give a man an opportunity of saying what he could in his defence? But there was not to be any fair play shown to the Irish people. Throw a man into gaol, shut his mouth, prevent him communicating with his friends, and then charge him with being steeped to the lips in treason. And how were those charges made out? By a system of giving meanings to language which that language did not bear. By a system of "reading between the lines." By attempting to establish a connection between a perfectly harmless and legal speech delivered in one place, and some outrages committed in another. If they were to be treated by that system, he wondered how any one of Her Majesty's Ministers would stand a similar ordeal. They had the Solicitor General for Ireland defending himself last night against accusations based upon speeches which he made during his election campaign. He said—"I did not mean this, I did not mean that." He denied that he said some of the things imputed to him, or that what he did say bore the meaning put upon it. Suppose they tried him on the system which the Government had adopted towards the Irish Members—of reading between the lines, and saying "meaning thereby"—how would he stand? They did not care, because they could defend themselves, and could not be put into Kilmainham. But the balance of power might vary some day, and then how would they like their successors to say to them "meaning thereby?" He protested against the unfairness, the unmanliness, the cowardice—if he was in Order in saying so—of this system of treatment which was dealt out to Irishmen. That was justice! That was what the Irish people were expected to have regard for. That was what was dignified in Ireland by the name of the law of the land. If the law of the land was an outrage upon justice and reason little wonder was it that the Irish people had no respect for the so-called law of the land.

MR. SEXTON said, he rose for the purpose of suggesting to the hon. Member for Queen's County that he might now withdraw his Motion for the adjournment of the House. Hon. Members in all parts of the House, whatever their political opinions, would agree that his hon. Friend the Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) had acted perfectly within his right in putting his Question; and natural feeling and public right were on the side of his hon. Friend the Member for Queen's County when he endeavoured to obtain an answer to the Question which he put. Nothing could have been more natural than that Question, or more manly than the challenge which he laid before the Government. It was a strange and sad commentary on Liberal rule that they must listen in that House to talk from Ministers about immunity and special rights and privileges in connection with the Question put by an hon. Member—"Have you a charge against me? If you have, what is it? and will you put me on my trial before a jury?" The man who made that statement was to be taunted by the Prime Minister with having claimed special immunities! The Irish Members in that House claimed no immunity, and asked for none. They were willing to take all the risks and perils of their situation. They were willing to stand upon perfectly equal ground with the rest of their countrymen. They would accept that situation, he believed, with a self-respectful silence, so far as they were individually concerned; and they would not, by any complaints, or by any opportunities for such speeches as that which they had just heard from the Prime Minister, endeavour in the eyes of ignorant English public opinion to diminish the heavy and crushing burden of shame which laid upon their shoulders. The Question asked was, would the warrants be placed upon the Table? The reason he asked his hon. Friend to withdraw his Motion was, that even if the warrants were laid upon the Table he would know very little more than he knew now. The hon. Member for Wexford wanted to see one warrant, the hon. Member for Queen's County wanted to see another. He was in a position to state that one of the subordinate officers of the right hon. Gentleman came into his bedroom and gave him two warrants; and he could also state, after studying the two, his stock of legal, or political, or personal knowledge was not very much increased. This he could certainly say —that they contained charges, one of which he knew to be preposterous. And when those charges came up for substantiation, even though they were supported by the lurid eloquence of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland, they could not command the attention of the House. He could assure the House, from personal experience, that the warrants of the right hon. Gentleman told nothing. He wished his hon. Friend, therefore, would withdraw his Motion, and give up his chase after this "Will-o'-the-Wisp" in the shape of Government warrants, which explained nothing, which contained nothing clear or intelligible, which only threw into legal phraseology the hateful policy of suspicion and silence, under which the liberties of the Irish people had been abolished.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he concluded with a Motion for Adjournment simply to put himself in Order. He did not wish to press his Motion to a division; but he wished to say that he knew perfectly well there was a warrant issued for him, and that in that warrant he was charged as being reasonably suspected of treasonable practices. That was a false charge. He knew there was such a warrant, because those who held it made themselves known to the servant at the hotel where he was stopping, which hotel the police searched in order to find him. Their search was not complete, and he remained in blissful ignorance of what was going on until the search was over. As soon as he knew there was a warrant, he sent word to some friends who were in Dublin at the time. He made every arrangement for his removal to Kilmainham; and after he had settled in the hotel whatever Land League business he could on the spur of the moment, he went into Sackville Street with his hon. Friend the Member for Roscommon (Mr. O'Kelly), who was now in Kilmainham. Somehow, he did not know why, he was not arrested. He had at that time an appointment in Kilmainham, and he kept that appointment. In the meantime, between that and his return from Kilmainham, his friends had come to the decision it was much better for their purposes that he should remove himself from Ireland, and continue to do the work he had in hand, because, of course, it would have been impossible for him to carry on that work had he been put into Kilmainham. That was the whole explanation of his removal from Ireland at that time. The charge which the Government thought fit to make and to sign in that warrant was a false charge; and he was anxious, if it were possible, to have that charge brought against him in England. If it was brought against him in this country, and he was tried and found guilty, the result would be that he would be liable to imprisonment with hard labour for 15 years. The result of his being arrested in Ireland under the Coercion Act would be imprisonment, without hard labour, for some months. Therefore, in inviting the Government to take proceedings against him in this country —and he challenged them with every word and taunt which he could command to induce them to take such action—he was not endeavouring, the House would perceive, to escape the most unpleasant consequences of his action. But if the Government were not prepared to bring him to trial, or to state what the charge was which they had hanging over him, they were acting a cowardly part, and the charge against him must be a false charge. He believed those individuals who put it forward were conscious it was false; and if he knew any language sufficiently strong to drive the Government, either through exasperation or shame, into taking action against him, he would use that language. As it was, he wished the Government to understand that he thoroughly defied them. He begged to withdraw his Motion for Adjournment.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—ALLEGED EXCESS OF DUTY AT CAPPAMORE, COUNTY LIMERICK.

MR. REDMOND asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If it is a fact that a girl named Bourke, twelve years of age, was assaulted recently in the village of Cappamore, county Limerick, by a sub-constable, who, because she was singing "Harvey Duff," drew his bayonet and inflicted a wound upon her, fracturing her skull and endangering her life; and, whether the child is still in a precarious state; and what steps he will take in the matter?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): This constable was arrested, brought before a magistrate, and committed on remand; and as the facts must be investigated in the ordinary way, in the prosecution which is pending, I cannot anticipate them. I am glad to be able to say that the girl has considerably recovered, and is daily improving. During her illness her parents, who are poor, receive a weekly allowance from Government by the Chief Secretary's direction, and medical attendance has also been provided for the girl.

MR. REDMOND asked, whether the constable was in custody?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Yes.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARRESTS UNDER THE ACT.

MR. BARRY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If it is true that nine persons in the neighbourhood of Hook, county Wexford, were arrested under the Lord Lieutenant's warrant yesterday; that several of the persons arrested are mere boys, under seventeen years of age; and upon what grounds were the arrests made?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Yes; these persons have been arrested in the district referred to, on the grounds of reasonable suspicion of intimidation. None of them are under 17 years of age. One is 22, two are 19, and the rest are upwards of 30 years of age.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—PRISONERS UNDER THE ACT.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, On what grounds Messrs. John King and Thomas Winterscale are still detained in Galway Prison as suspects, whereas three other prisoners, arrested at the same time and on the same charge, have long since been released from custody; and, whether it is true that these two prisoners have been detained for more than nine months; and, if so, whether they may not now be liberated without detriment to public peace and tranquillity?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): These two persons have been in detention more than nine months. Their cases were considered, as the Act requires, and so recently as last month; but His Excellency felt himself unable, after careful investigation, to order their discharge.

METROPOLITAN STREET IMPROVEMENTS ACT, 1877—NEW STREETS.

MR. FIRTH asked the honourable Member for Truro, When the Metropolitan Board of Works propose to proceed with the Charing Cross and Tottenham Court Road Improvement; and what is the reason of the delay in proceeding with it during the past five years?

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: The Metropolitan Board of Works have been prevented from carrying out the improvement from Charing Cross to Tottenham Court Road by the extreme and unprecedented stringency of the 33rd section of the Metropolitan Street Improvements Act, 1877, which relates to the provision of accommodation for the labouring classes to be displaced; but, under special arrangements with the Secretary of State, the Board are now engaged, and are far advanced, in the purchase of property in Newport Market which will be required for the improvement, and in respect of which the Board some time since received an official intimation from the Secretary of State that, notwithstanding the terms of the 33rd section, the Board would be permitted to clear the ground with a view to letting it for the purpose of the erection of labourers' dwellings. Until, however, Parliament has taken into consideration how far the provisions of the 33rd section can be revised, I am unable to say whether it will be within the power of the Board to complete this and other improvements. I would add that the Act passed in 1877 authorized the Board to carry out no less than 11 improvements, some of them of an extensive character; and, with the exception of the Western improvements and the widening of Gray's Inn Lane, the Board have already given full effect to the powers conferred by that Act.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—THE ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS.

Mr. BOURKE asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether the late appointments of Assistant Commissioners under "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881," have been for the term of one year only; and, if so, under what rule such appointments have been made?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): The appointments of Assistant Commissioners under the Land Act of 1881, since the Rule of the 9th of November, 1881, which has been presented to Parliament, are for one year.

Mr. HEALY asked whether the valuators had been appointed for one year or by the job?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, he could not give the hon. Member any information on that subject.

Mr. BOURKE asked, Whether there is any objection to lay upon the Table Copies of the instruments of delegation to the Sub-Commissioners issued under Rule 18 of the Rules made in pursuance of "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881."

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): No, Sir; there is no objection to lay the Copies asked for on the Table.

THAMES RIVER BILL—LEGISLATION.

Mr. M'LAREN asked the Parliamentary Secretary of the Board of Trade, Whether he intends to introduce the Thames River Bill this Session?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY, in reply, said, that it was intended to embody certain of the provisions of the Bill of last Session in a Bill to be brought in this Session, which would embrace those points in which the hon. Member was most interested—namely, those relating to steam launches.

LAW OF DISTRAINT—THE DISTRESS AMENDMENT BILL.

Sir WILLIAM HART DYKE asked the honourable Member for Forfarshire, Whether, in view of the strong feeling entertained in favour of the amendment of the Law of Distraint, he will remove the opposing Notice which he has placed against the Distress Amendment Bill.

Mr. J. W. BARCLAY said, the Distress Amendment Bill, referred to in the Question of the hon. Baronet, continued to the landlord the right to seize the property of third parties in satisfaction of his rent; and it did not, in his opinion, in any respect improve the position of the tenant. The changes or proposals did not seem to him any amendment of the law; and he was sorry he could not withdraw the Notice of Opposition given.

CRIMINAL LAW—INADEQUATE SENTENCES.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to a presentment made by the grand jury at the Central Criminal Court, having reference to the frequency of brutal outrages, which they attribute to the leniency of the sentences inflicted by magistrates for such offences; and what steps, if any, he proposes to take to give effect to the representations of the grand jury?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, the document to which the Question referred reached the Home Office that morning; but as he had been out of town all day he had not yet seen it. He might say, however, it would be most carefully examined and considered.

ATTEMPT UPON THE LIFE OF HER MAJESTY.

Sir **STAFFORD NORTHCOTE**: I wish to ask the Government, Whether they can afford the House any further information with regard to the late atrocious attempt upon Her Majesty's life, and also with regard to Her Majesty's health ?

Sir **WILLIAM HARCOURT**: In answer to the first part of the right hon. Gentleman's Question, I do not know that I can add any material facts to those which I stated last night. It is very desirable, of course, that anybody in a responsible position should not state anything that has not been distinctly proved in evidence as yet. The state of the case at present is this. By my desire the Solicitor to the Treasury attended this morning at Windsor in order to conduct the prosecution and the inquiry in this case; and Sir James Ingham, the senior magistrate at Bow Street, has also gone to Windsor in order to give his great experience and assistance to the local magistrates in conducting the case. The prisoner was remanded in order that further and fuller evidence should be obtained, and to give time for considering the charge which will be preferred against the prisoner. That is the actual legal situation with reference to the prisoner. The only other fact that I think I can properly mention now is, that this morning the bullet which had been discharged from the pistol was found near the railway station. That, of course, is a material circumstance; but that is all that can with prudence be stated with reference to the facts that have come to our knowledge. With reference to the second Question of the right hon. Gentleman, I have to state that, having had the honour of having an audience of Her Majesty this morning, I am able to state that Her Majesty has not suffered in health from the atrocious circumstance of yesterday. I may be allowed to say that Her Majesty expressed her extreme satisfaction at the messages which have reached her from all parts of this country, and I may say from all parts of Europe, of congratulation and satisfaction at Her Majesty's escape.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES) BILL.

Mr. **ARTHUR ARNOLD** asked Mr. Attorney General, If, with reference to the Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill issued that morning, he will cause a statement to be made showing the changes introduced into this year's measure ?

The **ATTORNEY GENERAL** (Sir Henry James), in reply, said, he would be very glad to give private information to any hon. Member as to the changes; but he did not think it desirable to publish a statement of them.

RELIGIOUS DISSENSIONS (GIBRALTAR)—DR. CANILLA.

Sir **H. DRUMMOND WOLFF** asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is true that the Governor of Gibraltar has broken into the Roman Catholic Church at that place with the view of forcibly installing Dr. Canilla as Vicar Apostolic ?

Mr. **COURTNEY**, in reply, said, he had received no information on the subject; but he believed that some difficulty did exist in Gibraltar with regard to the installation of the Vicar Apostolic.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS IN RUSSIA.—RESOLUTION.

Baron **HENRY DE WORMS**, in rising to move—

> "That this House, deeply deploring the persecution and outrages to which the Jews have been subjected in portions of the Russian Empire, trusts that Her Majesty's Government will find means, either alone or in conjunction with other Great Powers, of using their good offices with the Government of His Majesty the Czar to prevent the recurrence of similar acts of violence,"

said: Sir, I feel the grave responsibility which attaches to me, inasmuch as I have taken upon myself to plead the cause of 3,500,000 of human beings, so persecuted and ill-used that their cries for help and sympathy could never reach the ears of generous Christian men and women, were they not re-echoed by those who, like myself, live under a free and enlightened rule. I should not have ventured to undertake this responsibility had I not been convinced that justice and right are on my side. In pleading their cause I am strengthened by a knowledge of the fact that I am following the precedent of the illustrious statesman at the head of the Government when he, some years ago, with that power, vigour, and eloquence for which he is so pre-eminently distinguished, pleaded, with no uncertain sound, the cause of the oppressed Bulgarians. I trust I shall be able to approach this subject without any tinge of Party feeling, for it is a question not of one Party or of the other, but one which affects the humanity which is common to all. If the House will allow me, I will read an extract from a speech of the Prime Minister at Blackheath in 1876. I do not, however, plead that as a justification of the course I am now taking. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "It is idle to deny or to depreciate the character of this movement. It is absurd to say that it emanates from a political Party. I rejoice that, with scarcely an exception, both Parties are animated by the same sentiments as those which animate this meeting. I rejoice to think that I have heard in the House of Commons, and out of the House of Commons, many a voice from those who profess Conservative opinions, as sincere, as zealous, as energetic as anyone can be; for they feel that this question has a breadth, and a height, and a depth which carry it far out of the lower region of Party differences, and establishes it on the grounds, not of a political Party, not of English nationality, not of Christian faith, but on the greatest and broadest grounds of all—the grounds of our common humanity."

Sir, I feel convinced that if I endeavour to tread in the footsteps of the illustrious statesman, and follow the lines he has laid down, I shall not be accused of using this question for Party purposes. In this great and charitable England, scarcely a month passes that we do not read of a fund initiated by the Chief Magistrate of London, and generously supported by rich and poor, in aid of suffering humanity in our own or distant climes—humanity, stricken down by illness, famine, or accident. We can, however, find but solitary examples of the appeal which now daily greets us in the Press—an appeal for the suffering and persecuted Jews of Russia—a cry for help from man stricken down by his fellow-man. The appeal which was made in England on behalf of the Bulgarians was made in the same spirit of generosity as that with which this appeal and this plea is made. I do not wish to draw any distinction between the two cases; but, if a comparison be made, I think that the persecution of the Russian Jews appeals still more to the sympathies of Europe than did that of the Bulgarians. It must be remembered that the Bulgarian atrocities—much as I deplore them—took place at a time when the whole country was in a semi-state of war—[Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL: No, no!]—and that they were committed by savage and undisciplined troops. But the atrocities on the Russian Jews were perpetrated in the midst of a nation claiming to be a Great Power and a civilized and Christian State. They took place, moreover, not in the fields, as did the Bulgarian outrages, but in the capital towns of that country. And they were not committed by savage troops; but the soldiery who ought to have defended the inoffensive citizens actually connived at what was taking place. I must say that it was with a feeling of deep regret that I heard the Prime Minister state the other night that he could not grant an evening for the discussion of this question. I know that the right hon. Gentleman has the same sympathies as we all have. His whole political career proves how deeply he sympathizes with oppressed nationalities. I am sorry that some Government night has not been given to me for this discussion; but by a lucky accident I have secured to-night. I have no hesitation as to the course I have adopted, for the Prime Minister himself some years ago approved of the action of the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight in bringing forward the question of the Bulgarians under precisely similar circumstances. The right hon. Gentleman, on that occasion, said—

> "Five attempts had been made to penetrate the mystery of the official mind, and, after a sixth and a seventh had failed, the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight brought up the subject for discussion. I believe that the voices of Members on both sides of the House will be raised in support of humanity and justice."

I trust those words of the Prime Minister will be realized on this occasion. Certain statements have been put forward by the Russian Government in defence—if defence there can be—of the atrocities that have been committed. I think it will be well that the English public should know that those statements are mere subterfuges. The whole history of the question shows unmistakably that the worst element in that persecution was religious fanaticism. In 1817 the State Papers Nos. 1, 2, and 3 showed that the Emperor Alexander had promised perfect liberty to the Jews in Russia provided they became converted. There could not be a better proof than that that the persecutions to which the Jews have been subjected have originated in their desire to retain their ancient faith. In fact, that is their only crime. But General Ignatieff's Rescript of the 3rd September, 1881, under which Commissions have been appointed with a view to imposing further disabilities on the Jews, alleges, in justification of this course, that they are guilty of very serious crimes, and that they follow nefarious callings. I deny the truth of that. There probably are some out of 3,500,000 who may follow nefarious callings; but many of those who do, do so from necessity rather than from inclination. The truth is that the effect of the Ukase of 1827 has been to force the Jews into all sorts of callings they would not voluntarily have accepted. They are forbidden to traffic in the interior of Russia, they are not allowed to sell in shops or at their lodgings, nor to hawk about wares, to open workshops, nor to take apprentices in any department of trade whatever. The action of the Russian Government towards the Jews could not be better described than in the words used by Macaulay, when he made his speech in favour of removing the Jewish disabilities—

> "Bigots never fail to plead in justification of persecution the vices which persecution has engendered."

With regard to the outrages, I will give the House the figures. I believe I am understating rather than overstating them. Two hundred and one women have been violated, 56 Jews killed, 70 wounded, 20,000 rendered homeless, and £16,000,000 worth of property wrecked. No words of mine can so clearly set before the world the infamous character of the outrages at which the Russian Government have connived. As regards the Consular Reports of these atrocities, I will venture to say that I have never seen any official documents so unsatisfactory as they are. The House will see the inaccuracy of the Consular Reports from this—that whereas the bulk of the outrages took place in various outlying districts, the information respecting them almost invariably came from St. Petersburg. I fully admit that Consuls, as a rule, are extremely worthy servants of the Crown; but they are surrounded by officials of the country in which they reside, and, to a great extent, are obliged to modify their real views. In fact, our Consuls in Russia could not exist for six months in the positions they now occupy were they to put in their Reports all they know. The House will remember the case of Mr. Mitchell at St. Petersburg, who had to leave that city because his Reports were unpleasant to the Russian Government. The Consular accounts, therefore, are absolutely and totally unreliable, being nothing more than hearsay reports of what took place, gathered many hundreds of miles from the seat of the outrages themselves. Such Reports ought not to weigh beside the statements of eye witnesses and actual sufferers which have appeared in the newspapers and elsewhere. The Jews cannot, indeed, pay a sufficient tribute to the Press, both Liberal and Conservative, for having brought before the eyes of England and the eyes of the whole world these atrocious outrages. It is probable that had the Press not taken the matter up in the way it has done many of the outrages would never have been heard of, and these Consular Reports would have been received without contradiction. I may refer particularly to the refutation of the Consular Reports which has appeared in *The Times* of this morning, and which shows them to be completely untrustworthy. The evidence there published completely refutes the statements which have been made by Consul General Stanley. In Kieff there were 22 women and three girls violated. The horrors, indeed, are so terrible that it is impossible for me to relate them in this House. Are they to be passed by without a word? We have been told that this is not a matter on which the House ought to express an opinion. But the country, from North to South, and from East to West, has expressed its abomination of these outrages; and are we not to be allowed to corroborate the opinion of our constituents? Should I shrink from asking the Representatives of the people in this House to express that which their constituents have already boldly and rightly expressed? Is the House of Commons to be muzzled? There is no man on this side or on the other side of the House who would not repudiate such a course. The Prime Minister cannot fear in this Motion any Party attack—[Mr. GLADSTONE: No, no!]—and I hope he will give me his support. I do not ask the Prime Minister to make a legal claim upon Russia — no such claim, of course, exists; but Russia has connived at what has happened; she is *particeps criminis*, and morally responsible for what has happened, because she might have interfered, but did not; and I ask the Prime Minister to make a representation—a representation in the true sense of the word—which will show the Russian Government, as far as possible, that these outrages have touched the hearts of the nations of Europe—and call upon it to use all the means it possesses to avert a recurrence of them. Such a representation cannot give offence. Surely greater offence would be given to a friendly Government if such things were known to another State, and nothing said by it. The highest authority on International Law, if any were wanted—Professor Bluntschli—in his work, *Modern International Law of Civilized States*, says—

> "If the state of affairs in any country endangers the peace of Europe, or the action of such country threatens the security of the European States, or the sufferings of its population appear unbearable and unworthy of civilized Europe, such a condition is then no longer the exclusive affair of the particular country in question; but the collective European Powers are justified in urging remedial measures."

And the Prime Minister himself stated, in his pamphlet upon the Bulgarian atrocities—

> "Now, there are states of affairs in which human sympathy refuses to be confined by the rules, necessarily limited and conventional, of International Law. If any Englishman doubts that such a case may really occur, let him remember the public excitement of this country nine months ago respecting the Slave Circular of the Government, and ask himself whether we model our Slave Circulars respecting runaways on the precise provisions of International Law."

The House has now to deal with something quite as terrible as the sufferings of fugitive slaves—to deal with horrors such as have rarely disgraced any country since the Middle Ages. It has to deal with outrages sufficient to make the blood run cold, outrages which showed no respect for the innocence of childhood, no respect for mothers, no respect for wives, no respect for old age, and which sacrificed everything to bestial lust and barbarism. If those do not come under the precedent laid down by the Prime Minister in his pamphlet, I do not know when we may expect a case to arise which will. A few months ago the right hon. Gentleman rose in his place, and, in the most telling words, appealed to the House to express its deep sympathy and condolence with the Imperial Family of Russia in the loss it had sustained. The right hon. Gentleman asked us not only to express this condolence, but to condemn the terrible outrage which resulted in the death of the Emperor. I know well enough the sincerity of those words; and I ask him now to rise in his place and express his sympathy with the injuries of those who, though not high born, are yet human beings; I ask him that that meed of sympathy should be accorded in no measured words. I do not believe he would extend sympathy to the murdered Emperor which he would not give to the murdered peasant. Such an expression as I desire from the Government would not bear any resemblance to Lord John Russell's remonstrances with the Russian Government for their treatment of the Poles. Those remonstrances were founded on Treaty rights and on Treaty guarantees, and a Government like Russia would clearly refuse to answer a remonstrance which resembled a threat. But if the Government have the will, they can easily find means of getting over the diplomatic difficulties which they say stand in their way, and might use their good offices with the Russian Government. Sir, if we are to be precluded from asserting sympathy with the oppressed and condemnation of the oppressor by a fear of offending the official susceptibilities of a friendly Power, or of stimulating the blind fanaticism of a brutal and ignorant mob, we should, by a parity of reasoning, observe a complacent silence if it pleased any nation to re-establish the Inquisition, and ourselves affect a virtuous indignation should some unborn Mary re-kindle the fires of Smithfield. It cannot be a mere question of degree, for some of these Russian outrages are as bad as any of the horrors of the Inquisition. It is our duty in regard to these Russian atrocities, which outrage all decency and humanity, not to shield ourselves behind the worthless Papers of Consuls, and say we cannot interfere with the internal affairs of other nations. I do not urge upon the Government any course that may involve the country in unpleasant relations with Russia; but the opponents of the Resolution will be offering the worst possible apology for Russia if they hold that she will not listen to the counsels of humanity. In this House frequent appeals have been made on behalf of suffering humanity in every part of the world; here the Slave Trade has been abolished; here the horrors of the Neapolitan dungeons have been exposed—[Mr. Gladstone: They were not brought before the House of Commons.]—here the Polish atrocities have been denounced; here religious liberty has ever been effectively asserted; and the spirit of the House will be sadly changed if the present appeal, made in all honesty and without a trace of Party feeling, be rejected. It will be sad if the few words which I have ventured to address to the Government should be useless. I beg the House, therefore, to adopt the more generous course, and I would remind them of the words with which one who was renowned alike for eloquence and for political virtue ended his address on the Slave Trade—

> "Hear this, ye Senates, hear the truth sublime,
> He who allows oppression shares the crime."

The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving his Resolution.

Mr. SLAGG, in seconding the Resolution, said, that he was not at all desirous that the Government should suggest to the Russian Government the best method of managing their own internal affairs; but the subject, with all its sad and terrible incidents and painful characteristics, naturally excited deep feeling, and called forth the liveliest emotions of sympathy for a suffering and persecuted people. It must be borne in mind, however, that there was more than a slight distinction between the circumstances of these atrocities in Russia and the case of the Bulgarian atrocities which were denounced by the Prime Minister. In the case of Bulgaria this country was associated by Treaties and by strong ties of international policy with the Government of Turkey, and had largely spent the blood and treasure of the country in backing up Turkey, the author and perpetrator of those crimes. It behoved them, therefore, placed as they were in that position, to take some action; whereas, in the present case, no such relations existed between England and the Russian Government. The Empire of Russia was an independent Power in every sense, and any intervention or any representation which might be the outcome of the action taken in that House should be of the most delicate and cautious character. Certainly, he was not in favour of reckless interference with the affairs of foreign nations. The traditions and principles of the school in which he received his earliest political impressions were antagonistic to any policy of that description; and they would appeal in vain to the present Government to adopt any line so dangerous and fraught with so much possible mischief. But this debate would serve to elicit from those who had special information on the subject the whole truth in regard to these outrages; and it would add largely to the national sympathy which had found expression in almost every large town throughout the country. And why was it that that sympathy had been so strikingly manifested in relation to another nation? It was because the English people were bound up with the Jews in all the relations of life in the most intimate degree; and we all must admit that, as a race, they acquitted themselves in a manner which did them credit as citizens; and whether we regarded them as traders, or considered their accomplishments and high integrity, we could not help according to the Jews the highest position which it was possible for members of any community to occupy. He had the honour to represent a constituency in which a most important class of the community were composed of members of the Jewish race; and in their benevolence, their public spirit, their thorough equity of dealing, and in all their acts of citizenship, they were not excelled by the members of any other creed. It was clear, therefore, that when placed under just and fair conditions they behaved in the manner which gave strength and honour to a community; and it was only when subjected to shameful and unjust persecution that they developed those qualities of which their opponents made so much, but which were not characteristic of their race. Was it not fair to argue that if the Jews had been treated in Russia—as in other countries—such as England and France—they would have shown themselves an excellent people, as they had done in every other part of the globe? In Russia they were not allowed to dwell or travel in 24 out of the 80 Governments, and they were subject to various other vexatious disqualifications, the chief of which were that they might not hold landed property or leasehold estates, and might not employ any but Christian foremen in their businesses. It was alleged, in part extenuation of the treatment which they had received in Russia, that they occupied the position of usurers, and that they were of such grasping habits that they had produced a feeling of resentment which had culminated in these atrocious acts. It seemed to him that the accusation was a very feeble one indeed. If they were sober, thrifty, and industrious as compared with their neighbours, was it not hard that they should have to pay such a penalty for those qualities? It remained to be proved that the Jews in any part of Russia had done anything which contravened the law; and, if not, whatever their habits might be, they were clearly entitled to be protected by the law. His hon. Friend had borne testimony to the sufferings the Jewish race in Russia had undergone. It was sickening to reflect upon the crimes inflicted upon the women of a race whose women were renowned for their chastity. He did not think the purposes of the friends of the Russian Jews would be served by pushing the Government to any specific line of action, or that a division on the question would by any means promote the object they had in view. The Resolution, in fact, did not prescribe to the Government what they should do; and its supporters simply asked—and he thought it a very reasonable request—that if it should appear to the Government to be in any way possible for them to use their good offices with the Russian Government they would do so to the best of their ability. He trusted such an opportunity would soon occur, and that the Government would now give the House an assurance they would avail themselves of it. He hoped, at least, that the expression of opinion which he was sure would be elicited of deep sympathy with this suffering people would have the result of showing that the English heart still beat warmly for every oppressed nationality, without distinction of race or creed, and that they were specially concerned for a race so noble, and bound up with this country by so many ties of a strong and enduring character.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House, deeply deploring the persecution and outrages to which the Jews have been subjected in portions of the Russian Empire, trusts that Her Majesty's Government will find means, either alone or in conjunction with other Great Powers, of using their good offices with the Government of His Majesty the Czar to prevent the recurrence of similar acts of violence,"—(*Baron Henry de Worms*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Serjeant SIMON said, that he gave the hon. Gentleman opposite (Baron Henry de Worms) the credit for having acted with the best possible intentions, and for being actuated by the best motives; but he was bound to say that he considered the hon. Gentleman had assumed an enormous responsibility in separating himself from other Gentlemen in the House, professing the Jewish religion, who were as deeply interested and concerned in this question as he could be. The hon. Gentleman had stated that he felt the weight of the responsibility in taking up the cause of 3,500,000 of human beings; but he thought that the hon. Gentleman had, in the course he had taken, jeopardized rather than aided the cause he had at heart. He (Mr. Serjeant Simon) had spent all his life, not now a short one, in advocating the claims to justice of his brothers in religion. During the 14 years he had sat in the House—the hon. Gentleman opposite had sat there but two years—it would be in the knowledge of most hon. Members that he had again and again felt it his duty to bring forward the claims of his brethren in different parts of the world, and that on no occasion had he done so without the approval of both sides of the House. He regretted, however, to have to dissent entirely from the hon. Member on the present occasion. If he had thought that the House of Commons, by pronouncing an opinion, or that Her Majesty's Government, by taking action, could have done the slightest good to his suffering brethren in Russia, he would not have waited for the hon. Member opposite to bring forward this Motion, but would have taken up the matter himself, as he had taken up Jewish matters before. He knew something of the ways of the House, and he ventured to point out the danger of the course which the House was about to enter upon, and how very fraught with mischief it might be to the very persons whom it was proposed to assist. There was one point in the speech of the hon. Gentleman with which he entirely concurred. It was not possible, he thought, for language to exaggerate the evils and the outrages to which the Jews of Russia had been subjected. As a Member of the Committee appointed to collect and investigate the evidence, he was able to say that there was evidence sufficient to substantiate every charge that had been brought against the Russian mobs; and he could not hold the authorities in Russia free from blame in the matter. They had had notice of what was about to happen, and in Warsaw they allowed the atrocities to go on for three days without interruption. He asserted, further, that the repressive and exclusive laws of the country had tended to degrade a section of the Jews; and the only wonder was that, under such laws, so few of them were addicted to the practices complained of. He had seen the evidence of many of the refugees who had come over to this country, and he was able to state that there was not a single usurer or dram seller among them; they were all artizans, working men, and agriculturists; those were the victims, not people who had been earning their living by usurious transactions. In his opinion, the matter was one that could not properly be discussed in that House. He asked hon. Gentlemen to take the Motion in their hands, and to read for Russia and the Jews some particular place in this Kingdom, and to suppose that the German Government had passed a Resolution, and had called upon His Imperial Majesty the Emperor of Germany to use his influence with Her Britannic Majesty to put a stop to outrages complained of, and to prevent their recurrence. What would have been thought of such a proceeding here? What would the House of Commons have said? What would the people of England have said? Why, there would have been an outburst of indignation from one end of the country to the other. Yet that was what the House was asked to invite Her Majesty's Government to do, with regard to the internal administration of another country. The Motion was a most unwise one, and, as such, he protested against it. If such a Motion were carried, it would establish a precedent that would be most fatal, and would seriously disturb the relations between the two countries. What right had this country to pass a Vote of Censure upon a Foreign Power? No precedent could be found in favour of such a course. It had been suggested by the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg) that there was a distinction between this case and that of Bulgaria, and the hon. Member had disclaimed against the introduction into the question of any tinge of Party politics; but he (Mr. Serjeant Simon) must express his regret that he had introduced the Bulgarian Question, which had been a Party question. He protested, as an Israelite, against the hon. Gentleman dragging the unfortunate Jews and their sufferings before the House of Commons——

BARON HENRY DE WORMS rose to Order. He had never made a Party question of the matter, and had stated so distinctly. He regretted that the hon. and learned Gentleman should have taken the opportunity of his temporary absence to say that he had done so.

MR. SERJEANT SIMON said, that the hon. Member had said he did not make this a Party question; but he contended that the hon. Gentleman's zeal carried him away when he quoted the Bulgarian atrocities, and the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Gladstone) respecting them. It appeared to him very much like a defiance hurled at the head of the Prime Minister. They had no Constitutional right or warrant in International Law to pass a Resolution of this kind; and, if passed, its first effect would be to stir up the angriest and the bitterest feelings against the Jews in Russia, whose condition was bad enough now, as the atrocities had not yet ceased. We ought to rejoice at the idea that, instead of setting one Government against the other and one nation against the other, we had at this moment a Government which was in friendly relations with the Russian Government. He believed that in the friendly relations of the two Governments would be found the best security for the future of the Jews in Russia; but if we assumed a tone of remonstrance, or asserted a right to dictate to Russia how she should govern her Jewish subjects, he believed that the first people who would suffer would be the Jews themselves. Let the House consider the mischief that this Motion might even now do. Pass the Resolution, and they would see at once what would follow—angry feelings between the two countries; or let it be withdrawn or rejected. and how would the matter stand? It would go forth to Russia that an appeal had been made to the House of Commons to express sympathy with the Jews, and that the House of Commons had refused its sympathy. Everyone knew that the Russian Press was not like the English Press—that it was not a free Press. The decision of the House of Commons would go forth as a refusal of the expression of its abhorrence of the atrocities which had been committed. There was no chance of a report of this debate reaching a Russian paper, the reasons would not be made known in Russia, and the Russian people would simply have the fact that the House of Commons had rejected the Motion. On the first day of the Session he addressed a Question to the Prime Minister, not for the purpose of inviting diplomatic interference, but in order to enable the right hon. Gentleman to dispel many false ideas which were afloat in the Jewish community. There were people who believed that Parliament could do anything, and that the Prime Minister could dictate his own will to Russia. Deeming it desirable that such false ideas should be dispelled, he asked the right hon. Gentleman whether it was possible for Her Majesty's Government in any manner to exercise its friendly influence with the Russian Government on behalf of the Jews. The right hon. Gentleman, in reply, expressed as a man the pain and horror with which he regarded the treatment of the Jews in Russia; and he explained how detrimental it would be to the Jews themselves if the Government were to assume anything like diplomatic action on their behalf. On the same evening Lord Granville, in "another place," made a similar statement, pointing out the difficulty of diplomatic interference, and saying that he could make no promise even of private interference. Lord Granville was followed by Lord Salisbury; and he should have thought that the hon. Member for Greenwich would have paid some deference to the opinion of that statesman, who was now at the head of his Party. What did Lord Salisbury say? ["Order!"] He was not speaking of the House of Lords, but of "another place."

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. and learned Member is citing a speech made in the House of Lords, and has named the Peer who delivered it. He is clearly out of Order.

MR. SERJEANT SIMON said, he should be sorry to commit a breach of the Rules of the House. Lord Salisbury expressed—["Order!"] He would not name him. A distinguished nobleman, making a speech on the subject, said he quite concurred with the noble Earl.

MR. J. G. TALBOT rose to Order. The hon. and learned Member was now citing a passage verbatim from a speech delivered in the other House.

MR. SERJEANT SIMON said, he was citing the statement of a distinguished nobleman, who said he quite concurred with the noble Earl that official, and even unofficial, representations in matters of this kind were of doubtful utility. That was said by the Head of the Party to which the hon. Member for Greenwich owed allegiance. He further said—

> "If in the discussion of this subject or at any meetings those who represent in this country the political Party to which I belong have thought it, on the whole, better not to make a prominent appearance, it is because we have been actuated by much the same feelings as those which guide the noble Earl. We were afraid that the motive for our interference might be mistaken, and that this, which is a question of pure humanity, might be mixed up with others which are purely political questions; and we thought it better, on the whole, that the voice of the people of England should be heard in some less official form than it can receive within the walls of this building."—[3 *Hansard*, cclxvi. 229.]

The noble Peer to whom he was referring, then, not only endorsed the views of Lord Granville and the Prime Minister, but he went further—he thought that even unofficial representations were unadvisable, and he deprecated anything being said or done within the walls of Parliament, lest it might assume an official character. Therefore, he thought hon. Members opposite would not consider he was taking an extraordinary course if he deprecated such a discussion as they had to-night. It was, he should have thought, the very A, B, C of International Law that one independent country should not interfere with the internal affairs of another country; and, notwithstanding the precedents which had been cited, he ventured to say, without fear of contradiction, that there was not in political and international history a single precedent to justify this Motion. He hoped the House would consider that on a subject of this kind his opinion was entitled to some consideration. He did not think that the hon. Member was supported by any amount of Jewish opinion outside the House. On the contrary, persons of position in the Jewish community, to whose opinion weight ought to be attached, did not wish this subject to be brought forward. Numerous applications had been made to him as to the desirability of getting up a requisition, requesting the hon. Member not to proceed in the course he had adopted. He trusted that the House, having regard not only to the considerations to which he had alluded, but to what he believed was the real opinion of the Jewish community in this country, would not accede to the Motion.

MR. GLADSTONE: I think, Sir, in the state of opinion which prevails, especially among the Members of the Jewish community in this House, and considering the very difficult circumstances in which they find themselves placed, it will be advantageous that I should take an early opportunity of saying something on the part of the Government. And, Sir, with regard to the hon. Gentleman opposite, I assure him that I entirely acquit him—indeed, he does not need any acquittal—of being actuated by that Party feeling which he has laboriously disclaimed. Every word of his speech was conceived in a manner which, whether I might regret its having been delivered or not, proved, I think, that it flowed direct from his heart. On the other hand, I must say that I think there is very great force in what has been said by my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Dewsbury (Mr. Serjeant Simon). It is not, I think, possible for the House, wisely or usefully, to adopt a Motion of this kind. On the contrary, I go the whole length of my hon. and learned Friend, and I am firmly convinced that its adoption would be positively injurious to the interests of those in whose behalf it is brought forward. But, on the other hand, the negativing or the withdrawal of such a Motion does place us, as my hon. and learned Friend has said, in a position which may be misunderstood. When the result only is known without the discussion and the explanations that have taken place, it does place us in the position of being liable to what would certainly be gross misapprehension—namely, that we do not feel deeply on behalf of those whom the hon. Gentleman represents. The hon. Gentleman says that the Consular Reports are, in his view, no evidence. I am not surprised if, on an occasion of this kind, which appeals very directly to the feelings of all men, and most of all to those connected with the particular religion of the sufferers—I am not surprised if some exaggeration here and there should creep into the views that they take of some of those cases. I am not prepared, Sir—though I will not enter into details—I am not prepared to admit, and I have no reason to believe, that these Consular Reports, which are made by responsible men of character and ability, deserve the epithet which has been applied to them. At the same time, I enter into no details—it is not necessary to do so—as to the accuracy of this statement or of that. Again, I am bound to say, Sir, that I am not prepared to assert or to impute connivance to the Russian Government. On the contrary, I am bound to believe—and I know of no reason which would disincline me to believe—that the Emperor of Russia and his Government regard these outrages with the same feelings as we contemplate them ourselves. Whether or not, as stated by my hon. Friend, the zeal of the subordinate and intermediate agents between the Supreme Government at the seat of power and the sufferers, who ought to be the active agents of authority in preventing outrage, has slackened, or even in certain cases turned into connivance and satisfaction, that is a matter upon which I do not think it would be advantageous for me to enter. There can be no doubt that deeds which are terrible and atrocious have been committed on a scale which, whether it be the largest that is supposed by some—or the most contracted that is alleged by others—still constitutes a dreadful and terrible fact in the history of any country, and of the civilization of mankind. That is quite enough to say, so far as the statements of the hon. Gentleman are concerned; but I may be permitted to add, what I think we must all feel, that if we are in this place an Assembly almost uniformly professing Christianity, and if we as Christians believe, as we do believe, that it has been part of the office and effect of Christianity to establish a new and a far higher standard of civilization and humanity, then we must also feel that those deeds, so far as they have been done, being done by Christians, are more guilty, and not less guilty, than if they had been done by persons not professing that religion. Now, Sir, that is all that I intend to say, and all that my duty, I think, permits me to say, upon the nature of those dreadful occurrences to which this Motion refers. But I am bound to say that it is not from discussions of this kind that the full information can be obtained which my hon. Friend who seconded the Motion seemed to anticipate. Her Majesty's Government is not in possession of full information on the subject. Moreover, it is not possible that they could be in possession of such full information. They have not that international title which alone could warrant them in employing agents for the purpose of obtaining a competent knowledge and command of facts. I agree with the hon. Gentleman opposite, that there are cases for which the stipulations of International Law do not adequately provide. I can easily appreciate the views of those who think that when great outrages are committed under the impulse of popular fury, such a case has arisen as can hardly be regarded according to the strict views of International Law. I can agree with my hon. Friend again in the compliment he has paid to the Press on this occasion. The function of the Press is to awaken public opinion without official responsibility. It is quite evident that those by whom the Press is worked enjoy immense advantages on an occasion of this kind; because there is a chance, or at least a hope, that their representations may be judged according to their merits, and may escape the odious imputation of being due to national jealousy and a desire for unwarrantable interference. But the hon. Member must, I think, observe that there is no possible form in which this House could make an Address to the Crown upon a subject of this kind which would not lead to mischief. It is true that the words "good offices" are capable of a wide signification. It is quite true, also, that a judicious representative of the British Crown may have useful opportunities of touching upon subjects of this kind, and that it is his duty to make use of such opportunities; but, Sir, they must be wholly and entirely detached from all public, diplomatic, and Parliamentary action. The House cannot move in this matter without a serious risk of doing mischief. Those outrages which have occurred are due to popular fury and prejudice; and you must leave the responsible governors of the country to deal with it as they best can, without the intervention of a Government not based upon any international title. The fact of our being a party in the case would be certain to cause a strong reaction, not merely in the minds of those who have committed the outrages, but likewise on the part of a much larger number, who, while, perhaps, not sympathizing with the outrages themselves, yet are jealously averse to anything that may seem like an invasion of national independence. So you run the risk of bringing into the field against you those whose natural place is not to be among the approvers of these misdeeds. The hon. Gentleman has done me the honour to refer to conduct of mine in another contingency, which he thinks more or less resembles this. My conduct in the case of Bulgaria, I believe myself, was not based upon Party spirit, for at the time my proceedings commenced I really did not believe there was any difference of feeling between the two great Parties in the country on the subject. It may have been right, or it may have been wrong;

but it was based upon a conviction of a most distinct character, which upon every occasion I was careful to state. It was this—that we had, by the Crimean War and the Peace of Paris, deprived the subject races in Turkey of the benefits which previously they were entitled to expect and to claim from the intervention of Russia on their behalf, that right of Russia to intervene being founded upon a previous Treaty between us and Turkey. We destroyed it for the sake of the general peace and security of Europe. I always contended, from the time of the Peace of Paris, and at the time of the Peace of Paris Lord Palmerston admitted, that we could not possibly divest ourselves of the responsibility which had previously been the responsibility of the Russian Government, and which, in consequence of the Crimean War, became a European responsibility and a European right. That was the ground upon which the whole of my argument and proceedings were founded. It may have been right, or it may have been wrong; but it is impossible for it to be alleged in the present case. The hon. Gentleman has referred to the case of Poland. There was a case in which there was something in the nature of a European title to intervene and remonstrate; but I am bound to say that our remonstrances, although joined in by the other Powers of Europe, were a total and absolute failure. What amount of harm they did I am not able to say; but good, unquestionably, they did not do in the smallest degree. The hon. Member, by a not unnatural error, following upon some statement which he may have read in a public journal, supposed that I appealed to this House with regard to the great mischiefs, the terrible mischiefs—though of a totally different character—that at one time prevailed in the Kingdom of Naples. Sir, I most carefully and studiously avoided any illusion to public authority, any appeal of a hostile kind on that subject. Lord Aberdeen, united as he was with me in friendship and affection, and being possessed of great influence over Continental Governments, did me the great favour to endeavour through the Austrian Government to give friendly effect to my remonstrances and statements; and when he entirely failed, as I think, in that purpose, my appeal was made, not to any Government, not to the House of Commons—never did I say one word in this House on the subject—but it was made entirely to the public opinion of Europe through the medium of the Press, to which the hon. Gentleman has, on this occasion, paid a just compliment. I apologize to the House for mixing so small a matter as the rules of my own previous conduct with an important matter of this kind. The matter is undoubtedly important; and I hope the impression will not go forth that this question is viewed in any portion of this House, or in any portion of this country, with indifference. I believe, however, we should be most unwise if we led the Russian Government to suppose that we looked upon that Government as sympathizing with the perpetrators of these outrages. On the contrary, I hope the Russian Government will believe that we give them credit for every desire to put down and to prevent conduct which is a disgrace to civilization and humanity; and that the Russian Government will rather be encouraged by the assurance of our sympathy to use more and more vigorous efforts for the purpose of securing that great end. Such is the course I believe it wise and necessary for us to pursue. I do not found myself on the question of strict right; I will not say how far the strict rights of human nature might warrant us in going, if you mean by those strict rights the right of remonstrating and of expressing indignation against terrible misdeeds. But I say we shall be mistaken if we place the question on the ground of strict right. That which I wish to look to is that to which my hon. and learned Friend has addressed himself. Can we, by a Motion of this kind, do good to the persons for whom we wish to procure benefit? Do we not, on the contrary, run the most serious risk—nay, almost incur the certainty—of doing mischief by creating a re-action unfavourable to their interests? That is the ground on which I entreat the hon. Gentleman and the House to believe we act when we decline to become parties to any action of the House of Commons for such a purpose. On the former occasions, to which reference has been made, both my noble Friend (Earl Granville) and myself have been careful to point out the only mode in which we believed, on favourable opportunity, friendly counsel might be given with regard to matters of this kind. Anything beyond that will tend to defeat its own purpose. It is not because we disapprove of the purpose, not because we do not sympathize with the purpose, not because we undervalue its importance, but because we believe that an injudicious step will tend absolutely to defeat it, that I hope that this Motion will not be pressed on the attention of the House.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I think the language of the Prime Minister is in conformity with that which we should expect from him. No one can doubt, after what he has said, that he and his Colleagues share completely in the feelings which all Englishmen must have as to the terrible stories which have come to us respecting the sufferings and the persecution of the Jews in Russia. I must say I regretted to hear such language as was used by the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Serjeant Simon). When I reflect upon the many occasions on which the hon. and learned Gentleman, in the course of the last Parliament, pressed upon the late Government the claims of the Jewish population in Roumania, for instance, and used to urge upon us the duty and the necessity of taking strong measures for the purpose of procuring their protection, I own I did not expect to have heard the language which the hon. and learned Gentleman applied to my hon. Friend behind me (Baron Henry de Worms). Whether my hon. Friend is, or is not, taking the best course for the purpose of obtaining that which he desires, some interposition which may diminish the sufferings of his co-religionists, at least anybody would admit that it is with the purest feelings of humanity, and with the most natural feelings, which we must all respect, that he has brought forward this case, and that he has done so with absolute freedom from anything like Party spirit. The hon. and learned Gentleman comes up and tells us we must not compare this case with that of the Bulgarian outrages, because they were brought forward in a Party spirit. In saying this, it was, I think, an admission for which the right hon. Gentleman would not thank him——

Mr. Serjeant SIMON rose to Order. He had not, he remarked, said that the Bulgarian case was brought forward as a Party question. His statement was that the hon. Gentleman had referred to Bulgaria in a Party spirit.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: My hon. Friend referred to the Bulgarian case for the purpose of justifying himself in what he was doing by the authority of the Prime Minister, who, as he was willing to believe, and who, as he stated to the House, called attention to the outrages and atrocities in Bulgaria, not at all in a Party spirit, but because he believed it was a duty he owed to humanity. The Prime Minister now has endorsed that view, and has entirely justified my hon. Friend in the spirit in which he has referred to that case. The Prime Minister distinguishes between the two cases, and it may or may not be a just distinction which he draws; but certainly the spirit in which my hon. Friend the Member for Greenwich has brought this subject forward is distinctly and entirely apart from anything in the nature of a Party move. I feel, and I think the House must feel, the very great delicacy of the position in which the House is placed. Everybody, I presume, shares in the feelings of horror and disgust at the stories which have reached us, and which, I am afraid, it is hardly possible to doubt are substantially correct. Everybody feels, and everybody desires, if it be possible, to relieve in some way the sufferings which are being endured. The question is—how can we best take steps to accomplish that object? I was sorry, and rather surprised, to hear something said in opposition to the properly-worded suggestion of the Prime Minister; we are assured by the Prime Minister—we all feel convinced it must be so—that the Russian Government could have no sympathy with, could have no toleration for, could have no other feeling than that of indignant anger and grief at the injuries which have been perpetrated in some portions of their dominions. But it is said that there are places in which the Government may be powerless to stop that which is going on, or places in which the agents of the Government are, perhaps, countenancing, or rather not restraining, or doing worse, without the knowledge of the Imperial Government itself. If that be the case, does it not seem reasonable that any information Her Majesty's Government might obtain from their

Consuls, and which might refer to the conduct of subordinates that would otherwise be kept from the knowledge of the Imperial Government, might be communicated to the Russian Government, which, if thus made aware of what is going on, might take measures to restrain or control its agents? It seems to me that it might very possibly be of advantage to those who are sufferers that any communications which Her Majesty's Government may have received, and which they can rely upon, should be placed in such manner as would, at least in the most informal manner—my hon. Friend does not insist on any official interference—but should be placed in the most informal and most friendly manner before those who can make use of them. But it is said that any interference, any remarks, any expression of sympathy with these people may cause them increase of suffering by provoking re-actionary feelings of national independence on the part of Russia. That I hope is a slander on the Russian Government; I can hardly believe that such an argument would be tolerated by it. What is the position in which we stand? Undoubtedly there have been many cases in which the Government of this country has more or less officially called attention to, or taken steps to endeavour to mitigate, the sufferings of the peoples of other countries. We are told it depends a good deal upon our actual relations—our claims to speak in consequence of Treaty rights. I scarcely know how that was possible in the case of Roumania; I am not aware that there was any Treaty right in that case. In the case of Naples, we are told that though nothing was done in the House, yet some kind of friendly influence was used to bring about a mitigation of the sufferings of the people. Now, let me ask the Prime Minister, is the thing worthy of consideration? You have in one of the latest of great international settlements of Europe, the Treaty of Berlin, an Article in reference to the protection of the Armenian subjects of Turkey. Russia is a party to the Treaty; and suppose you had occasion to call on the Turkish Government to take steps for the improvement of the condition of its Armenian subjects, what would be the position in which Russia would be placed if it could be retorted—"You are speaking for the benefit of the Armenians; but look what is being done to your Jewish subjects in your own dominions." It would weaken the effect of an European remonstrance on behalf of Armenia if one of the parties to the Treaty giving the right to remonstrate was open to such a retort as that. I cannot help thinking that without asking for anything in the nature of official interference, or anything in the way of remonstrances that would give offence, it might be possible —and if possible it would certainly be most desirable—for Her Majesty's Government to take some step which would serve to mitigate the condition of these unfortunate sufferers. The right hon. Gentleman says there is great inconvenience in any course which may be suggested with that object. There may be inconvenience—in fact, the situation is one so terrible that it is almost impossible to touch it without meeting something in the nature of inconvenience. But what I am quite sure of is this—that my hon. Friend has brought the matter forward with no kind of object of embarrassing Her Majesty's Government in the slightest degree, but with the sole and simple end of endeavouring to do good to those whose cause he was pleading; he has acted, as he told us in the beginning of his speech, under a very considerable sense of responsibility; but he entirely subordinated the mode of proceeding to the great object that he had in view; and if he receives from the Government any encouragement to believe that this matter is one on which they will be prepared to do whatever upon reflection seems to them to be possible, he would, I am sure, be the last man to desire to bring about the appearance of discord in this House by pressing such a Motion to a division. But it should be distinctly understood that the Government entirely recognize the spirit in which the Motion has been brought forward, and are prepared, as far as may be possible, and in such a way as they may find by their own experience to be the best, to do anything they can for the mitigation of such great sufferings. I know I have correctly described the spirit in which my hon. Friend brought forward his Motion; and I earnestly trust that it may be found possible, consistently with the object which he has in view, to prevent anything in the nature of a hostile vote.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, seeing the nature of the question, he thought it better not to put contrary views on the accuracy of the parables which had been drawn between the conduct of the Government in Opposition and the conduct of the Government when not in Opposition. The right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government had re-asserted his convictions with regard to the motives that actuated him upon the Bulgarian Question; and, although on his mind it was still vivid, or appeared to be vivid, that the right hon. Gentleman drew a broad distinction between atrocities practised upon Christians and atrocities practised upon Mussulmans, on principle he still thought that it was the nature of the right hon. Gentleman to devote himself with undivided zeal to one side of the question, and the earnestness with which he devoted himself to its contemplation had a tendency to prevent him from realizing all that was concerned on the other side. He (Mr. O'Donnell) need not say that he most warmly and earnestly sympathized with the hon. Member for Greenwich in bringing forward this subject. As a member of the Catholic community, he was perfectly certain that he expressed the feelings of the entire Catholic community in Great Britain and Ireland in assuring the hon. Member for Greenwich of the cordial sympathy of all his co-religionists. The Head of the Catholic Church in this Kingdom had already, in a manner far beyond his power to emulate, given expression to his deep and warm sympathy with the persecuted Jews. But while expressing his very deep sympathy with the object which the hon. Member for Greenwich had in view, he (Mr. O'Donnell) could not but see that this Resolution was divisible into two parts; that one part of this Resolution proposed that they should express their sympathy, and that the other suggested that the British Government should enter upon a course of remonstrance with the Russian Government for the protection of the Jews in Russia. With the first part of the Resolution he entirely agreed; but when the hon. Member for Greenwich asked them to initiate a movement of remonstrance with the Russian Government, he might say frankly that he did not think, in the first place, that there was much in the character of the British Government to entitle it to any special moral respect at the hands of the Russian Government when they had to deal with the ill-treatment of subject populations. This was not a subject with which he wished to deal at any length; but, if he were disposed, he could easily show that there was not a disability inflicted upon the Jews in Russia which was not at this moment inflicted upon vastly larger masses of Her Majesty's subjects in one part or another of the British Empire; and the times had been when infamies hardly inferior to those perpetrated on the Jews of Russia had been committed in Jamaica, in India, and in Ireland by persons who, if not actual agents, were suspiciously like agents of the British Government of the day. The first consideration, therefore, to be kept in view on an occasion like the present was whether any official remonstrance, such as that now suggested on behalf of the suffering Jews, would be calculated to benefit or to injure those whom it was intended to serve. It might elicit a retaliatory despatch intimating that the British Government was at times more addicted to preaching than to practising all the Commandments. When, moreover, it was borne in mind that popular feeling in Russia was directed almost as strongly against the English as against the Teutonic race, he thought Her Majesty's Government ought to hesitate, out of regard for the interests of the Russian Jews alone, to assume the part of their special protectors. Not only might they expose themselves to a sharp *tu quoque* despatch from the Russian Chancellerie with no practical alternative but quietly to pocket the affront, but it would increase the unpopularity of the Jewish race in Russia if it was supposed to be covered by the *ægis* of England. A moral remonstrance on behalf of the Russian Jews from the Liberal Government would have no backbone behind it; and he strongly suspected that even a Conservative Ministry would think twice before picking a quarrel with Russia in such a matter. That question having, however, been raised in the House, it would be worse than a lame and impotent conclusion if the House either abstained from expressing any opinion upon it or rejected the Motion of the hon. Member for Greenwich. He thought there was abundant power in the hands of the Jews to put down such outrages as these. He could not but remember that in the hands of the Jews themselves rested the control of the Money Markets of the world; and, so long as that was the fact, a Government like Russia must depend largely upon the favour of the rulers of the Money Market. Of course, there might be no objection on the part of the British Government to remonstrate with a weak Government; and he hoped those on the Government side of the House who saw the immense difficulties of Governmental remonstrances with a strong Government would recognize the advisability of recording some emphatic declaration of their sympathy with the persecuted Jews, and their abhorrence of the cruelty with which they had been treated.

MR. ARTHUR COHEN said, that there were two questions which they had to consider. The principal question, perhaps, was, whether the course which his hon. Friend had invited the House to take was likely to conduce to the benefit of the Jews in Russia? But there was also another question—namely, whether that course was or was not consistent with precedents, with International Law, and with the usage and the dignity of the House? He need hardly say that he sympathized with the sufferings of his co-religionists in Russia. He had done his best to assist the efforts of the Russian Jewish Committee, presided over by his hon. Friend the Member for Aylesbury (Sir Nathaniel de Rothschild). It ought to be observed that his hon. Friend the Member for Greenwich did not bring forward his Motion with the sanction of that Committee. His hon. Friend brought it forward in opposition to the wishes of every Member of the Jewish persuasion in the House, with the exception of himself. They believed that the adoption of this Motion would seriously endanger and prejudice the position of their co-religionists in Russia. Public meetings had been held all over the country, in which men of all classes, creeds, and Parties joined, and to which our two great Universities of Oxford and Cambridge had given the weight of their influence and co-operation. They had expressed their detestation of those outrages, and declared that if Russia wished to retain the respect of England she must perform the primary duty of a civilized country—she must afford protection to all her citizens alike, without distinction of race or creed. He believed that nothing within the walls of Parliament could add to the effect produced by that remarkable manifestation of public feeling and opinion; and was afraid that much might take place here that would mar the good effect which had already been so produced, which might needlessly irritate the Russian Government, and still further excite the resentment and animosity of the Russian people against those 3,500,000 Jews dispersed over the Empire, who were now so completely at the mercy of the Russians. But he altogether declined to consider this question solely with reference to the interests of the Russian Jews. As an Englishman and as a Member of Parliament, he felt bound to take special care that his feelings and sympathies did not lead him to support any Motion which was inconsistent with precedent, with international usage, or with the dignity of Parliament. It appeared to him that there were only three cases in which it was proper for Parliament or the Government to protest against the conduct of a Foreign Government with reference to its own subjects. These cases were—first, where England became a party to a Treaty which guarded the interests of a people subject to a Foreign Government; secondly, where England was bound by the conditions of a Treaty, or by a regard to her own interests, to protect the independence of another foreign country; and, thirdly, where a Government instigated or actively encouraged atrocities of a very flagrant character. In this last case humanity and civilization might compel the Government to protest; but even in this case no protest ought to be made unless the Government were ready to follow it up by act or deed. Unless it could be followed up by act or deed, it was sure to impair the dignity and weaken the influence of the Government and of Parliament; and it was likely to injure, delude, and deceive the people on whose behalf it was made. As far as he could judge, there was no evidence proving that the Russian Government had instigated those persecutions. [Baron HENRY DE WORMS: Oh, oh!] If the Russian Government were, in fact, guilty of the political crime apparently now imputed to it by the hon. Member, then it seemed to him that the Motion he had brought forward was singularly feeble and inadequate. In such a case the House, if it took any action, could, in his opinion, do nothing less than call upon Her Majesty's Government to make use of the European Concert and formally protest against persecution and outrages which were a disgrace to civilization. There was, however, in his opinion, no sufficient proof justifying this House to prefer so grave a charge against the Russian Government. Under these circumstances, the Motion before the House was inopportune and inexpedient. For his own part, he felt sure that the noble Lord the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the Prime Minister, who had both taken so active a part in the political emancipation of the Jews of this country, would exert all their influence with the Russian Government with a view of improving the position of the Jews in the Empire of Russia. For these reasons, he should feel it his duty to withhold his support from the Motion before the House.

Mr. BOURKE said, he thought that this was a subject which it was desirable the House should approach with as much unanimity as possible. The more unanimous they were on that occasion the more powerful would be the result of the very interesting discussion they had had that evening. He was quite certain that when the remarks of his hon. Friend were published and known throughout this country and the world, they would carry with them universal sympathy. Practically, he thought that the House was unanimous upon the merits of this question. It would, therefore, be a most deplorable thing if for any reason the value of that unanimity should be lessened. His right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote) had invited Her Majesty's Government to say a little more than had fallen from the Prime Minister; and it was hoped that before the debate closed the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs would be in a position to give that additional assurance, or at least clear up what was obscure in the words of the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government. He was quite sure that his hon. Friend the Member for Greenwich would think that his object had been attained, and would be willing to withdraw his Motion, if the hon. Baronet could inform the House that this subject of the Jews would receive the attention of English diplomatists abroad, and that those who represented England in foreign countries would bring it to the notice of the Governments to which they were respectively accredited. He did not ask the Government to make any promise; all he asked them to do was to lay down the proposition that this was a subject which English diplomatists could bring before the notice of foreign Governments. If that were so, their diplomatists would, no doubt, take the opportunity, whenever a good one arose, of bringing the subject to the notice of Foreign Governments. He hoped the hon. Baronet would be able to give that assurance, that he would go that length, which was certainly not one much further than an influential Member of the Government in "another place" had gone. Under such circumstances he should advise his hon. Friend to withdraw his Motion.

Mr. ECROYD said, nothing could be further from his wish than to introduce into this debate anything which had, in the slightest degree, a Party aspect. But he was glad the subject had been brought forward, for that great and free Parliament had ever been the chosen arena in which were debated questions which touched the cause of freedom, the interests of humanity, and the immunity of oppressed races from unjust persecution. In his opinion, the greatest object to be attained by the present discussion was the emphatic expression of the undoubtedly unanimous opinion of the people of this country on the subject. He hoped that Her Majesty's Government would be prepared, consistently with the limitations laid down by the Prime Minister, to put in motion that wise, judicious, and, it might be, quiet, unpretending action of her trusted agents to which the right hon. Gentleman had alluded. He trusted that no result detrimental to the interests of the Jews would follow from the debate; and that the feeling attributed by the Prime Minister to the Emperor of Russia might insure a cordial reception of those delicate and prudent suggestions which he hoped would be made. He felt that, in one respect, the Jews occupied a position which gave them a special claim on their sympathy, and demanded the exercise of whatever influence they might rightly be able to use on their behalf. He would not speak of their great interest as Christian men in the Jewish race and religion, or of the debt of gratitude which the world owed to that remarkable people. The Jews had no localized nationality, no Government that could speak in their name, or appeal in the name of humanity to the various nations for better treatment and greater enjoyment of personal freedom; and on that account he thought they had a right to expect that England, who had always been foremost in the promotion of freedom in every country, should especially speak on their behalf. He trusted that this debate would have the effect of placing before the public of Europe a temperate expression of sympathy with the Jewish people in their affliction dissociated from all trace of Party feeling.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that he could no longer defer rising to answer the appeal that had been made to him by hon. Members opposite. It was quite impossible for Her Majesty's Government to go beyond the ground that they had taken up in reference to this subject on former occasions. As the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Bourke) had referred to the words which had been used on behalf of the Government in "another place" in relation to this question, he now begged to repeat them for the information of the House. They were as follows:—

> "If we apply this rule to ourselves, it is perfectly impossible to apply another rule to other countries; and, even putting aside the question of right, I believe that nothing would be more inexpedient than to do so. We should either irritate the foreign Governments or weaken them with regard to their own subjects in dealing with the question. It has been strongly suggested, by some who acknowledge that diplomatic interference would be a mistake, that we should privately and confidentially use our influence on this point. Now, I imagine that no person placed in the position which I happen to occupy would not avail himself of any proper opportunity, when it was likely to have effect, to refer in an unofficial manner to any subject that affects the good of humanity or the friendly relations between the two countries, although the question might not be properly one for diplomatic interference. But I beg to point out that if such a Minister were either to boast he had done so, or publicly promise he would do so, it would at once entirely change the character of unofficial and private communications, which sometimes, though not always, may be of the greatest value."—[3 *Hansard*, cclxvi. 227.]

Those were the views which were expressed on this subject on behalf of Her Majesty's Government in "another place" on a former occasion, and Her Majesty's Government saw no reason for departing from them now. He trusted that that language would commend itself to those who supported this Motion, because it had fully satisfied the Representatives of the same Party in "another place." Having made those remarks, he should not have further trespassed upon the attention of the House had it not been for the fact that in the course of the very able speech of the Mover of the Amendment there were some reflections made upon the character of the Consular Reports which might have been omitted. The hon. Member spoke of those Reports as being worthless Papers, that the information they contained was untrustworthy, having been founded upon hearsay evidence picked up at St. Petersburg. Those were very strong expressions for the hon. Member to have used with regard to those Reports; and he could assure the House that the charges they contained were not well founded. It was perfectly true that the outrages were only at first referred to in the very brief telegrams that had been received from their Consular Agents in Russia, and that the detailed Reports did not reach this country until several months afterwards. This delay in the forwarding of the Reports was inevitable, inasmuch as they had no Consular Representatives in those places where the worst outrages occurred. But when the hon. Member said that the information contained in those Reports was utterly untrustworthy, and was founded upon hearsay evidence picked up in St. Petersburg, he must say that he was mistaken. Thus Colonel Maude had been an eye-witness of the outrages at Warsaw, Consul General Stanley of those at Odessa, Vice Consul Lowe of those at Berdiansk, and Vice Consul Wagstaff of those at Nicolaieff, while Lieutenant Law, who had been their Vice Consul at St. Petersburg, had been sent all over Podolia, where the worst outrages had been committed. They had the evidence of four of their Consuls General or Vice Consuls who had been eye-witnesses of the outrages. The hon. Member was not justified in saying that those Reports were untrustworthy. Not only had Her Majesty's Government received Colonel Maude's Report, but its Members had also had the opportunity of speaking to him several times on the subject. With regard to the statement of the hon. Member that all persons in that House were of the same opinion as to the character of these outrages, he wished to point out that the Prime Minister, in reply to the hon. and learned Member for Dewsbury (Mr. Serjeant Simon), on February 9, had said—

> "My hon. and learned Friend has called my attention to a subject to which no man of ordinary feeling can refer without sentiments of the utmost pain and horror;"

while that evening the right hon. Gentleman had referred to the outrages as "deeds which are terrible and atrocious," and as "deeds which are a disgrace to Christianity and humanity." He concurred with the hon. and learned Members for Southwark and Dewsbury (Mr. Cohen and Mr. Serjeant Simon), who spoke with great weight and authority as Representatives of the Jewish community, when they expressed the opinion that anything like serious representation by Her Majesty's Government to the Government of Russia on the subject would be more likely to do harm than good. He had certainly been rather surprised to hear the hon. Member opposite cite the instance of our interference in the cases of Roumania and of Bulgaria as being in point, because they were totally distinct from the present case. In the former case they were about to confer certain privileges upon the country; and in the latter they had Treaty rights which did not exist in the present case. But with regard to the general principles which should actuate a Government in making representations to a Foreign Power, he would merely refer to the view taken by Lord Derby when he held the Office of Conservative Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. He had then said—

> "We must not suppose that in a day we can overcome the rooted prejudices of years. For my own part, I have great confidence, not so much in diplomatic representations, as in the pressure of general European opinion, which as nations come more and more into contact with each other is brought to bear on every community and people."

He need not endorse the eloquent words of the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Slagg) with regard to the position of the Jews in this country, and the opinion he had formed as to the beneficial effects of a policy of toleration in developing the full intellectual powers of the Jewish race. Her Majesty's Government had always expressed those views in the face of Europe; but there was a great difference between holding those views and interfering in the internal affairs of a foreign country. All the precedents of interference abroad had been precedents which it was not well to follow, for interference with Spain in 1848 had been severely attacked by the late Lord Beaconsfield; and it was now the general opinion of those who looked back to the time that their interference on that occasion somewhat justified the rebuff they received from the Government of Spain. It would also be remembered that their interference in Naples in 1858 was not productive of satisfactory results. It had been declared by the Representatives of the Jewish community of England—and in that declaration he himself agreed—that the acceptance of the Motion by Her Majesty's Government was not calculated, on the whole, to do any good to the suffering Jews in Russia; and he therefore hoped, after the assurance that had been given, that the hon. Gentleman would withdraw his Motion.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS agreed to withdraw his Motion, on the assurance that the Government would do their utmost to make such representations as were possible within the lines laid down by a noble Lord in "another place;" and he ventured to hope that the expression of opinion they had heard that day, so far from doing harm, would, on the contrary, do good to the cause they all had at heart.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, the tone of the Prime Minister's speech that night presented a remarkable contrast to that which he adopted four or five years ago in regard to outrages in another part of Europe. What were the facts? The State of Russia was one in which no expression of opinion, no Resolution, however forcible, that was passed by the House of Commons could be known to the Russian people except by the will and authorization of the Russian Government. A complete cloud of ignorance was spread over the whole of the Russian Empire; therefore the argument used by our Government, that a Resolution of this kind would do harm to the Jews, fell to the ground, unless they confessed that they were afraid that the Czar and his Ministers might be so wicked as deliberately to make use of such a Resolution in order to excite the population against the Jews. The Russian Government was a barbarous and unscrupulous one, just as the Russians were a barbarous and ignorant people. These atrocities were carried out with the connivance of high Russian officials, and with the Russian troops looking on. Indeed, in one case a Governor, who ought to have been held responsible and punished for them, was actually promoted. What was the position of the House with reference to this Resolution? He should be sorry if the hon. Member for Greenwich withdrew it, for if he did not mean to press it he ought not to have put it on the Paper. The hon. Member had ascertained the opinion of the Prime Minister on a previous occasion, and had been told that the Government considered that the Resolution would do harm to the Jews if it was brought forward. If the hon. Gentleman did divide, and hon. Gentlemen opposite voted against him, they would find hereafter that, so far as their constituencies were concerned, it was a most unfortunate step for them to take. He had already asked what was the position of the House of Commons with respect to this subject? They deplored these atrocities, and they saw that the Resolution did not propose to censure the Russian Government. It merely expressed horror at these outrages, which the Prime Minister stated the Russian Government itself deplored, although he (Mr. Ashmead - Bartlett) very much doubted it. The Resolution simply asked the Government to make representations to the Russian Government on the question at the time they thought proper and in the way they thought best. But let it be known that the House of Commons was not afraid to agree to a Resolution condemning atrocities which were a disgrace to humanity. What would the nation say? Why, it would be felt that the Government were afraid to make these official representations for fear if they made any representations to the Russian Government, the latter would reply to the Prime Minister—"Physician, heal thyself; how is it that you are pressing us to maintain order and peace, and to respect life and property, when in an integral portion of your own Empire you are unable to do the same within a distance of 400 or 500 miles of your Metropolis?" And, no doubt, the same retort might be made with reference to the action of the British Ministry as to the reforms in Armenia. So far as the argument of the Prime Minister regarding the possible excitement amongst the Russian populace was concerned, the Russian populace were absolutely under the control of their Government—never more so than at the present moment—and they could not do anything without the permission of that Government; in short, the Russian Government could have prevented these outrages, could now prevent them, and could prevent them in the future were they so inclined. The fact was, however, that they rather wished these outrages to continue, in order to distract the attention of the people from considering the misdeeds of those who governed them. The Prime Minister evidently wished them to believe that the Czar of Russia was as desirous as they were that these outrages should be put an end to. But how was the Czar situated? He was virtually imprisoned; and he (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) doubted very much whether General Ignatieff allowed him to know very much of what was going on in his own Dominions. Even if he did, it is doubtful whether he would object, because he allowed atrocities of equal magnitude to be committed on vast numbers of his subjects. High Russian authorities had before now been cognizant of, and had looked on at, outrages as bad as those committed on these unfortunate Jews. The treatment of the Mussulmans by the Bulgarians and by the Russian troops was infamous yet these the Skobeleffs, the Todlebens, the Gourkas, and all their most famous Generals had witnessed, and in mid-winter Skobeleff had himself given the order to his destroying troops to fire upon and drive into the mountains a vast encampment of 80,000 men, women, and children, who perished there of cold and starvation. There were numerous similar cases in the late war between Russia and Turkey, and in Central Asia. In fact, it would be found that, for the last 100 years up to the present time, Russians, whether in high or low position, had never hesitated to exercise the most revolting cruelty on those who were unfortunate enough to fall under their power. It was vain, therefore, for the Prime Minister, in what might be termed his usual subterranean fashion, to throw in a word in favour of the Czar and the Russian Government, by declaring that this miserable persecution of the Jews was a fact which both the Czar and his

Government deeply deplored, but were unable to put a stop to. He rather regretted the language that had been used by the hon. Member for Greenwich with respect to the Consular Reports from Russia. The position of an English Consul in that country was a very painful one. If he was a strictly conscientious man he could hardly remain there; if he was a needy and an easy-going man he might remain there, but he could not furnish full and true Reports. It was no secret that Lord Dufferin refused to remain at St. Petersburg because he would not consent to hoodwink his Government and the English people; for an English official in Russia must either remain with his eyes shut and return such Reports home as the Russian Government chose to give him, or he must leave his post. It was absolutely impossible for an English newspaper correspondent to stay in St. Petersburg, for after he had sent two or three letters to his paper his whereabouts was discovered, and he was either told to leave, or allowed to stay on condition that his letters should be viséd by the Russian authorities. As he had said before, the Russian people were kept in profound ignorance of everything that was going on; and until the English Government and the House of Commons recognized that fact, they would never succeed when they had any dealings with Russian Ministers. They could never persuade the Russian Government to do anything; but the influence of fear might be brought to bear upon them with advantage. General Skobeleff was recalled because they were afraid of the Germans and Austrians, although there was no doubt he went to France as the Russian Agent. The circumstances of the case changed, however, when M. Gambetta fell; the combination collapsed as soon as more moderate and abler men took the reins of power in France, and our Government had, from the same cause, found themselves in a great difficulty with regard to Egypt. Owing to the management of Prince Bismarck, Russia was for a time friendless in Europe.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is wandering very far from the Amendment before the House.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he thought that when the right hon. Gentleman saw his deduction he would consider his argument a fair one, as he was endeavouring to show that, at a moment when Russia was standing alone, England might, even single-handed, play upon her fears, and exercise a considerable amount of influence over her in favour of these suffering Jews. If this Motion was withdrawn, he was of opinion that the House would be placed in a very false position, as the country would think they were ready enough to bully Turkey in 1876, but were afraid to make an official representation to Russia, with reference to similar movements, in 1882. He did not believe that this Resolution, if passed, would do the Jews in Russia any harm; but if it did, it would show that the Russian Government were so barbarous that no Resolution passed by this or any other Parliament would have any effect upon them. It would have been far more creditable to the Prime Minister, after the savage language he had used towards the Turks, if he had taken some action in the matter; for the outrages that he had so bitterly complained of were not committed by the Turkish Government or by the Turkish authorities, but by the Bulgarian Christians upon the Bulgarian Mussulmans. He did not think that the attitude of the Prime Minister was consistent, or that it would redound to his credit or reputation in the country.

Mr. WARTON said, he was sorry the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett), with whom he generally sympathized, had not heard the last three speeches and the arrangement which had been come to. Had he been in the House he would hardly have made what might be called a general speech on the subject of Russia. He thought the hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry de Worms) was perfectly entitled, from his position in reference to the Jewish community, to bring the question forward in the manner he had, and that it was most unhandsome on the part of some other Members of the same community in that House to object to his assuming the part he had taken in it. As Christians, they all owed the greatest debt to the Jews, who had, among other remarkable services, preserved the Sacred Scriptures; and he was glad to observe the kindly feeling shown by the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who breathed the language of Lord Derby. He had no doubt the Government would take some opportunity of making unofficial remonstrances; and, if remonstrances failed, he believed there was yet in the country something of the spirit it displayed in the days of Cromwell, who, rebel as he was in England, and tyrant in Ireland, threatened that the thunder of England's cannon should be heard on the Tiber if the persecution of Protestants continued.

MR. E. COLLINS said, he felt that he should not be justified in allowing this debate to come to a conclusion without expressing condemnation of the language employed by the hon. Member for Eye towards a great and powerful State, between which and ourselves the most friendly relations continued to exist. During the years he had had a seat in the House, he could not call to mind utterances respecting any great friendly Power which pained him more than did these of the hon. Gentleman whose statements he had to complain of. He confessed that he listened with astonishment to his speech; and he asked himself how it was possible that any Member of this House in his representative capacity, how an educated Gentleman of any refinement, could so far forget himself as to have dared, he might say, to use such language? What had the hon. Member for Eye asserted? He told them in effect that the Czar of Russia, the great Ruler of 84,000,000 of people, was an assassin and a murderer, the slaughterer of his own subjects.

MR. ASHMEAD - BARTLETT explained, that he had not said that the Czar was a murderer or an assassin. What he had said was that, considering the oppression which existed under the rule of the Czar, it would not create any surprise if he was more or less acquainted with the treatment of the Jews.

MR. E. COLLINS said, the hon. Member's explanation did not help him out of the difficulty, for he admitted having associated indirectly, if not directly, the Czar with the slaughter of his subjects, because an infuriated mob, blinded with drunken passion, had taken the lives of 56 poor, unoffending, and unprotected victims, as if such a miserable sacrifice were needed to sustain his authority; and he had also told them that the Government of Russia was a savage and a barbarous Government. [Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Hear, hear!] The hon. Member for Eye further said that the Government of Russia had lent themselves, if the Czar had not done it, to the incitement of outrages. [Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT: Hear, hear!] It would be interesting to know whence the hon. Member for Eye had derived his information. He (Mr. Collins) had resided for many years in Russia, and had mixed in Russian society, from the highest almost to the lowest, and he would venture to say that the information of one who had resided in the country, and who knew its people, might be placed against that of the hon. Member, whose statements he confidently contraverted. In conclusion, he would venture to suggest to the hon. Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry de Worms) that it would be a graceful act on his part if, at the termination of the discussion he had initiated in so proper a spirit, he would withdraw the imputations he had placed upon the Government of Russia. One was to the effect that Russia had connived at these proceedings against the Jews. On another occasion he said that these infamous outrages were done with the connivance of the Russian Government. He thought the hon. Member would withdraw such imputations, and that such a withdrawal would be to the advantage of himself and his co-religionists in Russia.

MR. R. N. FOWLER reminded the House that if some Jews in Russia had fallen into the lowest occupations in life, as the hon. Member for Greenwich admitted, they had to contend with great persecution. He quoted the eloquent words of the late Sir Robert Peel on this point. Their degradation was the result of that persecution; and wherever, as in England, they were admitted to the privileges of the country in which they lived, they were always to be found among the best and most useful citizens in the State. The hon. Member had done very great service, not only to the community of which he was an honoured member, but to the cause of humanity at large, in bringing this matter before the House.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1881-2.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum not exceeding £34,919, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1882, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Irish Land Commission."

MR. GIBSON said, the Vote before the Committee was a very important one. It raised the question of the whole administration that up to this time had taken place in connection with the Land Act, and he need hardly say that a vast amount of criticism suggested itself upon almost every one of the items contained in the Vote. He had no desire whatever to raise anything like a prolonged debate upon any of these items; but he could not help noticing a fact, of which, however, they must all be aware, that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, who must, from the nature of things, be most cognizant of the expenditure included in the Vote, was at present absent from the House. He (Mr. Gibson) was quite prepared to make his criticism in the absence of the right hon. Gentleman, and he was sure that the noble Lord the Financial Secretary, who was in charge of the Vote, and his right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General for Ireland, would give any explanations that were necessary; but if they were not able to enter into all the explanations that might be called for, he would suggest that some part of the Vote should be allowed to stand over until the return of the Chief Secretary. The first item in the Vote was a sum of £25,705 for Salaries and Allowances. He wished to know what estimate the Government had formed of the annual expense of administering the Irish Land Act, taking into account the salaries of the Commissioners, of the Assistant-Commissioners, and of the general staff? He was told that the figure which might be put down for that was not less than £100,000 a-year, or, at any rate, somewhere about that sum. He was not desirous of passing any carping criticism upon the expenditure for Salaries; but, at the same time, he thought it was not only desirable, but fair, that the Government should inform the Committee what amount of expense the whole of the Empire would be asked to bear for the administration of this Irish Act. He would put that question at once on the first item of the Vote; and then he should like to know what was the amount received in fees from the suitors who went into the Court? He believed, from the study he had been able to make of the Rules and Orders of the Court, that the figure required to be paid as a fee in the first instance was extremely low. Any person who was a suitor, on coming into the Court, was only called upon to pay a fee of 1*s.* for the originating notice, and for that he got everything he could require, and he was not asked to pay 1*s.* further, no matter what the result might be. He wished, therefore, to know what, taking one year with another, was expected to be the amount of the receipts by the Treasury from fees? Fees so low did not exist in any other part of the world. Perhaps this might be a convenient time for asking a question as to the office of the Head Commissioners. The Head Commissioners had charge of a very large staff. There was, in the first place, a Secretary, who had the substantial salary of £1,000, and then an Assistant Secretary, who had a salary of £500 a-year; and he wanted to know whether in the Office a letter-book was kept, and whether that letter-book would disclose any instructions which might have been given to the Assistant Commissioners in the discharge of their functions? On more occasions than one, taking the newspapers as his source of information, he found that the Assistant Commissioners had stated that they had received instructions from the Head Commissioners in Dublin in regard to what they ought to do. Now, he wanted to know, seeing that a statement of that kind had been made, whether any letter-book was kept containing in writing a copy of all the instructions sent to the Assistant Commissioners? While he was upon the question of salaries and expenses, he should like also to ask a question upon another subject to which his attention had been directed. He noticed on page

33 of the Estimates the words "Chief Valuer attached to Commissioners." He assumed that that was the gentleman who was known as Mr. Gray—a very capable gentleman, he believed. But the next item was one for "Valuers ditto, ditto," with a maximum salary of £750. He wished to know what that meant? Valuers, he supposed, meant the plural; but what did the "ditto" mean? How many valuers were there? He had been informed, and he asked for further information on the point, that the Land Commissioners in Dublin had been desirous of appointing to the very important and responsible office of advising them upon their duties some of the best surveyors who could be got in the Empire, but that the Treasury had refused to sanction the appointments they made because they objected to pay the salaries that would be necessary. If that assertion were challenged, he could give the name of one gentleman who, according to rumour, was applied to, but who declined to accept the salary offered to him. A long letter had been wrtiten upon the matter to *The Times.* He had commented upon it at one or two public meetings in the strongest language he could find, because he considered it a scandal in the administration of an Act of Parliament, that the Treasury should refuse to the Commissioners who were required to administer the Act the instruments they considered necessary for the proper working of it. In administering an important Act like this it was obvious that the Commissioners would require the best class of persons they could obtain—persons who would be above all impeachment, and of the highest professional capacity. The Commissioners, it was stated, had applied to certain gentlemen whom they considered suitable for the discharge of the duties, and those gentlemen were willing to act, but the Treasury refused to sanction the salaries proposed to be paid to them, and other gentlemen had to be appointed. He did not mean to say that these other gentlemen were not good men; but what he did say was that the Land Commissioners were unable to get the men whom they thought most competent, because the Treasury refused to sanction the salaries they demanded. He asked, then, who were the gentlemen who had been appointed, and whether the noble Lord the Financial Secretary of the Treasury could say whether higher salaries were asked for by the Land Commissioners in the first instance, and whether the gentlemen who were applied to originally did not refuse to accept the appointments in consequence of the refusal of the Treasury to pay the salaries asked for? There was another item upon which he would like to make an observation. There were 20 first-class clerks with a maximum salary of £400 each. He wished to know whether these gentlemen were new appointments, or were they gentlemen who held other appointments. According to his own knowledge of the matter, speaking roughly, he should say that the majority were new appointments, but that nevertheless they were put down as first-class clerks, and, he presumed, would become part of the normal staff employed in the service of the Commissioners. Was there any qualification or not? Was there any Civil Service examination or any particular test for ascertaining the qualifications of these gentlemen? There were other matters to which he wished to draw attention, and especially the appointment of the Assistant Commissioners; but he would leave that matter until he had obtained a reply from the noble Lord to the Question he had already put.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN said, that, following up the questions put by the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson), he should like to ask the noble Lord the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, whether the Valuers had been appointed permanently or only for a fixed period, and whether they were specially charged with any specific duties? He also wished to know whether the legal officers already employed in the Land Court had been in any way utilized under the new Act? As he understood, since the Land Act came into operation the Encumbered Estates Court had scarcely had anything to do, and he wanted to know whether any steps had been taken towards utilizing the services of the unoccupied officers of that Court? He merely asked these questions so that the noble Lord might be able to make a reply to them in the answer he gave to the right hon. and learned Gentleman.

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he joined with the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gibson) in regretting that the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was unavoidably absent from his place, but he would endeavour to give the best answer he could to the questions which had been put to him. In the first place, with respect to the specific inquiries made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman, he could inform him that with regard to the amount of expense required in the coming financial year, adequate information would be supplied in the regular Estimates. He believed it would be found that the expense of administering the Act would amount to something over £90,000, and something under £100,000.

Mr. HEALY asked, if that was for 12 months?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH replied, that it was the estimated expense for 12 months. He had not, however, got the figures before him at that moment, and he was unable to state the exact amount with perfect accuracy. The right hon. and learned Gentleman was quite right in stating that the originating fee paid by a suitor upon entering the Court was 1*s*. The amount derivable from that source would depend entirely upon the number of the applications, and he could not, therefore, state what the total amount was likely to be. At present there were something like 70,000 cases entered, and the fees would consequently amount to £3,500 this year. The right hon. and learned Gentleman seemed to imply that that was too small a sum to cover the expense of administering the Act; but he would remind the right hon. and learned Gentleman that after the House had already determined that the Court should be established there would have been many complaints if the Treasury had persisted in placing pecuniary obstacles in the way of the suitors obtaining admission to the Court. The next question of the right hon. and learned Gentleman was—whether or not a letter-book was kept in the Office of the Land Commissioners? He had no absolute information on that point, but he could scarcely doubt that in an Office which had a great influx of correspondence there would be an elementary necessity for keeping a letter-book. The right hon. and learned Gentleman was quite right in his supposition that the chief valuer was Mr. Gray. The right hon. and learned Gentleman asked next if it was the case that the Treasury had refused to sanction the salaries recommended by the Commissioners for the valuers? Now, the Treasury did not object to the salaries proposed by the Commissioners; but there was an important question to be considered—namely, how far the work to be done by the Assistant Commissioners was to be shared by the valuers. It would be recollected that there was a debate in the House itself upon that question, when an Amendment was moved that valuers should be appointed. The understanding then came to by the House was that the work should be done mainly by the Commissioners and the Assistant Commissioners, and not by valuers. After full consideration the Government came to the conclusion that it was advisable, as the Chief Commissioners were unable personally to visit the different farms, that they should have the assistance of valuers, but that no such officer should be attached to the Sub-Commission. The question had not been settled by money considerations; and while, on the one hand, the Treasury were not desirous of launching into extravagance, they could not be charged with enforcing an ill-timed economy, for it would be seen that the amount of the salary proposed to be paid to these valuers was £750 each. At present he thought there had been only one person appointed.

Mr. GIBSON said, he believed that power had been taken to appoint four.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he thought there was power to appoint four ultimately.

Mr. GIBSON asked who the gentleman was who had been already appointed?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he was not able to answer that question. Indeed, he had not heard specifically that any appointment had been made, but only that power had been taken to make the appointments.

Mr. GIBSON said, he was afraid that the work would not be satisfactorily performed if the Treasury refused to appoint the best men.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he could only repeat that the question had not been settled by money considerations, and that it was not one of salaries at all. It was not, however, considered advisable to have a large staff of valuers. With respect to the clerks, he was not able to say what proportion belonged to the staff of the Church Commissioners; but, originally, when the Office was first constituted, a large proportion of the officers was taken from the salaried officials of the Church Commission. But as the Sub-Commissioners were multiplied a number of new appointments had been made, and there was a larger number of first-class clerks now than was originally contemplated. With respect to the question of his hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen) as to the term for which the appointments were made, he had not got the precise information before him at that moment; but, speaking from recollection, he believed Mr. Gray was appointed for one year. The hon. Member suggested that the staff of the Land Court should be utilized. That was an idea that was agreeable to the Commissioners, but he did not think that they had yet been able to make an arrangement of that kind; they would, however, do so as opportunity offered.

MR. HEALY said, that, for his part, he should be very slow in falling in with the suggestion of the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen) that the Land Commission should have anything to do with the officials now engaged in Judge Flanagan's Court. Judge Flanagan was not the person who, by any means, corresponded with the Prime Minister's definition of those who ought to be intrusted with the working of the Land Act. With regard to the Church Commission, the noble Lord would remember that last year some Members raised considerable objections to the proposal to utilize the staff of the Irish Church Commission upon the new Land Commission; and in the closing days of the Session there was considerable friction between the Irish Members and the Treasury Bench as to the proposal then put forward by Her Majesty's Government. He himself understood that the Government gave the House a promise that there should be no sweeping of old officials into the Land Commission. The Irish Members were of opinion that it was not desirable to have any of the old officials imported into the Land Commission, as many of them would have imbibed prejudices in connection with their old offices, and the understanding was, so far as he was aware, that none of these officers should be planted upon the Land Commission. He believed, however, that, in spite of the pledge given last Session, they had a superintendent from the Irish Church property branch with a salary of £700 a-year. He did not complain of that, as there might be some necessity for having someone who had been connected with the Irish Church Court. There was a considerable fight as to the solicitorship last year, and he now found that, in addition to the ordinary solicitor, they were to have a solicitor from the Church Property and Collection Department, with a salary of £600 per annum. He did not complain of the item; but he wished to have some explanation of the matter as he knew nothing about it at present. He should like to know if the individual appointed was the old solicitor of the Church Commission. He presumed that he was not. He presumed that the old solicitor would scarcely be inclined to accept such a salary as that which had been put down in the Estimate. He should like to ask whether the amount of duty which fell upon the solicitor of the Church Commission pure and simple was so extraordinary that it was necessary, for the continually diminishing amount of work which would fall upon his shoulders, to appoint a second solicitor? People in Ireland had learned to be very suspicious in regard to all appointments of a legal character. At present, for every four barristers called to the Bar there was at least one prize either in the shape of a County Court Judgeship, or a position on the Bench, or one of the legal appointments in the hands of the Government; and the tendency was to corrupt Irish intelligence by offering those offices to the Irish Bar, if these legal gentlemen would at once come in and serve the Government. Therefore, the noble Lord would not be surprised to find that the Irish Members desired some explanation as to this multiplication of officials. There was another point which was purely a matter of detail. He remembered very well, although he was not a Member of the House at the time, that his hon. Friend the Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen), when the Conservatives were in Office, inveighed very strongly against the mode in which the advertisements for Government stores were issued. [Mr. JOSEPH COWEN dissented.] He might be mistaken in attributing the action in the matter to the hon. Member for Newcastle; but it was a fact that strong objections were raised in regard to the mode in which the Government advertisements were issued. For instance, supposing iron was wanted, advertisements were inserted in some newspaper in Cornwall where, perhaps, there was no iron at all; if coal was wanted, instead of going to Durham, or Northumberland, or Lancashire, an advertisement was inserted in some other county where no coal existed at all. The same complaint was to be made with regard to the Land Commission. What was called the "Schedule of Voluntary Agreements between Landlord and Tenant in Ireland" was published, not in the Metropolitan daily papers in Dublin, or in the Irish newspapers generally, but in the London *Times*, *The Dublin General Advertiser*—a paper belonging to the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), which was never seen at all, or, at any rate, it circulated among a very limited portion of the people, having purely an advertising and an official connection—and in *The Scotsman*, published in Edinburgh. There was great sensitiveness among the Irish people upon this point; and he would ask the noble Lord if it was intended as a joke that the Land Commission, which affected the people of Ireland to such an extraordinary extent, could only find it worth while to insert the "Schedule of Voluntary Agreements between Landlord and Tenant in Ireland" in *The Scotsman*, the London *Times*, and *The Dublin General Advertiser*, owned by the hon. Member for Glasgow? He could assure the noble Lord that it was a matter in regard to which some people were very sore. Only within the last few weeks the Department had added insult to injury, and had inserted a two-line advertisement in some of the Dublin newspapers, referring the Irish people, if they wanted information, to the paper owned by the hon. Member for Glasgow. He presumed that they had got so thick-skinned that it was of no use going into these complaints; but the noble Lord would feel that this was a matter upon which a strong opinion was entertained. He would remind the noble Lord, if he was ignorant of the fact, that *The Freeman's Journal* was published in Dublin, and that it circulated 40,000 copies daily among the very people the Treasury desired that the Act should be made popular with. He understood that it was the wish of the Prime Minister that voluntary agreements between landlord and tenant should take place altogether irrespective of the operation of the Court; and to carry out this object the Government, instead of advertising in *The Irish Times* and *The Freeman's Journal*, simply advertised in the London *Times*, the Edinburgh *Scotsman*, and *The Dublin General Advertiser*. The right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) had referred to the question of valuers. That question of valuators, or valuers, was one of the utmost importance in connection with the working of the Act. The noble Lord had admitted—and he was somewhat surprised at the admission—that the Commissioners themselves were not able to visit the farms they had to deal with; and, therefore, they had to rely upon the valuers. Considering the multiplicity of the questions addressed to the noble Lord, it was only a matter of surprise that he was able, as he generally did, to grasp them and deal with them at all. It was a matter of astonishment that the noble Lord could carry all these details in his head, and that he should be able to deal with these Irish matters, which it might be supposed could only be dealt with by the Chief Secretary. The noble Lord was certainly entitled to the consideration of the Committee; but he should like to ask him if he was correct in stating that the valuers were appointed by the Commissioners only for a year?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: I think the valuers are appointed for a year only.

Mr. HEALY said, the noble Lord had stated further that, in his opinion, the Sub-Commissioners would not be able to visit the farms, and, therefore, must rely upon the valuers.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: No; I said the Commissioners.

Mr. HEALY said, that, of course, was an entirely different matter. It appeared, however, that the valuators were only appointed for one year, notwithstanding the fact that on the action of these valuers the entire administration of the Court, to a very large extent, depended. The Court of Commissioners, which was the final Court to decide upon the various matters connected with the working of the Act, could not go down to farms in remote districts, and the Commissioners were obliged to see through the eyes of the valuers. Therefore, to a large extent, their verdict and decision must be influenced by the reports of the valuers; and the question of valuers became a matter of even more importance than that of the Commissioners themselves. He submitted that it was not quite a fitting thing that Mr. Gray, if the noble Lord desired that the Act should work properly—that Mr. Gray, with an extremely accurate knowledge of English land, but no experience of land in Ireland, should have been imported into Ireland, and sent down to the miserable cottier plots in the County Cork and other places, and that upon his verdict the Chief Commissioners should fix the rents. For his own part, he (Mr. Healy) objected to the whole transaction. He objected to it, first, because Mr. Gray was an Englishman—and English agriculture and Irish agriculture were entirely different things. He also objected to it because Mr. Gray's appointment was an appointment of so partial a character. Mr. Gray was appointed, as the noble Lord had stated, only for one year. Then, was it to be supposed that any man whose interest in the matter was only of a temporary character, would be able to bring to the discharge of his duties the same amount of care and thought that would be devoted by a man who had lived all his life in the country? Mr. Gray would necessarily have to be guided, to a large extent, by the opinion of others who had had, from previous residence, an opportunity of knowing something of the real value of the land. He protested strongly against the appointment being for one year only. He thought it would tend to the scamping of the job, and would interfere with the proper working of the Act. He could assure the noble Lord that there was much sensitiveness upon this matter in the South of Ireland. He had referred last night to the appointment of Mr. John Barrett to the office of valuer, Mr. Barrett being known as a gentleman who was one of the most bitter enemies of the tenants. If the Prime Minister was desirous that the Act should become popular, he should take care that no appointments of that class were made. He would put the matter in this way. There was a strong agitation some years ago on the subject of Trades Unions, and certain Acts were passed directed against the "truck" system in England. What would have been said if, under those Acts, the Government had appointed as Inspector an individual who was the most hated and detested by the men connected both with Trades Unions and the "truck" system? What would have been done if, in dealing with the "truck" system, they had appointed as Inspector a man who had most heavily steeped himself in corruption and in the plunder of the workmen? Yet such a man would correspond to the character which John Barrett possessed in the South of Ireland. John Barrett—he would not go into his character again—was a man who, in the most peaceful times, never ventured to go out unarmed, and he had been guarded by the police for the last two years. Only very recently, acting under police protection, Barrett valued the farms of Lord Kenmare and the Gumbleton property without ever having walked over them or seen them. He, nevertheless, raised the value of the rents from 50 to 100 per cent. This was the man whom the Chief Commissioners had appointed to act as a Land Valuer. If the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister considered that the working of the Land Act was of very little consequence to the people of Ireland this might be the proper course to take; but he (Mr. Healy) desired that the people of Ireland should extract the utmost possible benefit they could get out of the Act. He had the keenest desire that the landlords should have their rents cut down to the utmost extent, and that the tenants of Ireland should benefit accordingly, and therefore he protested against the appointment of such a man as Barrett, who was a notorious rack-renter, employed to do the dirty work of Lord Kenmare. He protested against men like John Barrett being appointed as Valuers under the Act, and he had asked the Attorney General for Ireland that day whether Barrett, or men of his kidney, were appointed by the year or by the job? The answer he received from the right hon. and learned Gentleman was not at all definite.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): I know nothing about the matter.

Mr. HEALY said, it was a very extraordinary thing that the Committee should be asked to vote money in order to pay Mr. Barrett a salary when they were not able to get from the Government any information whatever about him. He ventured to say that if the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) got up and asked whether it was true that some well-known Tenant-righter, such as Byrne, of Walls Town Castle, Mallow, or some other well-known Tenant-righter, had been appointed under the Act, the right hon. and learned Gentleman would have had an answer ready; but when they asked whether a notorious landlords' partizan had been appointed, the right hon. and learned Gentleman got up and told them he did not know. It was most desirable that the Committee should have information upon these matters either from the right hon. and learned Gentleman or from the noble Lord. Of course, they did not expect that the noble Lord would be able to answer these questions in detail. It was not his business, and they could not expect details of this kind from the noble Lord, immersed as he was in other business. But when they had two Law Officers of the Crown in the House, he really thought that, on a matter of this kind, the Committee was entitled to some little information upon the question, and he would, therefore, ask the Attorney General to re-consider the matter and to answer this plain question—Whether John Barrett had been employed for 12 months under the Land Act as valuer, or not?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, the matter was one which was not in any way in his Department, or he would, of course, have made it his business to have ascertained all the details; but, as it was not in any way in his Department, he had not requested information upon it. He fully admitted that the hon. Member had the right to demand the information from some quarter, and, therefore, he would take care to make himself master of the details in order to satisfy the inquiries of the hon. Member. His impression was that Mr. Barrett had not been appointed at all by the Land Commission. The valuers were appointed, he understood, when the Land Commission went down to hear appeals from the Sub-Commissioners; and, so far, he believed there had only been two valuers appointed by the Land Commission—namely, Mr. Gray, and, he thought, a gentleman named Murphy. He had heard at the time Mr. Gray was appointed that he was a gentleman who, though of English extraction, had been for 30 years farming in the county of Wexford, and he was recommended to the Commission by a large number of persons as a gentleman thoroughly competent to deal with any questions arising in connection with the value of land. The general opinion in Ireland at the time Mr. Gray was appointed was that a more competent man could not be selected. He had been sent to Belfast to assist the Commissioners there, and, after examining the localities to which the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners applied, his report had given complete satisfaction. His impression was that only two valuers had actually been appointed, and that their appointment was only for one year. Mr. John Barrett, he believed, was the gentleman who valued some property of Mr. Bence Jones.

Mr. HEALY: He was appointed by the Government.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, he did not think that the employment of Mr. Barrett was a Government appointment. A Sub-Commission was empowered to call in an independent valuer, as the Sub-Commission in Limerick had done, before they gave their decision in reference to a holding on Lord Ashtown's estate, where the cost of that valuer was borne in equal parts by the landlord and tenant. Possibly that also was the case with reference to Mr. Barrett, as he believed he was merely subpœnaed as a witness employed by one of the parties. His own opinion was that the Estimates were not burdened with Mr. John Barrett at all; but he could only state his impression, and not give it as an absolute matter of fact. He would, however, make inquiries upon the subject before the Report of Supply was brought up. As he was now upon his legs, he might answer the remarks made by the hon. Member in reference to the officers of the Land Commission supposed to have been taken over from the Land Court. Now, nobody had been taken over from the Land Court; but the Church Temporalities Commission, as the hon. Member would recollect, was terminated during last Session of Parliament, its remaining business transferred to the Land Commission, and some of the most competent officers connected with the Church Commission had been taken over. This was an advantageous arrangement for the public, seeing that the superannuation allowances of these gentlemen would be saved, and their services utilized. The solicitor had been taken over in that way, and as the Church Temporalities Commission required to be wound up, there was a large amount of this business to be transacted. The tithe rent-charge had to be collected, and there were other matters to be dealt with, such as the money which had been lent out upon mortgage, and was being paid by instalments; and there were questions still pending in regard to the purchase and sale of Church land. All the land had not yet been sold, and it was for the interest of the public to retain the services of the Solicitor to the Church Temporalities Commission. By that means the public retained the services of a man who had practical experience, and who was perfectly competent in a professional point of view, and at the same time they were saved the expense of superannuation allowance, which would necessarily have been incurred if the solicitor had been discharged and a new solicitor appointed, because it would have been absolutely necessary to appoint some one to discharge the duties which the solicitor to the Church Temporalities Commission had been retained to perform. Another gentleman, who had also been alluded to, Mr. O'Brien, had also been taken over from the Church Commission in August to discharge, under the Land Commissioners, the same duties which he had previously performed in connection with the Church Temporalities Commission. In that case, also, the public had the advantage of the services of a gentleman fully competent to discharge the duties, and experienced in the performance of them, and at the same time they were saved the expense of a superannuation allowance.

MR. HEALY asked if these appointments were of a permanent character?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) believed that the gentlemen in question had been placed in precisely the same position as that which they occupied under the Church Temporalities Commission. He had been asked if the services of these gentlemen were wanted or not? When the Act was being passed he had assured the House that they would be necessary for the discharge of the duties transferred to the new Land Commission. It was impossible to obtain gentlemen more fitted for the discharge of those duties, and the undertaking given when the Act was before the House last Session had been strictly adhered to—namely, that all the officers should be taken over who were competent to discharge the duties. He trusted that the hon. Member would be satisfied with the answer he had given him. He would only add that he would take care, before the Report was brought up, to obtain all the information that was requisite to explain those matters which had been referred to by the hon. Member, and which he was not at present informed upon.

MR. CALLAN complained that no explanation had been given by the Attorney General for Ireland of the extraordinary and scandalous job which had been perpetrated in the Office of the Chief Secretary, by which advertisements relating to voluntary agreements were published for the information of the Irish people, in order to induce other people to come in and make similar agreements. It appeared that these advertisements were excluded from every Irish paper, and published in the Edinburgh *Scotsman* and London *Times*. He had travelled a good deal through Ireland, and though he constantly met with the London *Times*, for *The Times* circulated everywhere, even in Ireland, he had never yet seen a *Scotsman* except in four places—the Belfast, Londonderry, Dublin, and Cork Chambers of Commerce. The only other place it could be met with was in the country house of some Scotch merchant, who, having settled in the North of Ireland, like the proverbial Scotchman, never attempted to return to his own country. With these exceptions, he would undertake to say that not a single copy of the *Scotsman* was to be found in Ireland. The whole transaction in regard to these advertisements was a deliberate and infamous job intended as a bribe to secure their support to the Irish Administration. He wished to ask whether anyone connected with the Irish Office was prepared to get up and say that the Government were not responsible for the transaction, but that it was a job perpetrated by some junior clerk, who probably received a discount upon the order?

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the Committee had heard his hon. Friend the Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) address a number of very pertinent questions to the Treasury, and he thought they would agree that the answer which had been elicited from the right hon. and learned Attorney General was not a very satisfactory one. Indeed, the right hon. and learned Gentleman evidently believed himself that that was so, because he had intimated that he would obtain the desired information and communicate it to the House upon the Report, or, in the event of being unable to do so, that the Chief Secretary would answer the questions. But the House was informed early in the evening that the Chief Secretary would not be in his place until Tuesday, and he presumed that it was proposed to take the Report of the Supply voted to-night on Monday. At any rate, that was the usual course, and it would only be reasonable for the Government to agree not to take the Report of the Votes taken in Supply that night until the return of the Chief Secretary, in order that the information which had been promised might be duly afforded. In looking over the Vote, the first thing that struck him was that there was in in Ireland a very different system with regard to the appointment of Civil servants from that which obtained in this country. Over and over again had been pointed out the very great waste of public money which took place in this country in consequence of the system of pensioning a large number of Civil servants, in the prime of life, who were certain to draw their pensions for a considerable number of years. Some years ago there was a Bill passed through the House of Commons and assented to "elsewhere," which in due course became law, which dealt with certain officers in the War Office and Board of Admiralty. That Act abolished a large number of persons in the War Office and the Admiralty, and he must say that he knew nothing more indefensible than the provisions of the Act. It squandered an enormous sum of money in the shape of pensions, and cast out of the Civil Service a large number of persons who were perfectly capable of continuing the work in which they were engaged. These men were now entirely lost to the country, so far as their services were concerned, but they were likely to continue to draw their pensions for a considerable number of years. The ultimate reduction of public expenditure by the passing of the Act to which he referred would, he believed, prove in the end to be no reduction at all, but, on the contrary, he believed it would be found that the change had entailed a considerable increase. Whenever it was found necessary to incur an expense of this kind, when once the alteration of an establishment was decided upon, there seemed to be an insuperable objection on the part of the Treasury to utilize the services of the men whose services were got rid of in one Department, by employing them in some other Government Office. But, if these men had been employed in the public establishments in Ireland, they would have been provided with fresh berths for the period during which they might still be able to render effective service, and in this way there would be a considerable reduction of expense to the public. In Ireland it was the practice, wherever it was possible to provide a fresh berth for a Civil servant whose period of employment was drawing to a close to do so. According to the first page of the present Vote, it appeared that a Secretary had been appointed at a salary of £1,000; but a foot-note stated that—

> "The Secretary is at present in receipt of a salary at the rate of £200 a-year as Secretary to a Temporary Commission on Inland Navigation in Ireland."

That Commission was now drawing to an end, and accordingly another appointment was found for this gentleman. There was also a foot-note in regard to the Accountant, who also received a salary of £1,000 a-year. The note said—

> "This officer is entitled under the Superannuation Act, 1859, and the Irish Church Act, 1869, Amendment Act, 1872, to a pension of £533 6*s.* 8*d.*, £300 of which, in respect of services in the Office of Wood and Forests, is in abeyance as long as he holds his present employment."

Consequently, that gentleman was not

left to the full enjoyment of his pension, as would be the case in this country, but he was provided with a fresh berth, so that some of the money was saved to the Exchequer. The same thing appeared to be carried out on the next page. The Agency Clerk (Land Sales) received a salary of £400 a-year, and this officer had been holding a temporary appointment at £250 a-year to the 1st of February, 1882. That gentleman, having left one appointment, was at once provided with another; and the same was to be said of one of the second-class clerks, who had since July, 1881, been in the receipt of a salary at the rate of £50 a-year, as clerk to a Temporary Commission on Inland Navigation in Ireland, but this payment would altogether cease before the 1st of April, 1882. He had no objection to this system, because it enabled the Government to save the public money by the utilization of the services of persons who had previously been employed in other offices, and he thought it was a system which might very well be extended to the Civil servants of this country. There was an opportunity of doing so at present, which he would respectfully press upon the attention of the Government—namely, in the matter of the Customs clerks who were about to be disestablished in large numbers, and who would only be too grateful if they were treated in the same way as the Civil servants in Ireland. There was another question which he desired to put to the noble Lord, a question peculiarly affecting the Treasury administration, and which he was entirely unable to reconcile with the ideas he had obtained from service in a similar Government Department. It was with reference to the officer he had mentioned before, the accountant, who, according to the foot-note he had quoted, appeared to be entitled to a superannuation allowance of £533 6*s.* 8*d.* per annum, £300 of which was in abeyance, in consequence of holding the position he did. But the other £233 a-year he still continued to draw, although it was a superannuation allowance in connection with the Irish Church Commission. They allowed the accountant to draw that £233 a-year; but he found upon the next page of the Estimates the case of an officer who was entitled to an annuity of £360 a-year under the Church Property Act, and which sum would remain in abeyance while he held his present appointment. He asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury why two opposite systems were pursued with regard to the officers to whom he had referred, one of whom was allowed to draw his pension during his appointment under the Land Act, and the other not allowed to do so? And, again, if the officer commuted his pension under the Church Property Act, would he be allowed to draw the full salary put down in the Vote?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, the Treasury were always anxious to avoid the waste incurred by pensioning men in the prime of life; and, as far as possible, it was the practice to utilize the services of men on pension. He had been almost tempted to wish that the hon. Member who had just spoken had not been retired from the War Office at so early an age; and he could assure him that he entirely agreed in the opinion he had expressed that clerks should continue to be employed while their services were of use to the public. The hon. Member would observe that the Government had endeavoured to prevent claims for pensions arising in connection with this Commission. They wished it to be understood that no one by his appointment earned the right to a pension, and it was distinctly stated in the Estimates that the service was a temporary one. The accountant to whom the hon. Member had referred was an especially experienced officer, and they had been glad to be in a position to avail themselves of his services in establishing this very important office. The general rule was that officers should not draw pensions whilst they were in receipt of salaries; but if there were occasionally cases in which the rule was not followed, it was owing to special circumstances which gave a right to the pension.

MR. HEALY said, he failed to see where the money paid by the tenants for notices, copies of rules, and other documents was taken credit for in the Accounts. The office of Solicitor to the Land Commission having been resigned, he asked how it was, if the office was of the importance attributed to it, that it had remained vacant for three or four weeks, and when it was probable that it would be filled up? He would suggest that the Estimate should be postponed until Irish Members had an opportunity of passing in review the qualifications of the gentleman who might be appointed. They had the greatest confidence in Mr. Fottrell; they regarded him as worthy of the confidence of the Irish tenantry, and were naturally anxious that his successor should be equally popular. He thought the noble Lord would see that it was only right that they should have some knowledge conveyed to them as to the gentleman who was to be appointed to the office. The Committee would have observed that the noble Lord the Member for North Northumberland (Earl Percy) had a Notice on the Paper, which he thought might be very well applied and carried out with respect to Ireland. The noble Lord proposed to call attention to the circumstances attending the issue of a treatise, entitled *Free Trade versus Fair Trade*, by T. H. Farrer, and to move—

> "That this House is of opinion that it is undesirable that permanent officials in the Public Service should publish works of a political and controversial character in their official capacity, and under the authority of the Parliamentary head of their Department."

If officials in England were not precluded from publishing works of the kind indicated in the Notice of Motion given by the noble Lord, how was it, he asked, that Mr. Dennis Godley had issued a Circular, ordering, in the most decisive terms, every member of the Land Commission in Ireland not to write in any review, magazine, or public paper of any description whatsoever? An hon. Friend near him suggested coercion as the reason. They had, undoubtedly, had enough of that; but, whatever might be the reason, he ventured to say that, in his opinion, when a person received a salary for the performance of certain duties, his time should be fully occupied with those duties, and, therefore, he was inclined to support the Motion of the noble Lord when it came before the House. But why was Mr. Dennis Godley to lay down this law to the members of the Commission, while Mr. Farrer was allowed to give directions upon the question of Free Trade? If a gagging law was necessary at all, he contended that it should be applied equally to England and Ireland.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, the hon. Member for Wexford was probably aware that, in order to exercise a strict control over the Accounts for the Public Service, receipts were chiefly paid by stamps, which was the case with regard to the originating notices paid for by the tenants in connection with the Land Commission. With reference to the office of Solicitor to the Land Commission, he agreed that it was important to fill up that appointment; but hon. Members would agree that it was still more so that the best possible selection should be made. He thought, therefore, the Committee would not be inclined to grudge the delay of a few weeks which was rendered necessary by the endeavour to obtain the best man available. As it was not competent to him to discuss questions upon the Notice Paper, he was not able to deal with the question raised by the hon. Member for Wexford in connection with the Motion of the noble Lord, to which the hon. Member had referred.

Mr. GRAY said, he desired to call attention to a communication addressed by the Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, requiring a question to be put to Mr. Fottrell with reference to certain communications to the Press, which led to the retirement of that gentleman—a question which Mr. Fottrell would not have answered had it been put to him personally by the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He wished to understand whether the Commissioners were independent judicial officers, or if they were under the control of the Executive? Were they bound to put questions to their officers, which placed the latter in a position to state to the public that those questions were evidently put unwillingly, and in obedience to dictation? He appealed to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson), who could not be expected to have any sympathy with the political views of Mr. Fottrell, to say whether it was not a fact that the appointment of that gentleman to the office of Solicitor to the Land Commission was regarded with great satisfaction in Ireland because of his well-known professional qualifications, his activity and zeal, as well as his anxiety for the promotion of land reform in a proper manner. It was quite possible, and he did not deny, that in doing that which had led to his retirement, Mr. Fottrell had been guilty of an excess of zeal, which in the case of Government officials was sometimes a serious offence. But Mr. Fottrell had been punished by the Commissioners, acting, as in all probability they did, under the direct orders of the Government. If not, it was something very near it; and he had been obliged to resign his position because of what, at the utmost, could be deemed an excess of zeal. He could not have been actuated by personal feeling of any kind, because, unlike most solicitors to Commissioners, he was paid a fixed salary, and if he took the ordinary view entertained by officials so placed, the less he had to do the better he would be pleased. There had been elicited from him by means of a question of a compulsory character, to which he did not feel at liberty to refuse to reply, an acknowledgment that he was the person responsible for certain articles, the publication of which led to his resignation. He (Mr. Gray) did not wish, because, as he thought, Mr. Fottrell had been punished with severity and even injustice, that other persons should be punished likewise; but there could be no doubt that, while the entire punishment in this case had fallen upon the shoulders of Mr. Fottrell, there were others equally responsible, the only difference in their case being that they held very different political opinions, and were, in fact, well known to be strong Conservatives. It was for Party purposes, and, as he believed, in order to discredit the Land Commission, that the Conservative Party, both in that House and in "another place," originated a very violent personal attack against Mr. Fottrell, while they allowed another responsible officer to escape; and he was very glad that he had done so, because had he not so escaped, there would have been a double injustice in dismissing him also. But from this it would be seen how the political opinions of individuals altered cases. In the face of the action of Mr. Farrer in publishing a treatise on Free Trade, he did not think that any act had been done by Mr. Fottrell which could be construed into a justification for his compulsory retirement or dismissal. He was undoubtedly the author of certain articles which were subsequently published in the form of a pamphlet by the proprietors of *The Freeman's Journal*, and the real and honest purpose of which was the promotion of what were known as the Bright Clauses of the Land Act. The intention was to circulate information in an easily accessible form. Mr. Fottrell did not propose that the articles should be re-published, and although they were published by the Land Commissioners, it was not at his instigation. Copies of the pamphlet were sent to him, and that was the way in which he became acquainted with the fact of their publication. Numbers of landlords and other persons having applied to him for information on the subject, and he having given them copies of the pamphlet, which, no doubt, contained suggestions that ought not to have been endorsed by the Land Commissioners, and satisfaction having been expressed at the technical information conveyed by the publication in clear and popular language, Mr. Fottrell suggested to the Secretary to the Commission that it would be a convenient thing, not to re-publish, but to procure a number of the pamphlets and circulate them. Now, if that had been done, he did not think the suggestion of Mr. Fottrell would have constituted so grievous an offence as would have justified the punishment which had been visited upon him. But a London Department, acting upon the red-tape system, entered into a calculation; without Mr. Fottrell's knowledge of the business in any way, the Stationery Department were requisitioned by Mr. Godley to procure a number of the pamphlets, not endorsed by the Land Commissioners, but those issued by an independent establishment, for which no one was responsible; that Department calculated that by appropriating the copyright, so to speak, they could save 2½*d.* a copy, and they proceeded to save it by re-publishing the pamphlets through the Queen's Printer. The mistake was that they were issued with the apparant sanction of the Government through the Queen's Printer's office in Dublin, and that really constituted the gravamen of the charge. The point was that they were, in fact, Government documents. For all this Mr. Fottrell had no kind of responsibility. If it was the business of any person to look to it, the entire responsibility must be divided between the Secretary to the

Land Commissioners and the Stationery Office; the Solicitor to the Commissioners had nothing to do with it whatsoever. But because of his supposed connection with the Irish Land League; because of the assertion, which although frequently contradicted, had been still more frequently reiterated, that Mr. Fottrell had been at one time solicitor to the Land League, and had been acting generally for the Land League; because of the well-known fact that he entertained very advanced opinions on the Land Question, and was most anxious that the Bright Clauses should operate, the whole violence of the Conservative attack fell upon Mr. Fottrell. That attack was, however, not directed against him. It was directed against the Land Commission. The Conservatives concentrated their forces; the Government yielded to the attack, deserted the Land Commission, and pressed upon them the dismissal of Mr. Fottrell, while the Commissioners, showing even greater weakness, yielded in their turn, and made Mr. Fottrell the scapegoat. He believed that no hon. Member would rise in his place and say that the Commissioners had not experienced a serious loss in depriving themselves of the services of Mr. Fottrell, and they would doubless have to wait more than the few weeks indicated by the noble Lord the Financial Secretary to the Treasury before they met with another gentleman of equal zeal and ability to supply his place. Certainly, he did not think, now that the business was over, that they had any reason for congratulating themselves with reference to the course they had taken or the way they had treated Mr. Fottrell in this transaction.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) pointed out that the Act provided that the Land Commission might from time to time, with the consent of the Lord Lieutenant, appoint or remove a solicitor. The appointment was sanctioned by the Lord Lieutenant; but the responsibility with regard to it rested entirely with the Land Commissioners, who were an independent and judicial body. As to Mr. Fottrell's competency for the office of Solicitor to the Commissioners, he was appointed by them after careful inquiry, and was furnished by no less a person than the Lord Chancellor under the late Administration with the highest testimonial. Therefore, having that agreement on all sides as to his competency, no one could doubt it. When the letters were re-published in pamphlet form, Mr. Fottrell found the pamphlets useful in the Office, because they gave practical information as to the working of the Bright Clauses, and they were given by him to a few persons who made inquiry on that subject. Mr. Fottrell's own account was, that assuming it would be useful, he suggested that the Secretary to the Commissioners should get the pamphlets purchased and issued under the authority of the Commission. Mr. Godley, the Secretary, not looking into the matter at once with the amount of care that he ought to have bestowed upon it, acted on impulse and sanctioned the issue of them under the authority of the Land Commissioners, and having done so he did not communicate the fact to the Land Commission, which was, he believed, at Belfast at the time. The question then arose which had been referred to by the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray), and it was found that it would be a matter of cheaper and easier printing if the pamphlet was re-printed and published through the Queen's Printer's office. It was always the fact that after an event everybody was very wise. The Secretary was reprimanded in strong terms by the Commissioners; but, at the same time, they did not think that the part he had taken in the matter required his removal, and, of course, the House must trust a judicial body in the exercise of its judicial functions. There was just one other matter to which he wished to refer. It had been suggested that Mr. Fottrell was a gentleman of Liberal opinions, and that the other official was not visited with dismissal because he was a Conservative. That was the first time he had ever heard that Mr. Godley's opinions were Conservative; his opinions were, as he (the Attorney General for Ireland) believed, pronounced Liberal. But, however this might be, political considerations had nothing whatever to do with the matter.

Mr. GRAY said, that what he had meant to say was that the offence, if an offence had been committed, was not one which ought to have been dealt with in the way it had been dealt with. Was there any doubt in the mind of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland that the Land Commission, if left to themselves, would have been desirous to retain the services of Mr. Fottrell? The right hon. and learned Gentleman had not referred to one point that had been raised. The right hon. and learned Gentleman stated that the appointments rested solely with the Commissioners. Why, a fortnight before the appointment the applicants were over in London seeking the interest, not of the Commissioners, but of the Government. That was a notorious fact; and, indeed, had not the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary spoken of the appointment of Mr. Fottrell as if it was made by him? The Commissioners nominally had the appointment, but in reality it rested with the Government, as everybody knew. If the Commissioners were so totally independent and acted solely on their own responsibility, he wished to know why the Chief Secretary ordered that the question should be put to Mr. Fottrell so that he should criminate himself? Did the Attorney General for Ireland justify that action on the part of the Chief Secretary?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, there was no or order, anything tantamount to an order. The matter became one of public notoriety and public investigation. The pamphlet was issued with the Royal Arms upon it and involved the Government; it contained distinctly objectionable matter. Accordingly, the Government had no alternative but through their recognized channel the Chief Secretary, who was practically at the head of the Irish Executive, to request the Judges to make an investigation in the matter, as he apprehended would have been done in a like case in England or elsewhere. If the Judges had declined to do so, he did not see what power the Chief Secretary would have had to compel them; but, at the same time, if he were a Judge himself—not that he was at all likely to be—[*A laugh*]—he would withdraw that remark, as the House appeared to wish it, and would say that he was sure if hon. Gentlemen could put themselves in the position of the Judges they would feel that, in a case of such public notoriety, inquiry was necessary. The hon. Member (Mr. Gray) said that the Judges had acted unwillingly. No doubt they had, and there was no wonder they should. He supposed there was no one who did an unpleasant thing willingly; but, still, sometimes he must do it. The Judges did make the inquiry, with the result already stated.

MR. A. MOORE said, it would be very satisfactory, before they passed from the consideration of this Vote, if some precise and definite information could be given as to what steps were being taken in connection with the Purchase Clauses. After a good deal of trouble it had been elicited that the operation of the Purchase Clauses of the Act of 1870 had been for years practically stopped; and he would now like to know what steps were being taken in respect to the matter, and what support the Land Commission was giving for the purpose of carrying those clauses into effect? The powers given to the Land Commission were threefold—first, to advance money to tenants to purchase their holdings; secondly, to purchase whole estates with the object of re-selling them; and, thirdly, they were empowered to negotiate between landlord and tenant with the view of facilitating the transition of land from the hand of one class to the other. It was a matter of notoriety that at the present time there was an enormous amount of land passing into the Land Court; but Judge Flanagan, in the exercise of a wise discretion, was holding back a large amount of Irish land. Now, if a proper organization were set on foot it was quite possible the wishes of the Legislature might be carried out more rapidly than at present. He believed there was a large number of estates that Judge Flanagan was unwilling to sell, simply because he could not do justice to the owners, the mortgagees, or to any of the persons interested. The other day he noticed from a report of the proceedings of the Court that Judge Flanagan was compelled to sell property at 50 per cent under the price he had been offered for it 12 months previously, and that the Judge said—

> "I have done my best to hold back this property for a certain time, but I suppose the 'massacre of the innocents' must at length begin."

["Hear!"] He did not see that the selling of a man's property for half its value, entailing, as it would do in some cases, a large amount of trouble and positive ruin upon those concerned, was a matter for rejoicing, It would be satisfactory to the Committee, considering that the real and true and highest hope of the country rested in the proper development of the Purchase Clauses, to know what steps were being taken by the Land Commission towards the development and working of those clauses.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, the hon. Member seemed to consider the interference of the British Treasury in the matter unreasonable. He seemed to forget that it was provided by the Act that properties should be purchased from Irish landlords by the Commission only when it could be done without loss. The hon. Gentleman said that at the present time no one could be induced to give a reasonable price for the properties; and what he wanted was that the British Treasury should come forward and give a price which no one else would give for them. [Mr. A. Moore: No, no.] The hon. Member might say "No, no;" but he certainly wished the Treasury to buy lands at a fair price at a time when he himself asserted properties were being sold for half their value. He (Sir George Campbell) had always considered that the Land Act contemplated the purchase of lands only where there was a reasonable prospect of its being done without loss. If the Treasury were to give prices for land that no one else would give, it was evident the taxpayers of Great Britain must be prepared to put their hands in their pockets.

The CHAIRMAN: I would remind the Committee that we are travelling away from the subject in discussing the general working of the Land Act. I understand the hon. Member for Clonmel to ask what staff is included in these Estimates for carrying into effect the Purchase Clauses of the Land Act? That is quite within the scope of the Vote; but a general discussion of the Land Act is clearly beyond it.

Mr. A. MOORE said, he never suggested, even in the most distant manner, that the British Treasury should do anything of the kind supposed by the hon. Baronet. If the hon. Gentleman had made himself better acquainted with the clauses of the Act he did so much to assist to pass, he would have understood his (Mr. Moore's) remarks. There was a fixed sum placed at the disposal of the Commission, and the responsibility rested on them to invest that sum wisely. When land was at a depression of 50 per cent, he should not think the time at all inopportune for purchase.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, that by the Land Act all powers with respect to the Purchase Clauses were transferred to the Land Commission from the Board of Works, and the first step taken by the Commission in the matter was to appoint a chief agent. They thought they could not do better than appoint the agent to whose exertions, according to universal admission, the success of the sales under the Bright Clauses was due. The duty of this agent was to promote, as far as possible, the successful working of the clauses.

Mr. GIBSON said, at the commencement of the discussion he alluded to what he conceived the great importance of the appointment of valuators. Mr. Gray had been appointed valuator for one year. If Mr. Gray was to be head valuator to the Land Commission, if he was to advise them and had to make reports on which they would act, one year was no tenure for him to hold by. It was absurd to expect to get the services of highly-trained and competent valuators if they could be shunted at the end of a year. Valuators would prefer to go about from Commission to Commission giving evidence, sometimes for the landlords and sometimes for the tenant, than to act as a kind of Judge-valuator for one year only. It struck him that at present the arrangements in this respect were anything but satisfactory. The other matter to which he called attention, and on which his apprehensions had not been relieved by explanation, was the appointment of assistant valuators.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he thought two had been appointed.

Mr. GIBSON said, he would like to know who they were. He had heard of the proposed appointment of Mr. Murphy—a gentleman he never saw, but whom he understood was a gentleman of great ability. He had heard it distinctly stated that the Land Commissioners were very desirous to obtain the services of Mr. Murphy, and that he was willing to serve if he should be paid at the rate at which Mr. Gray was paid, or at some other reasonable figure. It was said that the Treasury, however, refused to sanction the payment, and the consequence was the valuable services of Mr. Murphy were lost to the Land Commission. He had said on public platforms, and he would now say in the House itself, that if this was the fact it was a gross public scandal. It was of the greatest importance to know who were the assistant valuators, and it was legitimate to inquire what the Government intended to do in reference to the tenure of these gentlemen. There were 36 of such gentlemen, upon whom very great and important duties were imposed by the Act. Twelve of them had a tenure of seven years—that was, they had a tenure as long as two of the Chief Commissioners themselves. The other 24 gentlemen had only a tenure of 12 months, and he would like to know under what Rule this tenure was regulated? He understood that the tenure of the Assistant Commissioners should be for seven years, and that the salary of the legal one should be £1,000, and of the non-legal one £750. He should like to know, then, under which of the Rules it was that the tenure of the last 24 appointed had been cut down to 12 months? He would also like to know whether the Government, at the end of the 12 months, intended to give more stability to the tenure of the 24 assistant valuators, and free them from the great uncertainty which surrounded their appointment, and which, from every point of view, deprived them of the semblance of independence? He was anxious to give every independence that could be given to the Assistant Commissioners, so that they should feel free and independent when they were giving their decisions. He was entitled to ask if it was intended by the Government, at the end of the first 12 months' tenure, to re-appoint the Assistant Commissioners for another term of 12 months only? He would be glad to know when it was intended to lay the Rules of the Land Commission on the Table of the House? And he would like to know, bearing in mind the statements that were made by the First Lord of the Treasury and the Chief Secretary when the Land Act was passing through Parliament, when they were to have the statements laid on the Table of the House as to the tenure and qualification, and names, and other particulars of the Assistant Commissioners? When the Land Bill was in Committee, they were distinctly told that they need not wait for the Annual Report for such information, for the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government stated, in answer to his (Mr. Gibson's) criticisms, that they would anticipate the Annual Report by a short statement, which would at once be laid before Parliament, indicating the names, qualifications, tenure, and other particulars of the Assistant Commissioners. That had not been done up to the present, and he did not think any further delay should be permitted. There was another matter to which he would invite the attention of the noble Lord. There was a large sum set down in the Estimate for travelling expenses —£9,400. He would like some explanation of that item. Were these travelling and personal expenses for the administration of the Act by the Assistant Commissioners; were the Assistant Commissioners paid lodging money and travelling expenses, and had they to make a Report of their travelling? These facts were important, with regard to the visits they paid the farms and other matters which were open to legitimate criticism. He did not wish to go into minute details and matters of small moment, but it was important that some explanation should be given as to how the amount given in the Estimate was made up. Hon. Members should be informed how much was for the lodging and how much for travelling, and what the travelling was? Was it travelling from town to town, or was it travelling to make the inspection, and, if so, how much was put down for inspection? He would say nothing about "incidental expenses," as he supposed, in connection with a matter of such magnitude as this that they would have to be incurred; but there was another item he would like some explanation upon, and this would be the last he would refer to. In the matter of "Survey and Valuation," he was struck by the smallness of the figure—£200. He should like to know what valuation cost that very small sum; and he should like also to be informed whether the surveys and valuations were made by the chief valuer or other valuers, or by the surveyors; and whether the surveys and valuations were made for the purpose of fixing the rents by the Assistant Commissioners? He should like, in connection with this, to know whether there were any canons of valuation laid down for the guidance of the valuators who were employed by the Assistant Commissioners? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) had drawn attention, in a Return he had asked for, to the fact that when the late Sir Richard Griffith made his great valuation of Ireland, he deemed it necessary—as it was obviously necessary—to give minute details indicating the general principles which should guide the valuators in making their valuations, and these documents were often appealed to. The Committee had a right now to ask what instructions were given to the valuators employed to make the surveys and valuations, both by the Assistant Commissioners and the Chief Commissioners. Did they merely turn the valuators loose on the farms, and tell them to make such valuations as they thought fit in their discretion, or did they give them some indications as to the general principles on which they were to proceed? It might be that the noble Lord was not in a position just now to answer this question; but he (Mr. Gibson) would be glad if at some time some explanation were given to the Committee on the point.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, that with regard to the Valuators, as he had already stated, he could not speak with certainty as to the terms on which they were appointed. This, however, he could say, that the terms of the appointments were satisfactory to the gentlemen selected, and that these gentlemen were considered by the Chief Commissioners perfectly qualified to perform the functions of their offices. [Mr. Gibson: What is their tenure?] The terms sanctioned by the Treasury were such as to secure the appointment of men well qualified for the work. The next Question put to him was with regard to the Rules of the Land Commission. They had been laid on the Table, and he had no doubt would be very shortly circulated. With respect to the tenure of the Assistant Commissioners, it was at first contemplated to make the appointments for seven years. These was a great number of cases entered for hearing; but it was not certain whether applications to the Court would continue to be made in large numbers for more than a limited period; therefore it was thought undesirable to appoint gentlemen for a number of years when, at the expiration of the first year, they might be absolutely unemployed. The right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson) asked what would be the tenure of these gentlemen at the expiration of the first year? Well, as to that, the Government would be better able to judge when the 12 months expired. Therefore, he would ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman to repeat his Question at the end of the first year. With regard to travelling and expenses, speaking from recollection, he believed there was so much allowed for fares, and so much for day and night expenses—£1 or £1 1*s.*—and the actual travelling expenses. This amounted to a large sum; but when they remembered the number of Assistant Commissioners at work, they would not be surprised at its magnitude. As to the amount for surveys and valuations, the right hon. and learned Gentleman was surprised that it was so small; but one reason was that the Ordnance Survey did what was required free of charge. The Valuation Department also rendered great service to the Land Commission in supplying information as to the Government valuation. The charge made in the Estimate was for copying some of the valuations received from the Valuation Department. This Sub-head did not, he thought, include any expenses connected with the valuations.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: The noble Lord has omitted to answer one or two questions put to him by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). The right hon. and learned Gentleman insisted, first of all, upon the necessity of indicating some of the principles of valuation which are to guide the valuers. He referred to very important principles laid down by Sir Richard Griffith when the valuation of Ireland was undertaken by him many years ago. The Committee have not, however, heard what the principles are which are to guide the valuators in discharging the duties they have undertaken. It has not even been stated whether any principles have been indicated. I will not now enter into the question that stands for consideration by the House next Tuesday; but I assume, as a matter of fact, that it is quite impossible that the Government can have intrusted the duty of valuing property without having, in some degree, indicated to the officers who were to carry out the valuation the principles on which they were to proceed. [MR. GLADSTONE: The Government have no authority.] The right hon. Gentleman says the Government have no authority. Well, it appears to me impossible to conceive that those who are intrusted by the Government with the carrying out of this important measure —this great Act, which is practically to revolutionize the principles on which the ownership of property rests in Ireland— can have trusted to the Sub-Commissioners to value the property of Ireland without having given some directions to them as to the principles on which they are to administer the Act and discharge their duty. I assume that some principles were laid down for their guidance, and that they were not, as my right hon. and learned Friend said, told to undertake the duty without any indication or suggestion whatever being made to them as to the principles to be followed. There was another point to which my right hon. and learned Friend referred. He said there was a distinct undertaking on the part of my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, that the names and qualifications, and tenure, and salaries of the officers should be communicated to Parliament immediately on its re-assembling. That was an undertaking as explicit as it is possible for an undertaking to be; but, so far as I know, it has not been carried out. I remember myself rising in my place and putting to the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant the great importance, the absolute importance, of assuring not only Parliament, but the country, that the officers who were to administer the Act should be officers in whom the most complete confidence could be placed; and that in order to assure Parliament that confidence could be placed in them, it was absolutely essential that their qualification for the office to which they were appointed should be made known as soon as it was possible to make it known. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. E. Forster) said it was not necessary to introduce into the Act a clause to compel the Government to make known the qualifications of the Sub-Commissioners, for, of course, the Government would do it immediately Parliament assembled. We all thought it would be done; but I am afraid the information required has not been given. Then, I regard the matter of tenure to be a very great thing. My right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson) has alluded to the fact that the tenure is very short. I should be reluctant to place on the public funds any charge in the slightest degree in excess of that which they should bear; but in a matter of this kind, which concerns the peace, good order, and well-being of the country—and the well-being of the country for a much longer time than we can venture to think of at the present moment—it is of the highest importance that the tenure of office of the Sub-Commissioners should be one that will secure confidence in the administration of justice by those who have to administer it. It appears to me a matter of deep importance that the officers who have to decide the future of the country for many years to come should have a tenure of office other than one simply at pleasure.

MR. GLADSTONE: I think the right hon. Gentleman hardly intends to complain that it was the duty of Her Majesty's Government, on a sudden emergency of this kind, to have appointed 36 gentlemen to administer the Act for a term of seven years. I do not suppose he intends to go that length; but, if he does, I entirely differ with him. It seems to me that would have been a most improper course. I can believe it is the duty of the Government to give the best assurances they can—according to the knowledge they have—as to tenure. The original appointments that were made may be termed experimental appointments; but I deny that they were appointments simply during pleasure. They were experimental, and necessarily so from the nature of the case, for it is one of the difficulties in an Act of this kind— under which there are judicial functions to be performed, novel in their character and uncertain—that you cannot secure the advantages of a suitable, regular, equal, and working system, but must endeavour to have a system and method which is elastic, and adapt your judicial means to the work to be done. We have had the disadvantage of working a short period and without knowing exactly what was necessary to be done; but the arrangements that have been made were such as seemed necessary as matters stood, and I do not think there would be any advantage at the present moment in altering them. The best thing we can do is to wait a few months, and we shall then know a great deal more than we know at present, both with regard to the amount of work to be done and the rate at which it has to be done. We shall be anxious to give all the information we can, and to take the best measures we can for meeting the various demands of the case in the course of the present Session. As to the question of the rate at which the work is to be done, the House probably was surprised last night to hear my hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General for Ireland set forth the remarkable acceleration of the business in the Courts during the month of February, as compared with the rate of progress during the preceding months, although there had been no lack of diligence on the part of the Assistant Commissioners. At first operations were slow, owing to the difficulty attending initial stages with regard to machinery and rules. Another point raised by the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson) was the engagement of Her Majesty's Government to produce an account with respect to the Sub-Commissioners to be appointed. It is quite true it was stated that it would not be necessary to wait for the conclusion of the year's operations; but it is no part of my duty to look to the redemption of that engagement. I am quite sure the Chief Secretary, if he were here, would be able to give a better account than I can. If there should by an accident, in the midst of an immense amount of work and number of engagements, have been a remissness in this matter, we will look into it and endeavour to give the information desired at the earliest possible time.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I am glad to hear what has fallen from the right hon. Gentleman as to an account of the Sub-Commissioners. The House expected, when this Act was passed last year, that the Chief Commissioners themselves would, at the commencement, have gone into the different localities in Ireland, and written the line at the head of the copy-book, so to speak—have laid down some sort of rule for the guidance of the Sub-Commissioners. I very much regret that they did not do so. We trusted these gentlemen. The Bill would never have been allowed to pass if the names of the Chief Commissioners had not met with the approval of the House and been put into it. These gentlemen, I contend, should themselves have visited the different Provinces and counties in order to show what their interpretation of the Act was. There was one part of the observations of my right hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gibson) to which the Prime Minister has not accorded an answer, and that was whether, in the absence of personal visits to the localities by the Chief Commissioners, there were not some general principles laid down by them and communicated to the Sub-Commissioners? That is what we especially want to know. These gentlemen were trusted with the execution of this Act on the faith of their great name and standing in the country. If they had gone round themselves and given a sort of plea as to the meaning of the Act, and as to how different cases were to be dealt with, the state of the case would have been very different; but they did not do that, and therefore one may say that the putting of this Act into operation was handed over to the Sub-Commissioners. What we want to know, therefore, is, when these Sub-Commissioners were appointed?—I will not say what instructions were given them, because they would not be instructions, but what general principles were laid down for their guidance? An hon. Member the other night said that, whether you take Ireland by Provinces or counties, you find pretty much the same line of policy followed by the Sub-Commissioners—whoever they are —whether they are those who were first appointed or those who were appointed last. He went further, and said something which struck me very much. He declared—

> "It has not been denied, although it has been frequently pointed out, that whether the farms are highly rack-rented or not rack-rented, the reductions are pretty much the same. The Sub-Commissioners do not seem to be guided by the extent of rack-renting, but they have made a general reduction of something like 25 per cent."

I do not know whether that is so or not. ["No, no!"] Well, that is a point upon which I want information. All I say is that that was an accusation made by an hon. Member who spoke the other night, and it has never been denied by any Member of the Government up to the present time.

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: There has been a Return on the subject.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: No answer has been given to that speech since it was made. We want to hear something from the Government on this matter, which, however, is only incidental to the question I am putting, and which the Committee is entitled, I think, to have answered. Were any general principles laid down for the guidance of the Sub-Commissioners who were to be appointed; and if the Attorney General for Ireland will be good enough to state that to the Committee? I will ask him further, if that is so, what are the general principles so laid down, and were the instructions to the Assistant Commissioners communicated in writing or not? That is a very plain question, to which, I hope, we shall have a very plain answer from the right hon. and learned Gentleman. Before I sit down I would add a query which has fallen from my right hon. Friend the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith), and which deserves great consideration—namely, what is the tenure of the last-appointed Commissioners? I quite agree with the Prime Minister that in an ordinary case it would not have been well to saddle the country for five or seven years with a charge for a flood of officers who would not be required after 12 or 18 months. But in a case of this kind, where you have 570,000 people who may have recourse to the Court, you must have known, if your Act was to succeed at all, you would have a great many applications, and that it was not at all improbable that for the first two or three years the Sub-Commissioners would have a great amount of labour to perform. The fact of paying a few thousands a year more out of the Exchequer was really an absolute trifle compared with what was really the main object we wanted to establish by this Act of Parliament. We wanted to establish this—that those who were to have the administration of the Act should be absolutely independent. It would have been better to have paid five or six or seven years' salary to these Sub-Commissioners, rather than have left them uncertain of a renewal of their appointment at the end of the first year.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, the Government had no authority, and, therefore, could not possibly give any instructions or directions either to the Land Commission, or Assistant Commissioners, or valuers. The 43rd section of the Statute provided that the Land Commission might delegate to any Sub-Commission such of the powers by the Act conferred upon the Land Commission as they thought expedient, and might from time to time revoke, alter, or modify any of the powers so delegated to the Sub-Commission. That delegation, whatever it was, he apprehended was an instruction. In reply to the right hon. Member for King's Lynn (Mr. Bourke), today he had given an undertaking to lay on the Table a copy of the delegation; therefore, so far as that was concerned, the House would see what those instructions were. Beyond that Her Majesty's Government could not go. If the Committee wanted any other instructions given to the Sub-Commissioners by the Land Commission, application must be made to the Land Commission, because the Government knew nothing at all about it. ["Oh, oh!"] Probably there were hon. Members present who thought it was the duty of the Government to control and supervise the Land Commission. He confessed he was not of that opinion. It was the duty of the Land Commission to discharge their own functions independently, and it was not the duty of the Government to interfere with them in the discharge of those functions. The next point to which reference was made was the tenure of the Assistant Commissioners. The tenure of the first who were appointed was according to the Rules laid on the Table of the House, and dated 1st October last. The Statute directed that the persons appointed should have the prescribed qualifications and hold office for the prescribed times. The Rules of October accordingly prescribed for the Assistant Commissioners appointed under them the term of seven years. In reply also to the right hon. Member for King's Lynn, he had stated that the subsequent appointments made since the 9th of November, 1881, were made pursuant to a further Rule, which was also laid on the Table to be printed. He had asked for it whilst this discussion had been going on, but had been unable to obtain it. It had been laid on the Table, but had not yet been printed; he apprehended that it would necessarily be printed as a public document. But the Assistant Commissioners appointed under that Rule of November held office for one year certain. As to the reduction of rents, of course, to strike an average all round gave no conclusion of any value whatever; but anyone who looked at the Returns furnished would find that in some cases there had been no alteration in the rents, whilst in others some had been reduced and others had been only triflingly raised. He had not provided himself with the figures, because he had not anticipated that the point would crop up. There were some cases where the reductions were slight, in others where they were considerable; in fact, the reductions made varied from 2 or 3 per cent to 50 per cent. The rent was, and must be, fixed having regard to the circumstances of each case. The right hon. Gentleman had suggested that the large amount of business to be disposed of, the large number of persons who might be expected to go into Court, and the large number who, in point of fact, had already served originating notices, made it appear that some means to make the administration of the Act more rapid were required. He, however, did not think the facts already presented would of necessity justify that suggestion, for the Return which the Solicitor General for Ireland had quoted from last night showed that nearly half the amount had been arranged out of Court; and the longer the Act was in work the more smoothly it might be expected to work, and the more numerous, he apprehended, would be the cases amicably settled out of Court. As an illustration of this, he would mention that he had received a letter to-day from the South of Ireland, near Bandon, in which this statement was made—

> "The valuator, who was called on the part of the landlord, was employed on the part of the landlord to value the estate. He went over and valued it. The tenants appointed their valuator by agreement, and the tenants' valuator valued the estate also independently of the landlord's valuator."

The estate appeared to be a considerable one. Before the valuators entered upon their valuation they appointed an arbitrator, and the writer of the letter (Mr. Hooper) said—

> "I and the tenants' valuator sat down, and in three hours we had arranged the entire estate, with 10 exceptions, which the umpire disposed of."

He did not see why that desirable course should not go on largely in Ireland. The longer the Act was in work the less friction there would be in its working, the nearer landlords and tenants would come together and settle the points by mutual arrangement, as was a common practice before the Act was passed.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he wished to know whether any principles had been laid down for the guidance of the Sub-Commissioners and valuators; and whether there would be any objection to a Return, containing such principles, being presented?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) replied, that he thought it would be better to inquire in the first instance. The Prime Minister had no information on that subject at present; but, of course, an inquiry could be made.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he hoped the right hon. and learned Gentleman would make an inquiry and answer the question in a day or two.

Mr. TOTTENHAM inquired when the Return from which the Solicitor General for Ireland had quoted would be laid on the Table? He did not think it quite fair to those who had to make observations on these points that a Return should again be sprung upon them. He also wished to know whether it was not a matter of fact that in the Returns which had been published the vast majority of cases had shown reductions of between 20 and 30 per cent, and that the next figure was between 30 and 40 per cent? Those were the results of such analysis as he had been able to make of the Returns presented. He further inquired whether it did not appear that on the date of those Returns the cases settled out of Court had been only 60?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter) said, he could only say in answer that the Return from which he had quoted had been previously laid on the Table. It had not then been printed, but he had a manuscript copy of it. With regard to the reductions—

in the Province of Connaught, where they were largest, the average reduction was 28·60 per cent, and in the Province of Leinster, where they were the least, the average was 21·5 per cent.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS explained, that what he had alluded to in his question was any instructions or principles that might have been laid down by the Chief Commissioners. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland had stated that he would inquire upon that; but this very question had been down on the Paper in the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) for more than a week. Surely the Chief Secretary for Ireland, or the Attorney General for Ireland, or the Solicitor General for Ireland, ought to have been able to answer a simple question, of which Notice had been given more than a week ago, by this time.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): I can only plead guilty to not having done what, perhaps, I ought to have done, in consequence of the pressure of the proper business of my own Department.

MR. TOTTENHAM again asked when the Return from which the Solicitor General for Ireland had quoted would be in the hands of Members? It was no answer to his question to say that it had been laid on the Table, or that copies of it were in the possession of the Government. It ought also to have been in the hands of Members, in order that they might be in a position to answer the figures it contained.

MR. GLADSTONE said, it was a difficult thing to say when the printer would have the Return printed; and, whatever the right hon. Gentleman might think, it was impossible for the Government to state that positively. All they could do was to lay the Return on the Table; the printer was not under their direction.

MR. SEXTON said, a good deal had been heard of the printer last Session, when it happened that he was not able to produce Papers in time for them to be made use of. He (Mr. Sexton) had carefully studied the Returns—as the right hon. Gentleman had invited Members to do—he did not say as to particular Provinces, or in particular districts, or well-off parts of the country, where the tenants were comparatively well able to live, or where the improvements were of slight value, or where they were several times the value of the fee-simple. But he had found that throughout the average reduction was about 25 per cent, and that the Sub-Commissioners had kept over Griffith's valuation. He was quite unable to understand how this universally identical result had been arrived at. The Prime Minister had dropped an observation with regard to a statement made by the Solicitor General for Ireland last night, and he appeared to desire to lead the Committee to the conclusion that the rate of speed shown by the Sub-Commissioners in arriving at their decisions had very much increased; and he conveyed the idea to the Committee that there had been considerable improvement in that respect. Now, the cases decided up to the end of January numbered 1,300; the number in February 1,000. But how did the Solicitor General for Ireland proceed? By taking credit to the Sub-Commissioners for the cases settled out of Court. Why had these cases been settled out of Court? The fact that they had been settled out of Court was the most damning and fatal fact against the Sub-Commissioners. The tenants, seeing the hopelessness of seeking to obtain judicial decisions for months and, perhaps, years, were in many parts accepting any terms the landlords chose to offer. The Sub-Commissioners had shown fatal facility in too many cases in making vexatious and needless decisions. The Attorney General for Ireland said these cases would become more numerous. No doubt they would. The more the conviction was forced home on the minds of the tenants that they need not hope for an early settlement, the more completely would they be at the mercy of the landlords. And why did the right hon. and learned Gentleman leave out of view the fact that most of these tenants were two or three years in arrear? If, in such a case, there was no chance of a decision for two or three years, would not the landlord, under threat of eviction to recover the arrears, impose any terms on the tenant? These settlements out of Court were direct testimony to the inefficiency of the Land Act. A thousand cases were heard in February; that was an increase, but, even so, it was only 12,000 cases a-year, and it would take six years to deal with the cases awaiting hearing. And, further, whatever had been gained in speed had been lost in public utility, for the discontent with the decisions had grown during February. The indication by the Prime Minister that the reductions would be lower in future had produced an immediate effect on the Sub-Commissioners; and although, of course, the Sub-Commissioners were independent judicial officers, there were many ways—by a postscript to a letter or a speech in the House of Commons—by which judicial independence might be at least sapped, if not overthrown. The Government were so in love with their Act——

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member cannot, under a Vote for the Officers of the Land Commission, discuss the general principles of the Act.

MR. SEXTON, continuing, said, the Sub-Commissioners in Armagh, which was in Ulster, had recently valued an estate belonging to Mr. Francis William Pope, and their decision had given such grave dissatisfaction that the hon. Member for the county (Mr. Richardson) had felt it his duty to send a valuator over the estate after the decision had been given, and that valuator had arrived at the same conclusion as the tenant's valuator. And a most remarkable scene was witnessed a few weeks ago in that locality. During the popularity of the Act which they thought was to be their one salvation and hope, the tenants gave a singular proof of that popularity by publicly burning two of the Armagh Sub-Commissioners in effigy; and the newspaper report stated that the burning of the effigies was carried out with the utmost enthusiasm by the farmers of that district, and also that they adopted a resolution asking for the dismissal of the Sub-Commissioners. These were proofs of popularity to which he (Mr. Sexton) would have a very strong objection if he had been concerned in the production of the Land Act. The Attorney General for Ireland had quoted an Irish proverb—that "the best goaler is always on the ditch." There was at this moment a curious official illustration of that proverb. The Chief Secretary was supposed to know more about the work before the Commissioners than anyone else; but where was he? It was his business to be in the House to answer important Questions rather than to be away on the ditches in Clare, making speeches to a small army of police and soldiers.

MR. J. N. RICHARDSON said, it was perfectly true that he had from time received letters, finding fault with the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners, from tenants who had considered the reductions made in their cases too low. He had also been asked from time to time to take part in meetings to find fault with the Sub-Commissioners' decisions; but he had uniformly declined to do so, believing that, as a Member of that House, it was not his business to sit in judgment upon the Sub-Commissioners. He had not thought any the less of the Land Act because of these complaints; his belief was that, so long as the Sub-Commissioners satisfied neither party, they could not be very far from right. With regard to the burning of the Sub-Commissioners in effigy, he had heard nothing of it. [MR. SEXTON: It was reported in the newspapers.] He had not seen the report. It might have happened, for in some parts of Ireland effigies were sometimes burned. He believed that the late Lord Beaconsfield had been burned in effigy; and he knew the present Prime Minister had been; and he himself had been burned in effigy on the back of the Prime Minister. They were not, however, burned in effigy by supporters of the Liberal Party, or of the Party whom the hon. Members opposite (the Home Rule Members) wished to represent, but by the supporters of the Opposition.

MR. A. MOORE said, he thought it extraordinary that hon. Members should rise at this moment to complain of the slowness of the Sub-Commissioners. What amazed him was the forgetfulness into which hon. Members fell from time to time. Was the Committee aware that the whole of Tipperary was at this moment covered with placards, signed by Mr. Egan, telling the tenants not to pay rent and not to go into Court? Yet the Sub-Commissioners were to bear the blame of delay, while the whole force of the Land League organization was being directed against not only paying rent, but going into Court. When the Commissioners went to his town (Clonmel), not a tenant ventured to go into Court, for the word had gone forth that it would not be safe to do so. A number of tenants were most anxious to accept the most generous offer of their landlords to pay 75 per cent of rent down, and leave 25 per cent unpaid. Nothing could have been fairer; but when the tenants were prepared with their cases to go before the Court, shots were fired into their houses. In the case of one man, a bullet was fired into his house, and struck his daughter on the back, though happily without inflicting any serious wound. And in the yard the man found a notice on the wall to this effect—"No rent; no Court. Moonlight will call again." That was the reason why the tenants did not go into Court, and the Act had not worked more rapidly; and, until these outrages were put down, the Act could not possibly work well.

MR. GRAY said, it was evident that the abstention of tenants, either because of intimidation or for other reasons, from going into Court had nothing to do with the rate at which the Court could deal with the cases submitted to it. The two matters were totally distinct. He wished to ask the Attorney General for Ireland for an explanation on one or two points. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had stated that it was not the duty of the Government to interfere with the functions conferred on the Chief Commissioners by Parliament in reference to the appointment of the Sub-Commissioners, and had pointed to a section of the Act vesting the appointment of the Sub-Commissioners in the Chief Commissioners, and not in the Government. He wished to know whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman adhered to that statement?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, he had already promised to further inquire into that matter, and to lay the copy of the delegation to the Sub-Commissioners on the Table.

MR. GRAY observed, that the right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had tried to get from the Government a statement as to whether they would be in a position to lay on the Table a Return of the grounds or principles upon which any instructions they had given to the Sub-Commissioners had been based, and of the principles upon which valuations were to be conducted. He was rather inclined to fear that, even if the Government were disposed to grant such a statement, they would probably be told by the Commissioners that they had not a copy of such instructions. It was a very remarkable fact that while important statements were usually made with care and deliberation, and copies were kept, yet in the case of the Land Commissioners copies of statements were not accessible at all. The right hon. Gentleman probably knew to what he was alluding, as he had placed a Motion on the Paper in reference to the matter. The noble Lord (Lord Frederick Cavendish) had explained the small amount in the Estimate on account of valuations by the fact that the Government Valuation Office had placed at the disposal of the Commissioners copies of their maps. It appeared to him that the business would have been simplified if the Sub-Commissioners had availed themselves of the valuations as well as the maps. All the travelling expenses would have been saved, and the same results arrived at. In regard to the case of Mr. Fottrell, the Attorney General had said that when any action had been committed for which the Government were more or less responsible, they were entitled to ask the Department concerned to make an investigation. No one contested that assertion for a moment, and no one could question the propriety of the letter of the Chief Secretary on that matter, which had been laid on the Table. But the letter to which he (Mr. Gray) had alluded was not the printed letter, but a private letter. Was the right hon. and learned Gentleman not aware that there was a private letter from the Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner, Judge O'Hagan, requesting him to ask Mr. Fottrell whether he was the author of certain articles which appeared in the newspapers? He could inform the right hon. and learned Gentleman that there was such a letter, and the Chief Secretary had acknowledged that in a postscript to that letter he suggested that that question should be put to Mr. Fottrell. And Mr. Fottrell, in the published letter, had stated that the Commissioners, in accordance with the suggestion of the Chief Secretary, but with reluctance, had put a question which it was evident they would not have asked unless compelled. Did the Government justify that action, and would they lay the letter containing that postcript on the Table? That was the letter he had referred to, and not the ordinary published letter requiring an investigation which was perfectly natural.

Mr. CALLAN complained that although the Solicitor General for Ireland had spoken twice, and the Attorney General for Ireland several times, neither of them had given any information respecting what he called a scandalous job—the advertisement of certain material facts which were to be brought to the knowledge of the Irish tenantry. That advertisement was inserted in *The Scotsman* newspaper, a paper which had for the last twelve months vilified the character of the Irish people, and in which, day after day, the Irish Members were attacked in its London letter in a manner only worthy of contempt. He contended that it was a gross act of bribery to a Scotch newspaper which did not circulate in Ireland, and he should like to know for what reason the bribe was given. It could not be for giving information to the Irish people, and it could only be given in the shape of a pecuniary bribe to a Scotch newspaper. He wished to know if the advertisements were sent out to the newspapers from the office of the Land Commissioners or from the Office of the Irish Government? If no answer were vouchsafed to the question he would move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £750.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, he had already stated that he would inquire into the matter and undertake to furnish the House with particulars.

Mr. CALLAN said the answer quite satisfied him. He saw that the right hon. and learned Gentleman was so thoroughly ashamed of the transaction that he would not admit for a moment that the advertisements had been sent out from the Office of the Irish Government.

Mr. HEALY said, he was not surprised to find that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had not been able to reply to the queries put to him. The moment the name of Mr. Fottrell was mentioned the right hon. Gentleman the Premier gave a groan; but if he wished to see the Estimates passed quickly, that was not the way to succeed in his object. They were quite able to understand what these groans meant; but although the *clôture* was under discussion, the Government had not yet succeeded in passing it. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman that as long as the Irish Members considered any question worth debating they would debate it in spite of the groaning of the Prime Minister and of the whole Treasury Bench in chorus. He wished to ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General whether it was true that the tenants were obliged to describe the position and name of their farm according to the way in which they appeared upon the maps of the Ordnance Survey? He was not quite sure whether this requirement appeared on the face of the originating notice itself, but he believed that it did. They had heard a good deal that night as to the Ordnance Survey maps, and he was sure that a good many people in Ireland were prejudiced against them, and he would tell the Committee why. He understood that the nomenclature, as it appeared on these maps, was one for which a well-known Irish scholar — the late John O'Donovan—was, to a great extent, responsible; but, nevertheless, it was a fact that many of the names which appeared on the maps of the Ordnance Survey were names which were not known to the Irish people at all. The result was that they compelled the persons who paid 1*s.* for an originating notice to go 15 or 20 miles in order to obtain an Ordnance Survey map, or else to incur the expense of purchasing one, in order to satisfy the Commissioners, when it did not signify a button what they called the farm so long as it was capable of being identified. He wanted to know what reason or necessity there was for these vexatious requirements, and whether the Commissioners themselves would be supplied with the maps of the Ordnance Survey? As soon as an opportunity was afforded it was his intention to call the attention of the House to these extra requirements. He should like to ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman whether, as he was so delicate about interfering with the judicial action of the Commissioners, he considered it part of his functions, or that of any other right hon. Gentleman on the Treasury Bench, to ask the Chief Commissioners or the Sub-Commissioners whether, instead of enforcing this extra requirement, it would not be sufficient for the tenant to describe his farm, the number of acres upon it, the name of the landlord, and the name by which the the farm was ordinarily known? He could not understand why this extra requirement was attached to the originating notice, because, some 40 years ago, some person connected with the valuation thought fit to lay down a name for a particular farm, which might as well have been given in Arabic or Hindostanee, as it was not recognized generally.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, he thought it was hardly necessary to answer the question. This was certainly the first time he had ever heard any complaint upon the subject. He had not seen any complaint in any of the Irish newspapers, nor had he heard of any from any professional man. As to the accuracy of the maps of the Ordnance Survey, he entirely differed from the hon. Member. It was a matter in which Ireland was far in advance of England. England was only beginning to follow in her wake. The whole of the proceedings of the Landed Estates Court in Ireland, ever since the institution of that tribunal, had been based upon the Ordnance Survey. All the sales were verified by the Ordnance map, and there was not a person in Ireland interested in the sale of land who did not possess an Ordnance map of the locality with which he was connected. There were copies of it to be obtained in any library or public institution.

MR. HEALY remarked, that a tenant farmer with 10 acres of land did not often possess a library.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, there was no difficulty whatever in obtaining a copy of the Ordnance Survey, and this was the first time he had ever heard any objection raised to the accuracy of the Ordnance maps.

In reply to Mr. GRAY,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, he had never heard anything, either good, bad, or indifferent, in regard to the letter in the Fottrell correspondence, to which the hon. Member had referred. If he had not seen the letter it was not possible that he could answer the Question.

MR. GRAY remarked, that the right hon. and learned Gentleman represented the Chief Secretary in the absence of that right hon. Gentleman, and he was, therefore, the only person the Irish Members could appeal to for information.

MR. BIGGAR wished to put a Question to the right hon. and learned Attorney General in reference to this Vote in regard to the appointment of clerks. He was told that the Commissioners had represented that they would appoint clerks by competitive examination, and, accordingly, a number of persons made application to pass an examination, so that they might have a chance of securing some of the appointments. But before the time expired at which the examination was to take place, the greater part, if not the whole, of the appointments had been filled up by clerks who had passed no examination whatever. He only knew one clerk who had been appointed to a post under the Land Commission after undergoing an examination. He did happen to know one, and he was given to believe that the individual in question was the only one. It seemed to him that the course taken by the Commissioners in this respect was most objectionable, and he should be glad to learn if the right hon. and learned Gentleman was in a position to give any information upon the subject?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, he believed that some of the clerks had been taken over from the Church Temporalities Office, and it was not necessary that they should be required to undergo an examination. All the other clerks who were selected in order to start the Office were nominated and subjected to examination. Since the first appointments were made, all the clerks appointed in future would be placed on the same footing as the clerks in other Public Departments, and would only be appointed after competitive examination. It was possible that some of the clerks appointed in the first instance were brought up in batches; but they were all subjected to the same kind of examination, and all those appointed would in future be subjected to competition.

MR. CALLAN said, he wished to make a remark in reference to the Fottrell Correspondence. He desired to inform the right hon. and learned Gentleman that when the Chief Secretary read the celebrated postscript to the Correspondence, he challenged the right hon. Gentleman to lay a copy of the entire Correspondence upon the Table. Indeed, he had moved for it on Tuesday last, and accordingly the House would soon be placed in possession of this historical postscript.

Mr. SEXTON said, he thought that the explanation which had been given with regard to Mr. Fottrell was highly unsatisfactory. [*A laugh.*] It might be very amusing to some hon. Members; but the Irish Members considered it a very serious matter for the Government to appoint a decent man to a position and then to get rid of him. If they appointed him at all they should keep him. The explanation given on behalf of the Government was so unsatisfactory that he felt it his duty to move, by way of protest, the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £1,000. Up to the present moment he had not said a word on the subject of Mr. Fottrell; but if Mr. Fottrell had had the slightest connection with the Land League he (Mr. Sexton) would have known it. The League had one or two solicitors, and so far as the Irish Bar were concerned the Land League were the best employers that Bar had during last summer. He had been personally concerned in employing 10 or 12 barristers every week, but with Mr. Fottrell he had had no connection at all. Mr. Fottrell was simply employed in connection with the purchase of *The United Ireland* newspaper; and, although he (Mr. Sexton) had the direction of the affairs of the Land League for some time, he never knew anything of that gentleman. It appeared that the only fault Mr. Fottrell had committed was a fault of excessive zeal in endeavouring to bring into operation the only part of the Land Act from which the least good could be expected. It was an evil lesson when honourable, high-minded men were driven out of the service of the Government, and when, upon the other hand, the son of Judge Fitzgerald, who had made himself a most useful agent of the Government in the pursuit of their policy of coercion, was singled out for favour and advancement. He intended to protest in every way he could against the cowardly and unfair treatment to which this high-minded gentleman—Mr. Fottrell—had been subjected, and he would therefore move that the Vote be reduced by the sum of £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £33,919, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1882, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Irish Land Commission."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

Mr. GIVAN only desired to say one word at this advanced stage of the discussion. He regretted the course which the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had taken in delaying the passing of the Vote. At the same time, he hoped he might be permitted to say that no one had ever imputed to Mr. Fottrell anything beyond the exercise of over zeal in the discharge of his duty. He had had frequent opportunities of seeing Mr. Fottrell since his appointment as Solicitor to the Land Commission, and he had never known a gentleman who was more devoted to the discharge of his duties, or had been more anxious to carry out the intentions of the Act of Parliament, and especially of the Bright Clauses, to which he was much attached. He did not think the Motion of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) was necessary as a protest against the removal of Mr. Fottrell. He did not think it necessary at all that the course which the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down proposed should be taken, because, in every circumstance in which reference had been made to the matter, the universal opinion had been—and it was the opinion he entertained himself in the strongest degree—that Mr. Fottrell had discharged his duties with efficiency. He was a gentleman of the very highest character, and the only fault he had been guilty of in connection with the whole matter was simply over zeal in the discharge of his duties.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 15; Noes 130: Majority 115.—(Div. List, No. 34.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

(2.) £472, Queen's University, Ireland.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, this Vote was one on which they were entitled to receive a considerable amount of information. Nothing could be more unsatisfactory than the position of University education in Ireland, and he thought Irish Members should be afforded the earliest possible opportunity of exhibiting the very serious deficiencies which existed in the system which had, in fact, been in many respects rendered more hurtful by recent legislation. The manner in which the Queen's University had been wound up had not tended in any degree towards removing the grievances of Irish Catholics, or introducing religious equality into Ireland; while from the point of view of pure education the interest of the country in that Department had not been consulted by the change which had taken place. The noble Lord had stated that it was not his intention to take the next Vote, and he (Mr. O'Donnell) could not but think it would be well to defer this Vote also.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he would remind the hon. Member that they had, up to that time, only taken the Vote for the Office of the Irish Land Commission, and he could not assent to the suggestion of the hon. Member that it would be well to postpone the consideration of the Estimate before the Committee. The present Vote did not involve any question of principle, but was simply for the purpose of providing for certain charges which in the ordinary course would have come in course of payment in the next financial year, but which became a Supplementary Charge upon last year, owing to the dissolution of the Queen's University.

Mr. O'DONNELL pointed out that if the Queen's University had not been dissolved they would have had an opportunity of discussing the question of Irish University education on the Estimates, and they could have asked to have the Vote taken at a proper time in the day. The circumstances under which the Queen's University had been dissolved, and the unreal character of that dissolution, all came up on this question. The dissolution had only taken place in a specious and unreal sense, inasmuch as all the objectionable features of the University had been retained, and the change which had taken place had been carried out in such a manner as to constitute an additional ingredient of unfairness and dissatisfaction in the educational system of Ireland. He could, of course, sympathize with the desire of the noble Lord the Financial Secretary to the Treasury to make progress with the Supplementary Estimates, and begged to assure him that it was the wish of Irish Members to retard no Votes which, in their opinion, did not urgently call for delay. If the noble Lord would mention what were the other Estimates he desired to get through, he was sure that his hon. Friends would be willing to pass them unchallenged if they possibly could do so; but he thought the present Vote, together with that for the Royal University, might very well stand over with the County Court Officers' Vote. If that course were adopted the noble Lord would make more progress than by taking the University Votes separately.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he could not conceive that the present small Supplementary Vote offered a convenient opportunity for discussing the general question of University education in Ireland.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he thought it would be hardly worth while to insist upon passing this Vote while the Vote for the Royal University was left over. As that would involve a considerable amount of discussion, he would suggest that it would be better to take the two Votes together on a future occasion. However, if the noble Lord said that the fullness of discussion would not be interfered with on the next occasion by the passing of the present Vote, he was willing to withdraw his objection.

Vote *agreed to.*

Class V.—Foreign and Colonial Services.

(3.) £1,500, Colonies, Grants in Aid.

(4.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £4,356, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1882, for Expenses connected with the Transvaal and Zululand."

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he should move that this Vote be reduced by the sum of £670, being the amount charged on account of salary, staff, and office expenses of the Resident in Zululand. He thought it had been conclusively proved that the position of the Resident in Zululand was worse than a sinecure. The present occupant of the office did no good whatever to the Native population, and his presence seemed only calculated to support the mischievous action of such unworthy characters as John Dunn. The so-called "settlement" in Zululand was simply a system of internecine war and mutual extermination carried on by the miserable nominees whom they had set up in that country. He had not seen the slightest trace of any beneficent action on the part of the Resident there; but he by no means wished to bring any charge of inefficiency or ineffectiveness against the Gentleman who happened to occupy the post. It was quite possible that the circumstances in which he was placed, and the very nature of the position, rendered him absolutely incapable of doing any good. His objection was taken to the office of Resident itself, which, in his opinion, was not calculated to promote in any way the well-being of the Native races, and was, on the contrary, a mere badge of irritating interference—a mere continuation of the wicked policy introduced into Zululand by Sir Bartle Frere, which had been condemned by the Liberal Party, and which it was astonishing that they should now support, seeing that they had it in their power to change the state of affairs. The Resident in Zululand had not prevented any of the struggles that had taken place between the Native Tribes, although he (Mr. O'Donnell) believed that on one occasion he had tried to do so; the reward of his interference being that he was obliged to fly from the wrath he had provoked on both sides. His presence in Zululand was only a sort of pledge that they would continue to support the evil system they had introduced there; and he expected it would hereafter be proved that a much larger number of murders and outrages of every kind had been perpetrated under the nominal supervision of the British Resident, than had occurred during the whole period of Cetewayo's much-abused reign. He hoped the hon. Gentleman who represented the Colonial Department would offer some explanations on this subject. He recollected that the hon. Gentleman had on former occasions given the Irish Party some assistance in defending the cause of the Natives of South Africa, whose rights he was, doubtless, still interested in preserving.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £3,686, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1882, for Expenses connected with the Transvaal and Zululand."—(*Mr. O'Donnell.*)

Mr. R. N. FOWLER reminded the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) that the question relating to Zululand would be raised on the Motion which stood on the Paper in the name of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). He should strongly support that Motion when it came before the House; but he thought the hon. Member for Dungarvan would do well to consider that, whatever might be thought of the position of affairs in Zululand, it was very important that Her Majesty's Government should have reliable information as to what was passing in that country. That being the case, he did not see how the Vote could, with propriety, be reduced; and he would suggest that it would be better to discuss the question of the Resident on the Motion to which he had alluded, rather than that the Committee should divide at so late an hour of the morning, on the question of an amount which, after all, must be given to the Government; because it was clear that, under any circumstances, the representation of this country in Zululand would involve a certain amount of expense.

Mr. COURTNEY said, he hoped the Motion of the hon. Member for Dungarvan would not be pressed. With respect to the position of the Resident in Zululand, he was willing to agree with the hon. Member that it was certainly one open to serious consideration. The Resident was without any authority, his office being simply to act as adviser, and, being in that position, he was not quite so useless as the hon. Member seemed to think. He was engaged in giving advice to the Natives, which was intended to prevent struggles taking place between the different Tribes; and upon some occasions he had been successful, although upon others he had failed. It was part of the instructions given to Sir Henry Bulwer, who had gone out to Natal, that he should ascertain and report to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in the fullest and most accurate manner, what were the sentiments and wishes of the people of Zululand themselves; and the future settlement of that country must greatly depend upon the answers received from the Native Chiefs.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he was satisfied with the explanations of the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, so far as they went, and was willing, with the permission of the Committee, to withdraw his Motion for the reduction of the Vote.

Mr. ONSLOW asked if the instructions referred to by the hon. Gentleman opposite were, that inquiry should be made of the Zulu Chiefs as to whether they wanted their King back again?

Mr. COURTNEY: It is not put exactly in that way.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Class VII.—Miscellaneous.

(5.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £4,145, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1882, for certain Miscellaneous Expenses."

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he was about to move the reduction of this Vote by the sum of £3,195. The first item of the Vote, under the heading of Orders of Knighthood and Medals, was a portion of the sum of £3,645, for the purchase of Insignia and Robes, &c., on the creation of the Emperor of Russia, and Kings of Sweden, Spain, and Saxony, as Knights of the Garter. He was not a member of any of these Orders; but he presumed this referred to some kind of mediæval millinery connected with them, because he believed that the jewel was only lent to the Knight to be returned on his death. He would allow for each of the Monarchs named the sum of £100, which he considered as amply sufficient. The next item was for the purchase of Insignia and Robes, &c., on creation of the Duke of Cambridge as Knight of the Thistle. The Committee were entitled to some explanation of that charge. These Orders of the Garter and Thistle called to mind the remark of Lord Melbourne, that there was no nonsense of merit about them; they were merely adjuncts of the toilet. He believed that when a Knight of the Thistle was appointed he had to buy his own Insignia and Robes; and he failed to see why any exception should be made in favour of the Duke of Cambridge. Then came the charge for the purchase of Insignia of the Order of St. Michael and St. George to be placed in stock, &c., &c. He supposed that meant the medal itself, and he believed he was making a handsome allowance in putting down £50 for this item. The next item was £564 for Fees to Heralds and others in respect of patents of creation issued from the Crown Office in Chancery, and now taken in stamps. He did not understand why this amount was paid. When these Orders were given by Her Majesty there was certainly no reason why payment should be made to these absurd Heralds.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £950, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1882, for certain Miscellaneous Expenses."—(*Mr. Labouchere.*)

Captain ALYMER said, he could not agree with what had fallen from the hon. Member for Northampton, because he had more respect for the dignities specified in the Vote than had been observable in the speech to which they had just listened. He hoped the noble Lord would see if anything could be done to make the College of Heraldry of use.

Mr. W. H. JAMES said, he thought that the names of persons who had received the fees and payments for the Insignia should be furnished, so that hon. Members might have some better idea of the way the money was disposed of.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he had already referred to the Return with these details; and if the hon. Member who had just spoken desired it he would be happy to show it to him. The hon. Member for Northampton had stated that the jewels were all returned at the death of the Knights. That was the case with the ordinary Knights of the Garter; but it was never the case when the Order was conferred on Foreign Monarchs. He did not think the hon. Member would wish to make an innovation in that respect. [Mr. Labouchere;

Oh, yes.] The reason for the purchase of the Insignia of the Order of St. Michael and St. George was that the Order had a short time since been largely increased; and it was found to be much more economical to buy in the manner indicated in the Vote, by which, he believed, there had been a saving effected of about 10 per cent. The fees to Heralds were fully covered by the stamps issued to the Herald's College.

Mr. O'DONNELL admired the dashing style in which the hon. Member for Northampton had knocked over, so to speak, the mediæval relics provided for in the Vote; still he thought that even on democratic principles the Committee ought not to vote against the granting of such distinctions. Objections might be brought against them; but he believed that all history showed that those bits of silk and pieces of gold and silver had always been regarded as stimulants to heroic action, and as their most coveted reward. Whether they were English, French, or the Orders of other Foreign States, the desire to possess such distinctions was deeply rooted in human nature; and he strongly suspected that if some hon. Members who objected to them had gone through terrible scenes of battle and storm, and were acquainted with the value placed upon them by the bravest of the brave, their objections to them would not be so strong, at least, in principle. Whenever any abuse could be detected in the conferring of these Orders he should be quite at one with the hon. Member for Northampton. But if there were a distinction which ought not to be objected to by Radical Members, he thought it was the distinction of Knighthood. It was not hereditary, and he was surprised that Radicals should object to a class of honours which must, by theory at least, be the reward of personal merit, and which could not be handed down to future generations.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he thought the hon. Member for Dungarvan had not looked into the Vote. Had this charge related to the Victoria Cross, or distinctions won on the field of battle, he should have offered no objection. As he had said, he was not a member of the Order in question; but he was not under the impression that it was very frequently conferred upon democrats, or that it was a very democratic Order, and so on several grounds he moved the reduction of the Vote.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN said, he did not agree with the hon. Member for Dungarvan, who appeared to have entirely misunderstood the nature of these Votes, into which the question of merit did not enter at all. His hon. Friend had stated that the desire to possess distinctions of this kind was deeply rooted; but he (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) did not think it was desirable to pander to human weakness of that kind. He could understand the conferring of these Orders where battle had been done to maintain a just cause. But that consideration did not arise here. These Orders were in many cases given for bad purposes; he knew they were often used as a means of bribing persons to take a course which they really ought not to take. The only argument of weight that he had listened to in the course of the discussion on the Motion of the hon. Member for Northampton was that advanced by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, who said that with regard to these Insignia a considerable saving of expense had been effected by purchasing a quantity.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY suggested that if the country had to pay for the Robes of the new Knights, a considerable saving might also be effected by buying up a large quantity of them, second-hand, from the Lyceum Theatre, for example.

Mr. BROADHURST asked the meaning of the mysterious paragraph relating to the fees to Heralds?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he had already pointed out that the cost of the fees in question were entirely covered by the stamps issued.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, the Insignia and the Order of St. Michael and St. George were distinctly rewards for merit, and even rewards for very distinguished merit. If they were not usually won on the battle-field, they were won on the not less noble field of successful administration. He listened with great surprise to the protestations of the hon. Member for Westmeath (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) against chivalric distinctions. On many occasions that hon. Gentleman had won the cheers of Irish audiences by appeals, in his own touching and eloquent style, to the glorious days—

> "When Kings, with their banners of gold unfurled,
> Led the Red Branch Knights to danger;"

and it did seem strange that now the hon. Member should turn his back upon the poetic traditions of Erin.

Question put.

The Committee *divided :*—Ayes 29; Noes 90: Majority 61.—(Div. List, No. 35.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(6.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £6,214, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1882, for the repayment to the Civil Contingencies Fund of certain Miscellaneous Advances."

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he did not intend to divide the Committee upon this Vote, because these items were very much the same as those upon which they had already divided; but really there ought to be some sort of explanation afforded them. The first item was—

> "Fees paid on the Installation of the Emperor of Russia, and of the Kings of Sweden and Spain"—he did not know why the King of Saxony was left out—"as Knights of the Garter, £1,358."

These were *bonâ fide* payments, and he believed that the recipients of the Garters had fees to pay besides.

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: It is not the case with Foreign Potentates.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that again they had—

> "Fees paid on the admission of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge into the Order of the Thistle, £245."

They did not begrudge the Thistle to the Duke of Cambridge; but when they had to pay £245 it was really too bad. He had no doubt the Duke of Cambridge efficiently performed his duty; but he had not done any signal service which rendered it necessary for the country to not only give him the Order of the Thistle, but to pay fees amounting to £245. When the Order was given it was only natural it should be given without any obligation, either on the part of the Government or recipient, to pay large fees into the Herald's Office. He had known cases in which gentlemen had refused to accept the Orders because, although they really had distinguished themselves abroad, they had not been prepared to pay the large fees exacted. They ought to receive some explanation of what the Herald's Office was, and what was its relation to the Government. Again, they had—

> "Fees paid to the College of Arms, &c., for recording the Pedigrees, &c., of Sir F. S. Roberts and Sir D. M. Stewart, on their creation as Baronets, £78 11*s.* 4*d.*"

Now, these gentlemen might be very estimable, and they might have pedigrees; but why £78 11*s.* 4*d.* should be paid for recording these pedigrees did appear a little too absurd. It was no use to walk through the Lobby again, because they would only get about the same number of hon. Gentlemen to follow them as in the last division. But if they did not divide, they ought to have some explanation from the noble Lord, and an assurance that he would look into the matter.

MR. BROADHURST said, he would like some explanation of the item of £900 "for the conveyance of Distinguished Persons." He would like some information as to who those distinguished persons were, and as to where they were conveyed to, and where from. He decidedly objected to the item of £245 for fees paid on the admission of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge into the Order of the Thistle, and would move its omission from the Vote.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That the item of £245, for Fees paid on the admission of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge into the Order of the Thistle, be omitted from the proposed Vote."—(*Mr. Broadhurst.*)

MR. R. N. FOWLER asked for some explanation of the item of £923 1*s.* 6*d.*, as "Equipage Money to the Right Hon. H. Law, on his appointment as Lord Chancellor of Ireland." He did not rise to object to the sum, because he had the greatest respect for the right hon. and learned Gentleman.

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, he had the greatest respect for the traditions of the College of Arms; but he wished to call the attention of the noble Lord to the fact that, although a good deal of money was paid to the College of Arms, it was, practically, useless. He believed it might be made of use, if it set about making the titles possessed by gentlemen more respected. At the present time there was at the end of *Forster's Peerage* what was called "The Chaos," being a list of 67 names of gentlemen who used the title of Baronet without being entitled to do so. When these fees were paid to the College of Arms, the least the College could do would be to do its best to see that distinguished titles, such as that of Baronet, were only held and used by the persons entitled to them. While there was no law in the country to prevent a misuse of titles, he thought the noble Lord might do something to make the College of Arms more useful.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that when the noble Lord rose to explain the points already raised, perhaps he would be good enough to explain also one of the last items of the Vote—namely, £150 to

"J. H. L. Rogers, compensation for injury sustained at an Election riot at Portarlington in 1868."

He did not remember having heard of any claim on the part of his constituents in Queen's County, or on the part of the constituents of the hon. Member for Portarlington (Mr. Fitzpatrick), who, unfortunately, was not in his place; and they would be interested to know what were the grounds for the claim, and what were the reasons for the delay in meeting it.

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, that, in respect to the last question addressed to him, he had to state that Mr. Rogers, a resident magistrate, was wounded in an election riot at Portarlington in 1868. His eyesight was so affected that he was ultimately obliged to retire from his post. His expenses for medical advice and attendance were heavy, and he was considered entitled to a grant from the public funds when he was obliged to leave the service. [MR. SEXTON: When did he leave the service?] He believed Mr. Rogers retired about a year or two ago; but he was not certain of the date. As to the observations made by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), he thought the remarks he made concerning the last Vote would apply to this also. If, in accordance with universal custom, they considered it a matter of policy to give distinctions to eminent Potentates they thought it necessary to pay for them; it was not considered proper to ask the Sovereign, to whom the Orders were given, to pay the customary fees. He himself considered the system of paying large fees a bad one; but he could assure hon. Members that it was much easier to find fault with it than to abolish it. The Treasury had never lost an opportunity of putting an end to them, and he would not be backward in his duty in that respect, though he was afraid he could not promise any great success. With respect to the fees paid on the admission of the Duke of Cambridge to the Order of the Thistle, he had to make the same remark, that, according to universal custom, when a Member of the Royal Family received such honours the fees had always been paid by the State; and he did not think an invidious distinction would be made in the case of the Duke of Cambridge, who had rendered such long and active service to the country. As to the "special packets for the conveyance of Distinguished Persons," the payments were made for Members of the Royal Family chiefly when crossing to the Continent. Formerly a man-of-war was placed at the disposal of the Members of the Royal Family on such occasions; but it had been found much more economical, and otherwise more satisfactory, to arrange with the Mail Packet Company for the use of one of their special packets. He did not know whether any hon. Member would wish him to give the names of those who had had the special packets; but if so, he might refer them to the Return, which had already been moved for by the hon. Member for Gateshead (Mr. W. H. James). As to the equipage money to the Right Hon. Mr. Law, it had always been made to the Lord Chancellor of Ireland on his appointment. A similar grant was made in respect to the Lord Chancellor of England.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question again proposed.

MR. SEXTON said, the explanation given in regard to the item of £150 was the most extraordinary he had ever heard. Fourteen years ago, a resident magistrate was wounded at Portarlington, and the noble Lord told them that his sight was injured and he left the service a year or two ago. He could not think that Mr. Rogers' state of health two years ago could be influenced by injury he sustained 12 years before. He was inclined to regard the business as a job, and he objected to the payment the more emphatically, because within the last year or two the police in Ireland had wounded many people, and even killed some, yet he did not find any proposal to compensate the wounded, or the relatives of the killed. The relatives of the woman killed by the police at Belmullet had not received a single shilling. The item was a scandal, it was evidently a job, and he should move its omission.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Item of £150, for Compensation to Mr. J. H. L. Rogers, be omitted from the proposed Vote."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

MR. W. H. JAMES asked for an explanation of the item of £2,182 11*s.* paid to—

"The representatives of John Tate, deceased, on account of share in the Uruguayan Award, the amount of which had been paid into the Exchequer."

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, the award arose out of circumstances of a long time past. The Government paid considerable sums on account of claims made by British subjects. The item referred to was not claimed, and it was consequently paid into the Exchequer. The representatives of Mr. Tate, however, had since proved their claim to the deceased's share, and it was felt proper to pay it to them.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked if the noble Lord could refer the Committee to any Parliamentary Paper or Return with respect to Mr. Rogers?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he was not aware that any Return had been presented.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR inquired if the noble Lord would have any objection to lay on the Table of the House the Correspondence relating to the grant to Mr. Rogers?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, if the hon. Member would defer the matter until Report, he would tell him then whether there was any Correspondence in the matter.

MR. SEXTON expressed a wish to withdraw his Amendment, on the understanding that some explanation was made on Report.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

POST OFFICE.

(7.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £80,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1882, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Post Office Services, the Expenses of Post Office Savings Banks, and Government Annuities and Insurances, and the Collection of the Post Office Revenue."

MR. SCHREIBER said, that at a previous Sitting the Committee was of opinion that a quarter to 2 in the morning was too late an hour to proceed with a Vote of this importance. Perhaps it would be the opinion of the Committee that at 5 minutes to 2 in the morning it was still less convenient to take the Vote. He did not wish, however, to set himself against the general opinion of the Committee; and if the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General felt equal to offering, at that hour, the explanation which so important a Vote demanded, he would not press the Motion he now made to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Schreiber.*)

MR. ONSLOW appealed to the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington) whether it would not be advisable now to report Progress on a subject of this great importance? A long explanation would be required from the Postmaster General, for it was a Vote in which the Post Office clerks were greatly interested.

MR. FAWCETT said, he was extremely sorry to press the Committee to sit late; but really it would be a convenience to take the Vote to-night. It ought to be remembered that the greater part of the money now asked for was spent last year upon the scheme, then brought into operation, for improving the position of the Post Office clerks and telegraphists throughout the country. He was endeavouring to extend the operation of the scheme as rapidly as possible; he was constantly being asked by hon. Gentlemen when the scheme was to be put in force in their particular constituencies, and he should be glad to have the money required.

Mr. ONSLOW asked if there really was any dire necessity to vote the money to-night? Surely a week's delay would not interfere with or thwart the prospects of the Post Office clerks. If such an important Vote had been brought forward in former years at such a late hour he was sure the right hon. Gentleman would have been the first to oppose it.

Mr. FAWCETT said, he would not press it for a moment; but in the state of Public Business he was not at all certain when they would be able to get into Committee of Supply again. This was simply money that was absolutely required to carry out the scheme which was sanctioned last year; and if there was any point on which information was required, he should be glad to give it at any time.

Mr. SCHREIBER said, he had taken some interest in this matter; but he had not, he must say, a clear idea of the manner in which this £80,000 was to be spent in improved scales of pay in the Post Office. The case of the telegraph clerks had been discussed, but that of the Post Office clerks had not; and he did not think the Committee had any idea—he was sure he had not—of the way in which the money asked for was to be applied. It was because he wished to have a detailed statement of this increased grant that he should adhere to his proposal that the Chairman report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Mr. FAWCETT said, he could explain in a sentence or two how the money had been spent. Last year, before the new scheme came into operation, the postal clerks and telegraphists had their positions improved. The second and third classes were amalgamated. The present Vote was required to give effect to the new classification, the new system of promotion, and raising of pay.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he should like to elicit, if possible—though it was putting a great strain on the memory of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fawcett)—what was the amount of relief given to the postmasters and letter-carriers of Ireland, who had made repeated complaints of their position. As to the clothing of Irish letter-carriers, the manufacturers of Ireland considered it a grievance that they were obliged to send samples of their goods to London before they could supply the men in Ireland.

Mr. FAWCETT said, this Vote did not in the slightest degree affect the letter-carriers. The money was wanted for the Post Office clerks—those who sorted the letters. He had received a great many Memorials from the letter-carriers, all of which he had gone through with the greatest care. He had instituted an inquiry, which inquiry had only just been completed. The case of the letter-carriers was not dealt with in these Supplementary Estimates, which only referred to a scheme sanctioned by the Treasury in July last. As to the clothing, he had informed the Lord Mayor of Dublin, in a letter his Lordship had published in the newspapers, that a great deal of improvement had been made in that matter.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I hope the hon. Member will not think it necessary to press his Motion for reporting Progress. Though I admit the hour is rather late, the Committee is still extremely full, and, so far as I can see, extremely attentive. It is necessary that these Votes should be obtained in a very few days, and I do not think there is much probability of our being able to bring them on at an earlier period than this. The Committee will recollect that this is only an additional opportunity of discussing the Votes. The regular Estimates have yet to be introduced, and if any class of public servants have a grievance it can be discussed when those Estimates are considered. The Postmaster General tells us that these Votes are only required in consequence of a scheme already sanctioned, and as he is willing to offer any explanation that may be demanded I hope we shall be allowed to go on.

Mr. SCHREIBER said, that if they were to wait to take a general discussion on the Post Office Vote until the ordinary Estimates were before them, they would probably have to wait until the middle of next August. He had not the least objection to what the Postmaster General proposed to do, as he thought that was a step in the right direction. It was desirable that there should be increased force and better pay in the Post Office, and also that the better pay should come out of the funds of the Post Office; but he desired to know why the Postmaster General had selected this particular class for improvement? This increased grant was to go to the sorters.

MR. FAWCETT: And telegraphists.

MR. SCHREIBER: Yes; but the first £80,000 to the sorters. He was not aware that any scheme had been placed before the House for this improved remuneration of the sorters. When this Vote appeared on the Paper he was considerably excited with the belief that he had got some money for the poor letter-carriers of London and the Provinces, and he had thought he should have no more occasion to ask questions of the right hon. Gentleman, or make speeches in the House upon that subject. Well, as matters stood, all he could say was that if the sorters were to receive this increased pay the matter could not stop there. The letter-carriers were a harder worked class; they were worse paid, and to a large extent they already did sorters' work. He hoped, therefore, that if this Vote was now passed by the Committee, the right hon. Gentleman would clearly understand that he could not stop there, and that the House and the country would expect him to go on, and out of the increased earnings of his Department—which were, perhaps, the most satisfactory part of the Revenue of the country—find increased pay for these hard worked men the letter-carriers.

THE CHAIRMAN: Does the hon. Member desire to withdraw the Motion?

MR. SCHREIBER: No, Sir.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the noble Lord (the Marquess of Hartington) had pointed out that they would have another opportunity of discussing these Estimates. Well, he (Mr. O'Connor) would remind the Committee that not only last year, but the year before, the Post Office Estimates were taken so late in the Session that the Committee made a mere pretence at discussion. For the last two years there had been really no discussion of the Post Office Estimates. If they were to go on with the discussion of this Vote now he would ask the Postmaster General if he would say—["Order!"]

THE CHAIRMAN: I did not observe anything out of Order in the hon. Gentleman's remarks.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, it seemed to be the opinion of many hon. Members that he would have been more in Order if he had confined himself more closely to the question of reporting Progress.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Question is that I report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.

MR. FAWCETT hoped that, if he stated that the voting of this money would not, in the slightest degree, prejudice the case of the letter-carriers, the hon. Member (Mr. Schreiber) would allow the Vote to be taken. He (Mr. Fawcett) had not looked at every branch of the Service all at the same moment. He had done what he could to look into the case of the sorters and telegraphists, and directly he had finished with that he had taken in hand the case of the letter carriers, which had proved a long one. He had only just completed his inquiries, and was not at the moment able to make a proposal. The voting of the money now asked for could not in the slightest degree prejudice the case of the letter-carriers—in fact, he should think it would rather strengthen it. The hon. Member for Poole (Mr. Schreiber) had said that the case of the sorters and telegraphists should not have been taken up before that of the letter-carriers; but in this he ventured to differ from the hon. Member. He did not mean to say that the letter-carriers were not hard working; but he could say this—that they were certainly not harder working than the sorters. He would ask the Committee to consider what were the conditions under which the sorters of London carried on their work. Their work was carried on up to 6 or 8 in the evening, many of them lived some miles from the post office in which they were employed, and did not get home until 9 in the evening, and they had to begin work again, in some instances, before 4 o'clock in the morning. This practically went on every day in the year. It seemed to him impossible for any class of men to carry on their work under more onerous conditions. He had felt this, and that was the chief reason why he had taken up the case of the sorters first of all. He hoped, in the interests of the men themselves, and in the interests of the Service, that the Committee would allow the Government to take this Vote.

MR. SCHREIBER said, he quite agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that the granting of this money would not prejudice the case of the letter-carriers; but his argument was that it established a precedent which the right hon. Gentleman would have to follow out to its logical conclusion. He would withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS.

(8.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £80,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1882, for the Salaries and Working Expenses of the Post Office Telegraph Service."

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, that, no doubt, there was a great deal to be said with regard to this Vote. He was one of those who thought that his right hon. Friend had done more for the Post Office Service than any of his Predecessors for years past. To the best of his ability the right hon. Gentleman had improved the condition of that Office, therefore he (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) was not going to offer the least obstruction to the Vote under discussion. What he had risen for was to say that it was most unfair on the Committee, and on the country, that the Estimates should be taken at the time they were last year, and at the time they had been taken of late; and he would ask the noble Lord to give them some assurance that they would have the Estimates to discuss and consider at a fair and proper time, the Estimates being things peculiarly for the discussion of the Committee of the Whole House. It was highly improper that their discussion should be put off for Business that was less pressing.

MR. ONSLOW said, that before the Vote was passed, he should like to ask one question. In answer to a question put by an hon. Member the other day as to the Post Office telegraphs the right hon. Gentleman had made the assertion that in every instance claims arising for seniority and fitness had been most carefully weighed. Well, he (Mr. Onslow) has led to believe that that statement was rather misleading, and that seniority had not always been taken into consideration, but had been ignored. A gentleman who had written to him had said the answer of the Postmaster General was quite misleading, and "a typical case of the misstatements that are made as to telegraph clerks." The scheme laid down last year was that seniority should take precedence over every other consideration; and he should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he would like in any way to qualify the answer he gave the other day? It was considered in many quarters as not quite correct; and he (Mr. Onslow) wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman had any further information to give the House?

MR. FAWCETT said, he believed the answer he gave the other day was really strictly accurate. He had never supposed that seniority was the sole controlling force in determining promotion; but that promotion was determined on two considerations, one seniority and one fitness, and he had said that in arranging promotion many thousands of cases had to be considered. He had taken the advice of the most experienced officials in the Post Office, and in every case where seniority was not the sole cause the two elements or factors of the problem, seniority and fitness, were taken into consideration. He did not mean to say that in no single instance had a mistake been made; but he felt certain that the utmost possible care had been taken in all these promotions to make them just and fair.

MR. ONSLOW wished to know who decided as to a person's fitness for promotion? Was it the local officer in charge, who might have some bias against a particular individual, which the Postmaster General might know nothing about, and which the Committee, who might have to make the promotion, would never hear of? Unless there was something against a particular individual seniority should have a prior claim. He did not wish to mention names; but he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that in many cases great dissatisfaction was felt by gentlemen who had been honestly doing their duty for years past, because they had been superseded, and for no reason whatever, many of them thinking that they ought to have been amongst the first to be promoted on account of their merit. In some cases there had been—he would not say unfair play—but unnecessary stigmas put upon clerks by the heads of Post Offices.

MR. FAWCETT said, he did not know anything more difficult to determine than the exact amount of consideration that ought to be given respectively to the two elements of seniority and fitness; but he could say this without hesitation—that in every single case where it was proposed to appoint a junior over the head of one of his seniors most specific information had been asked for, not only from the postmaster, but from the surveyor of the district, to justify the recommendation, and if they had not been satisfied with the reasons given for placing a junior over a senior they disallowed the recommendation of the local authorities.

MR. WARTON said, that hon. Members ought really to consider the manner in which the Government were conducting the Business of the country. To appeal to the Committee night after night to go on with Supply at this late hour was most improper, when they were studiously wasting the time of the House themselves with all kinds of unnecessary Motions. They were wasting the time of the House by bringing in Motions about the House of Lords.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. and learned Member must confine himself to the Vote before the Committee.

MR. WARTON said, he was going to move to report Progress, and he would tell the Committee why he did it. He should confine himself as closely as possible to the Question. His reason was that the Government asked them to take an unusual course at an unusually late hour; and he thought he was entitled to say that such a demand as that could only come with a good grace from those who showed that they were themselves the guardians of the time of the House. The Government had a higher duty than that of bringing in a mass of legislation of all kinds—namely, to bring on the discussion of the Estimates at a time when they could be properly discussed. The 16th of August had arrived last year before the Committee reached the Votes to which reference had been made, and on the 22nd of August they were engaged for the first time that Session in the discussion of the welfare of 250,000,000 of Her Majesty's subjects.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

MR. SEXTON said he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman a question. The Committee was aware that the Postmaster General, in obedience to the warrant of the Home Secretary, for some time had allowed his subordinates to open and read, and, he supposed, copy the correspondence of persons in this country. He wished to know if that system continued in the Post Office and in the Telegraph Department? Had the Postmaster General's subordinates instructions to submit selected messages to their superiors in the Post Office? Did the Postmaster General make a selection of telegraphic messages and submit them to Departments outside his own for political reasons, or was the integrity and secrecy of the Telegraph Department preserved?

MR. FAWCETT said, he could only say that he had no authority to divulge any secret that came to his knowledge.

MR. SEXTON said, all he wished to know was whether the warrant of the Home Secretary operated in this direction or not. Was the authority of the Home Secretary used for that purpose?

MR. FAWCETT said, that was really a question which must be put to the Home Secretary himself, and not to him (Mr. Fawcett).

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question again proposed.

MR. GRAY said, he had a somewhat similar question to put to the right hon. Gentleman, and one to which he hoped he should receive a more distinct answer. As the right hon. Gentleman was no doubt aware, there were special wires running between the London offices of certain newspapers and the local offices. He wished to ask whether on any occasion these wires, or any one of them, had been tapped secretly for the purpose of ascertaining what communications were sent from one office to the other? He was aware that very frequently the wires were openly tapped for the purpose of ascertaining whether private messages were being sent, or whether the wires were working properly. But he wanted to get at whether they were ever secretly tapped and the communications passing along them taken off and copied?

MR. FAWCETT: Certainly not, to my knowledge.

MR. REDMOND said, the right hon. Gentleman would be consulting his own convenience, and the convenience of the Committee, if he would stand up and give the Committee some assurance that the warrant of the Home Secretary had not been used in the way the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had suggested. This opened up a large question, and unless the right hon. Gentleman could see his way to giving the assurance asked for, he did not see how the Committee could consent to the Vote. He had thought that another Vote ought to have been postponed in consequence of an almost similar question arising—namely, the opening and detaining, and in many cases even destroying, a man's letters. In deference to the opinions of hon. Members all round him, he had consented to allow the discussion of that matter to stand over until the proper Estimates came up; but certainly this question of tampering with telegrams was one of such importance that the Vote ought not to be taken unless every information were given hon. Members. With that view he would move that the Chairman leave the Chair.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Redmond.*)

Mr. FAWCETT said, it was not for him to quarrel with hon. Members for raising this question of the warrants. He hoped they would not think he was guilty of any discourtesy to them if he said this did not appear the proper occasion to put the question, or to say—"We will stop the Vote until we get an explanation." What would be result of doing such a thing as that? Who would suffer? Why, the unfortunate sorters and telegraphists, who were hard worked and had been promised an increase of pay. From no part of the United Kingdom had more complaints been received as to the inadequacy of the scale of promotion for the telegraph staff than from, not only Dublin, but from the Provincial offices throughout Ireland; and there was scarcely a telegraphist who would not materially benefit, both with regard to immediate pay and promotion, by the scheme which came into operation last year. This Vote was to give effect to that scheme, and if the hon. Members succeeded in stopping this Estimate the persons who would suffer would be those telegraphists who had for some time past been inadequately paid, and who had now a fair prospect of promotion. He, therefore, hoped the hon. Member would not prevent the Vote being taken.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he thought the argument of the right hon. Gentleman would be an argument against opposing any Vote, because no Vote could be postponed without causing a delay in payment to some officials who had done very good work. This was a very important question, and one upon which he thought some answer should have been given. The question was, were telegrams placed under the same conditions as private correspondence? Were they open to invasion in the same way as letters? He thought this Vote ought not to be allowed to pass until those questions were answered.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I trust this Motion may be withdrawn. I think my right hon. Friend has shown that this is scarcely the proper time at which to raise opposition. My right hon. Friend is not entitled to give the Committee any information as to how the Secretary of State has acted under the powers of the Act. I do not know, and I cannot say, what is the power of the Secretary of State to give information on this subject to the Committee; but what I can undertake is to say that hon. Members can renew this discussion on the Report. I think it is somewhat unreasonable at this time, when this Vote has practically been voted by the Committee, to raise objections which can be raised in other ways.

Mr. SEXTON said, he could not understand when the proper time for raising this question would be if it was not now. He understood the Constitutional maxim to be that grievances should properly be brought up in Supply for redress. He had simply asked a question, and the noble Marquess then said he doubted whether the Secretary of State would be in a position to give any information; but was it not obvious that the Secretary of State had made no secret of the exercise of his powers in regard to correspondence? The Secretary of State had refused to give particulars as to individuals, or as to what papers he had opened; but he made no secret of the fact that he was using and exercising the power confided to him and was generally opening correspondence. He, therefore, failed to see why, if there was no secrecy as to letters, there should be secrecy on the subject of telegrams. He could not see any relevancy in the reply of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) —namely, that his Question should be addressed to the Secretary of State; and he also could not attach any importance to the argument that payment would be delayed. The Government could bring the matter up on Monday, and he could not think that any persons would be materially injured by a two-days' delay. He must certainly press on the Government his claim to have an answer to these questions. He knew it was idle to protest against the use of arbitrary powers; but he wanted to know under what conditions people were living in Ireland—whether Irish telegrams were being opened? and he could not postpone that question for the convenience of any class of officials.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, he wished to know whether any portion of this Vote was applied to the distribution of pamphlets setting forth the advantages to young men of entering the Army? There was a strange incongruity in a Department devoted to the internal duties of the country undertaking this.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Vote is with respect to telegrams alone.

MR. ILLINGWORTH added that the Vote was not strictly confined to telegrams; and he wished to know whether any part of it was devoted to the distribution of this information?

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN said, this matter of the telegrams was a very important and interesting question; and the Irish Members wanted to know what had happened to their telegrams. An instance had been mentioned a few nights ago in which a little school-girl's religious pictures had been taken out of a letter, and in the hurry of closing the letter again some other person's bank book was placed in it. They knew what had happened to their letters; and was it too much to ask that some little light should be thrown on the question whether their telegrams were rifled and overhauled as their letters were? The Postmaster General could end the matter very simply. Did he plead ignorance of the matter? If he did not plead ignorance, then let him say he knew but would not tell; and then they must take their own course. The right hon. Gentleman had not given any intelligible answer to this simple question—whether it was or was not true that private telegrams were made known; that the secrecy of telegrams was violated, and their contents made known to persons appointed by the Government? It was a simple matter of "yes" or "no," and they were entitled to have an answer one way or the other.

MR. GRAY said, he regarded this as a matter of the most urgent importance, for it was rumoured that the Government had in contemplation the acquisition of the Telephone Companies' work. One of the difficulties which occurred to many people with regard to the original acquisition of the Telegraphs was that the Government might violate the telegrams in a way which the silence of the right hon. Gentleman would indicate they were now doing; and probably, if there was any proposal to acquire the Telephones, that might come on before hon. Members were able to raise this question in a formal manner. The violation of the secrecy of telegrams was, in one respect, far more serious than the opening of letters, because it was necessary to have the whole body of telegraphists acting as spies, and collectors of what they might deem information suitable for the purposes of the Chief Secretary, and for submission to the Home Secretary. But in the case of letters a warrant might be issued for the opening of one letter. That was the intention of the Act; but by a juggle of words the word "warrant" was interpreted as an authority to the Home Secretary to open all letters. The Home Secretary could not, however, do the same with regard to telegrams. In regard to them, he must direct the Postmasters or Telegraphic Superintendents to look out for all telegrams that might read suspicious, and forward them to him. Therefore, there was no secrecy; and it was clear from the reticence of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Fawcett) that the practice did exist. He was sure that, from the views the right hon. Gentleman held, he must regard such a practice as detestable, and that he would be only too anxious to repudiate it if he could. The right hon. Gentleman, therefore, stood in the anomalous position of having to act as the tool of some other Government Department in carrying out such work as that. If he could, the right hon. Gentleman would not have hesitated for a single moment in repudiating such a base and ignoble practice.

Mr. FAWCETT observed, that the Home Secretary had no idea that this matter would be raised now or he would have been in his place; but the question could be put to him on Monday before the Report on this Vote was taken, and if hon. Members were not satisfied with his answer they could raise the question upon Report. He could assure the hon. Member (Mr. Gray) that, so far as he was aware, the Government had no intention of buying up the Telephone Companies; and, at any rate, if any such idea was entertained, as long as he was at the Post Office the public would have ample warning of the intention. With regard to the question of the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), the expenses of circulating the pamphlet respecting the advantages of joining the Army were borne by the War Office.

Mr. GRAY said, he could not understand the contention that the Home Secretary was the proper person to put this question to. He could be asked if he had issued certain warrants; but the Postmaster General was in charge of the Telegraphs, and he was the person to be asked whether in obedience to warrants he was in the habit of violating telegrams intrusted to his charge? The Home Secretary might receive the telegrams, but it was the Postmaster General who directed them to be copied and sent to the Home Secretary, and the right hon. Gentleman could not shift his responsibility. Hon. Members knew the opinions which the right hon. Gentleman held when he occupied a familiar seat on this side of the House; and if he now, in consequence of the change in his position, had become an instrument of a system of espionage such as was suspected, he should not shift the responsibility on to the shoulders of the Home Secretary. He must be prepared to take the responsibility upon his own shoulders, and he was the person to be asked. If he answered in the affirmative, then they could ask a question of the Home Secretary as to the justification either in law or in public policy for his action; but they were entitled to ask the Postmaster General whether the telegrams in his charge were, or were not, respected? Of course he could answer the question, or evade it, as he was now doing.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I am sure my right hon. Friend seeks to shirk no responsibility; but the fact is that the responsible exercise of these powers rests with the Home Secretary. My right hon. Friend would not be justified in stating whether the power has been exercised or not. I do not know what power the Home Secretary may have for giving information; but, certainly, my right hon. Friend the Postmaster General would not be justified in giving information which, whether affirmative or negative, might be equally injurious to the Public Service. My right hon. Friend is most anxious to give any information he can give consistently with his duty; but considering that it is the Secretary of State, and not the Postmaster General, who is responsible, my right hon. Friend would not be justified in giving any information.

Mr. HEALY said, that as this was practically an admission that the trick was done, he would give his hon. Friend (Mr. Gray) some information as to how it was done, his information having been supplied by an official in Dublin. In October last, when the famous raid was made on the Land League, the Chief Secretary caused a private wire to be taken into his own office, either in the Irish Office or in Dublin Castle, and he had a telegraph clerk there who "tapped" all the communications reaching Dublin. The Chief Secretary had them transcribed in his office, and so, without putting the Postmaster General to the disagreeable necessity of answering warrants, the Chief Secretary had all the telegrams transmitted in Ireland brought under his eyes through the medium of the telegraph clerk. The Committee would therefore see that there was not that difficulty as to warrants which the right hon. Gentleman had suggested.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, there was not a particle of foundation for this statement. Just as the hon. Member (Mr. Gray) had a direct wire into his own *Freeman* office in Dublin from London, so there was a direct wire from the Irish Office in London to Dublin Castle. It was a private wire and "tapped" no other wire, carrying only messages sent over it.

Mr. HEALY said, he had his information on this subject from a gentleman to whom he was inclined to give as much credence as to the right hon. and learned Gentleman. [Several hon. MEMBERS: Name, name!] They were not in the habit of themselves getting names in that House.

MR. SEXTON said, he could come to no other conclusion than that the secrecy of the Telegraph Department was being violated. He had no doubt, from the frank character of the Postmaster General, that if that were not the case he would have said so; but would he stand up and say it was his duty to violate telegrams in obedience to the warrant of the Home Secretary, as the noble Marquess had put it? It was most discreditable to a civilized Government that the right hon. Gentleman should be put in such a position; and, from his knowledge of the right hon. Gentleman's character, he must express some sympathy with the right hon. Gentleman. This was such a discreditable matter that he must support this Motion and any subsequent Motion.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 8; Noes 74: Majority 66. — (Div. List, No. 36.)

Original Question again proposed.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, what he and his hon. Friends wanted was an answer such as he knew it would be the inclination of the right hon. Gentleman to give. Was this system applied to telegrams as well as to letters? Had the Government really entered upon that system, so long unknown in this country, of violating the privacy of telegrams as well as letters, in order to get at what they supposed political secrets? That was a system which, when practised in other countries, had been regarded by all right-minded men here with loathing and detestation. They wanted to know whether that system prevailed, and in order to give the Government a chance of answering the question in the most direct manner, he would move that Progress be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Justin M'Carthy.*)

SIR WILFRID LAWSON said, he could understand the feeling of hon. Members opposite; but he would ask them whether they thought it right to call upon the Postmaster General to do a thing which the noble Marquess had stated distinctly in this House the right hon. Gentleman would not be justified in doing? It was hard to call upon the right hon. Gentleman to do what was clearly not his duty; and he would suggest the consideration whether it would not be better if hon. Members opposite allowed this Vote to be taken, and then on the Report make what attack they liked? The Home Secretary was clearly the person responsible in this matter.

MR. LEAMY said, he thought it curious that the noble Marquess should state that it would be unjustifiable of the Postmaster General to give this information, and it was also a little strange that the noble Marquess himself could not give it. Did the Postmaster General say he could justifiably give the information or not? What was his opinion? What was the information sought? It was not, as he understood, at the present moment whether the secrecy of telegrams was violated, but whether the Home Secretary could by his warrant direct that the contents of telegrams should be given to him, in order that he might be made acquainted with the contents of telegrams as well as letters. That was a very simple question.

MR. FAWCETT said, if the question which had been previously put was that which had just been asked, he was sorry he had not answered it. He believed it was a legal question which should be addressed to the Law Officers; but, as he understood, telegrams were in the same position with regard to warrants as were letters.

MR. REDMOND said, that that was not the question which the Irish Members desired to have answered. They were asked to vote certain public money in support of a Public Department. They wanted to know whether, in the conduct of that Public Department, certain things were done which, to their minds, were entirely unjustifiable? If the conduct they reprobated, and which he presumed the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General was ashamed of, was really carried on in the Department, then they were of opinion that they would not be justified in voting this money. Therefore, they desired to have an answer from the right hon. Gentleman to that question, and simply "Yes" or "No" would be sufficient. Was the right hon. Gentleman, in obedience to a warrant, in the habit of violating the secrecy of the Post Office telegrams? Unless the right hon. Gentleman gave a candid answer to that question, he (Mr. Redmond) did not think the Committee would be justified in voting the money now asked for. The Committee were asked to pay money for the support of the Department; but they would not be justified in voting it until they had that question clearly and distinctly answered. On the contrary, they would be justified in using every Form of the House in order to oppose the Vote.

Mr. GRAY said, he wished to explain why, while he felt strongly with his hon. Friends that they would be justified in using to the utmost the Forms of the House in order to get a reply to the question which had been put to the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General, he did not feel it his duty to take any part in any further division, if a further division was challenged. He thought that the question addressed to the right hon. Gentleman was a perfectly legitimate one; but he could not forget that the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington)—who, in the absence of the Prime Minister, was the Leader of the House—had distinctly expressed an opinion that the right hon. Gentleman could not give the information for which he was asked. The Irish Members should also recollect that they could not expect at that hour of the morning that any observations they made would be reported in the public Press. Nor could they expect, by dint of argument alone, to produce any beneficial effect. He thought, therefore, that they ought not to persevere any further. They had already, as far as their power extended, entered their protest in the matter; and what they should do at this particular time, finding that they were not able to raise in any effective manner this question of government of espionage, was to consider the position in which they might be placed by persistent divisions in reference to the discussion of the Resolutions which had been introduced in regard to the *clôture.* ["No!" *from the Irish Members.*] At any rate, that was his opinion, and he was not inclined to help the Government or strengthen their position by continuing now to divide upon the question of reporting Progress. He thought the proper course would be to put on the Paper forthwith a specific Question to the Home Secretary, so that the matter might be raised on an early day at a time when it could be brought forward and properly discussed. If the right hon. Gentleman refused to give an explicit answer, then a distinct question might be raised upon it by moving the adjournment of the House. That would be an issue which the public would understand. It would bring the whole matter under the attention of the public; whereas, by persevering in taking a division now, the Irish Party would be placed in a very questionable position. He did not see that any good end would be attained by the course now being taken; and he, for one, should simply retire and take no further part in it.

Mr. SEXTON said, he could not share the opinion of his hon. Friend the Member for the County of Carlow (Mr. Gray). He did not think the measure of success which the Government were likely to obtain in reference to the *clôture* would be affected by anything the Irish Members could do in regard to this Vote. Her Majesty's Ministers unfortunately possessed the means of effecting their will in regard to the *clôture,* or coercion, or anything else which they made part of their programme; and, therefore, he did not think the course of the Irish Members should be affected by any consideration which might appertain to the *clôture.* Perhaps it would be useful to lay again before the Committee, briefly and clearly, the position which he (Mr. Sexton) and his hon. Friends took up upon this question. The question he asked was this—whether a warrant of the Home Secretary ordering the violation of the secrecy of the Post Office telegrams was at present in operation in the Post Office Department; whether the telegrams received were liable to be copied and laid before the right hon. Gentleman or any other Member of the Government outside the Post Office Department? That was the question they desired to put. They admitted that a statutory power rested with the Home Secretary, and that he had a legal power to do this if he thought proper. They raised no question upon that head. In the second place they did not raise the question for the purpose of any conflict, or with any ulterior view of bringing about a conflict in the Committee, because they had long since made up their minds that the exercise of the powers possessed by the Government in an arbitrary manner was a matter over which they had no control. The only object they had in asking the question was the ascertainment of a fact, and not for the purpose of raising any conflict. Were they, under such circumstances, to be told that they had not the right to expect an answer to the question. The hon. Baronet the Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) said that after the declaration of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) it was impossible for the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General to answer the question. The hon. Baronet took a more severe view of the position of the right hon. Gentleman than he (Mr. Sexton) would have expected. The matter was not governed by any declaration or form of apology made on behalf of the Postmaster General. The Irish Members asked the right hon. Gentleman whether a certain thing was taking place in his Department—the Department of which the right hon. Gentleman was the Constitutional head—and his hon. Friend the Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray) advised them to ask somebody altogether outside the Department. Now, it was obviously plain, in regard to the Department of which the right hon. Gentleman was the supreme head, according to the Constitution, that the right hon. Gentleman was himself the Minister, and that he was the proper person to answer the question, and no one else. He believed that on reflection the right hon. Gentleman would see that it was an evasion—and an unworthy evasion—to tell him (Mr. Sexton) to ask another Minister what was done in his own Department; and he failed to see why the Irish Members should not pursue their protest by every means in their power.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he thought it was useless to discuss the question any further. As the hon. Gentleman stated that his only object was not to enter into any conflict as to the exercise of this power, but merely to obtain information, he (the Marquess of Hartington) would venture to point out that a way had been suggested by which the hon. Member could obtain the information he desired—namely, by putting a Question to the Minister, who would either answer it or decline to do so. A Question could be put to the Home Secretary on Monday; and when the Report of Supply was brought up, the contest, if necessary, could be renewed. The information which the hon. Gentleman desired to obtain could certainly not be gained by the course now being pursued.

MR. SEXTON said, there was some point in the last remark of the noble Marquess. It was a point, however, which was conspicuously absent from the previous speeches delivered from the Treasury Bench. He (Mr. Sexton) was perfectly sincere in saying that he had no desire to force a conflict. He simply desired to know what the fact was, and he had no objection to postpone the further consideration of the matter until the Report was brought up. He must, however, be allowed to say that, when hon. Members accepted the proposal of the Government to postpone the consideration of any particular question until the bringing up of the Report, their confidence was seldom repaid by the treatment they subsequently received from the Treasury Bench.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Original Question again proposed.

MR. GRAY wished to say a word or two upon the general question before the Vote was agreed to. The Postmaster General had stated that a considerable amount of this Vote would go towards the relief of the Irish telegraph clerks; and the right hon. Gentleman had also stated in regard to the previous Vote that the principal part of it went to Ireland. He (Mr. Gray) was quite aware that the Irish telegraph clerks complained bitterly of their treatment. They were equally skilled, and did an equal amount of work as the telegraph clerks, either in London or the other great centres of England, such as Manchester, Liverpool, or Birmingham; but, nevertheless, they did not receive an equal amount of pay. He did not profess to know anything in regard to the mechanical appliances of telegraphing; but it certainly appeared to him that those who received or transmitted a message at one end of a wire must be equally as skilled as those who received or transmitted a message at the other end, and that they were entitled to equal consideration in regard to remuneration. The clerks employed in London were paid at a much higher rate than other clerks. He did not complain of that. Everybody in London was paid at a higher rate than anywhere else; but he did not see why the clerks in Manchester should be paid on a higher scale than those in Dublin. The expense of living was quite as high in Dublin as in Manchester, or Glasgow, or elsewhere; and the skill of the telegraphists was quite as great. He hoped that he might interpret the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General to be an intimation that the existing inequalities were about to be remedied.

Mr. FAWCETT said, he certainly thought that when the hon. Gentleman saw the classification he would perceive that no body of telegraphists would benefit by it more than the telegraph clerks in Ireland. There would be, in future, very little difference between the position of the telegraphists in Manchester and in Dublin; and the improvement that would be effected in the condition of the clerks in Dublin would be very great indeed.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next;

Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

BOILER EXPLOSIONS BILL.—[Bill 4.]

(*Mr. Hugh Mason, Mr. Burt, Mr. Henry Lee, Mr. Broadhurst.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 2nd March.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN moved the insertion of the following Clause:—

(As to costs and expenses of inquiry.)

"7. The Court may make such order as they think fit respecting the costs and expenses of the inquiry, and such order shall, on the application of any party entitled to the benefit of the same, be enforced by any Court of Summary Jurisdiction as if such costs and expenses were a penalty imposed by such Court.

"The Board of Trade may, if they think fit, pay to the members of the Court of Inquiry, including any assessors, such remuneration as they may, with the consent of the Treasury, appoint.

"Any costs and expenses ordered by the Court to be paid by the Board of Trade, and any remuneration paid under this section no otherwise provided for, shall be paid out of moneys provided by Parliament."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be now read a second time."

Captain AYLMER begged to move that the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again. A great many of his hon. Friends, who were interested in this Bill, had waited until a late hour, and had now gone away, under the impression that the Bill would not be brought on. At such a late hour (3.20) he did not think it was necessary that he should enter into any reasons for moving to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Captain Aylmer.*)

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, he had moved the clause in order to redeem the undertaking he had made on the second reading of the Bill. He might remind hon. Members that the Bill was strongly supported on both sides of the House, and no difference of opinion prevailed in regard to the clause he proposed to introduce. If any objection were raised it might be allowed to stand over until the Report. The clause itself had been on the Paper for some time, and no objection had been taken to it. The principle which it involved was agreed to on both sides of the House on the second reading of the Bill. What he was doing now was a mere formal matter, and would be for the convenience of the House, by securing the insertion of the clause in the Bill. They might then be allowed to get out of Committee, and they would be able to consider any further matter on the Report.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY joined in the protest made by his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer) against proceeding further with the Bill after a quarter past 3 in the morning.

Mr. BROADHURST expressed a hope that the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer) would not press his objection. Many hon. Members had been staying there for six or seven hours in order to bring this Bill on and advance it another stage. The Bill itself had been received as a useful and proper measure in all quarters; and he could assure the hon. and learned Member for Sheffield (Mr. Stuart-Wortley), and the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer), that they would consult the convenience of hon. Members on both sides of the House if they would withdraw the Motion for reporting Progress, and allow the measure to go forward.

Captain AYLMER said, the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had called attention to the fact that no Amendments had been placed on the Paper to the clause which the Government proposed to insert in the Bill. That was quite true; but he had only been able to see the clause of the right hon. Gentleman yesterday, and to-morrow there would be five or six Amendments to it on the Paper. He did not think he ought to be required to move them at that hour of the morning.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he thought that it was most unreasonable for the Government to ask the Committee to go on with the Bill at that hour of the morning. He had supported the Government in their effort to get money. [Mr. Chamberlain dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman shook his head; but he (Mr. Fowler) thought he was quite justified in saying that he and his Friends had supported the Government, and they had a right to object now, under the circumstances, to go on with the present Bill.

Mr. WARTON said, that if he was in Order, upon a Motion of this nature, he should like to point out from the Bill itself a reason why they ought to postpone any further proceeding with it at the present moment. They were now discussing a new clause; but on referring to the Schedule of the Bill he thought he could point out a reason why the right hon. Gentleman in charge of it should give a little further time for the consideration of the measure.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN remarked, that he was not in charge of the Bill. It was in the charge of the hon. Member for Ashton-under-Lyne (Mr. Hugh Mason).

Mr. WARTON begged the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. He (Mr. Warton) had naturally thought that the right hon. Gentleman was in charge of the Bill. He wished, however, to point out that there was an extraordinary difference between the Schedule at the end of the Bill and the previous section. He could not understand why the hon. Member for Ashton-under-Lyne (Mr. Hugh Mason) had not made the Schedule agree with the previous section; and there were one or two additions and one or two omissions that it would be necessary to make when they came to the Schedule to which he proposed to call attention. It would be absolutely necessary to make a number of small alterations in order to bring the Schedule into harmony with the rest of the Bill. The Amendments moved by the right hon. Gentleman who was not in charge of the Bill would introduce considerable alterations and practically determine the shape of the Bill.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, he thought hon. Members opposite were under a misapprehension, inasmuch as they appeared to suppose that this was a Government measure. The Bill was brought in by his hon. Friend the Member for Ashton-under-Lyne (Mr. Hugh Mason). He rose only to express the opinion that little good would be done by proceeding farther with the clause before the Committee, in view of the strong feeling which had been evinced by hon. Members on that side of the House. Had the Bill been supported as on a former occasion, he had no doubt that another stage would have been reached.

Mr. HUGH MASON said, he regretted that they could not proceed, inasmuch as the Bill had been received previously with almost absolute unanimity on both sides of the House, and five minutes' more discussion would have forwarded it to another stage.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

LAW OF DISTRESS.

Select Committee *appointed,* "to consider the whole subject of the Law of Distress, especially as regards Agricultural Landlords and Tenants."

And, on March 9, Committee *nominated* as follows:—Mr. Goschen, Mr. Salt, Mr. Heneage, Sir Massey Lopes, Mr. Cropper, Sir William Hart Dyke, Mr. Blennerhassett, Colonel Brise, Mr. Duckham, Mr. Biddell, Mr. Joseph Pease, Mr. Fellowes, Mr. James Howard, Mr. Akers-Douglas, Dr. Commins, Sir Gabriel Goldney, and Mr. Rendel:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records; Five to be the quorum.

House adjourned at half after Three o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 6*th March*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—SELECT COMMITTEE—Claims of Peerage, &c. *re-appointed* and *nominated;* Land Law (Ireland), The Duke of Sutherland added *v.* The Earl of Clarendon.

PUBLIC BILL—*First Reading*—Slate Mines (Gunpowder) * (28).

ATTEMPT UPON THE LIFE OF HER MAJESTY.

ADDRESS TO HER MAJESTY.

EARL **GRANVILLE**: My Lords, I rise to move a Resolution, the cause of which is a thing of sadness and of shame, though it is as happily accompanied by some circumstances of a compensating character. On Thursday last, when Her Majesty returned from London to Windsor, before Her Majesty had proceeded some 20 yards from the station, the carriage then going at a foot-pace, a man, who has since been ascertained to be called Roderick Maclean, presented a pistol at the carriage and fired. The bullet was discovered next day some 28 yards away from where the carriage was when it was fired, and in a direct line with the carriage. The man remained with his arm up and with his pistol pointed in the same direction, and he was immediately seized and disarmed. I think it will be better for me not to go into further detail, or to anticipate in any way the facts that will be brought out in the course of the judicial proceedings that will take place. I have said that there were compensating circumstances connected with this degrading, this unmanly, this most disgraceful outrage. In the first place, this deadly attempt turned out to be utterly harmless, either with regard to the person of Her Majesty and those who were with her, or with regard to any of her subjects who were standing by her. In the second place, the sensation that might well be expected in this country appears to have run through the whole civilized world. The respect which has been felt for one whose reign has been so long and so beneficent has been poured out in the warmest feelings from all civilized countries. It is, so far as we know, satisfactory that this attempt, of which it is hard to define the real motives, appears to be absolutely free from anything of a political taint. I remember, as if it were yesterday, that, in 1850, Lord John Russell, a man of singularly calm and collected character, told me, immediately after an outrage on the Queen, as she was coming from Cambridge House, that he was perfectly astonished at the serene courage Her Majesty exhibited at that moment. Thirty-two years have elapsed since that time; great misfortunes have overtaken Her Majesty, and it is possible that there may be some diminution of physical strength; but that same brave spirit which then filled the gentlest of her sex has remained to this day. The first inquiry which the Queen made was whether anyone had been hurt. Her second feeling was her great appreciation of the courage which her devoted daughter by her side (the Princess Beatrice) had inherited from herself and had equally displayed. It is with the greatest satisfaction, after making what is, in some respects, a painful statement, that I say now on the highest authority—that of the illustrious Prince (the Prince of Wales) on the Cross Benches, who has only immediately left the Queen—that this attempt, which was sufficient to shake the nerves of the boldest man, yet left Her Majesty with her nerves unshaken, and in possession of the health she had before. The noble Earl concluded by moving his Resolution.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty to express our horror and indignation at the reckless and wicked attempt made on Thursday last against Her Majesty's Sacred person, and our heartfelt congratulations to Her Majesty and the country on Her Majesty's happy preservation from danger; and to assure Her Majesty that we make it our earnest prayer to Almighty God that, as He has long preserved to us the blessings that we enjoy under Her Majesty's beneficent government, He will continue to watch over a life so highly prized by Her Majesty's loyal subjects." — (*The Earl Granville.*)

THE MARQUESS OF **SALISBURY**: My Lords, I am sure that in proposing the Resolution which has just been read, Her Majesty's Government have been the faithful interpreters of the feelings of your Lordships' House, and that if some such Address had not been presented on this momentous and almost calamitous occasion, Parliament would not truly have represented the feelings of Her Majesty's subjects. The noble Earl has told us that the causes of this crime are mysterious, and he has wisely abstained from dealing with any possible hypothesis with regard to it; but it is a great satisfaction to know that there is no tinge of political feeling in the crime, which, unfortunately, is analogous to other crimes which this generation has witnessed. The noble Earl did rightly in stating that there is not necessarily any political feeling in these crimes, because we have seen them committed, and that with fatal effect, on the chief Rulers of States so far removed in their political character as the Republic of the United States and the Empire of Russia. Nor, again, are such crimes any indication of resentment felt against the distinguished persons against whom they are levelled; but it is, unhappily, rather those Sovereigns who have shown the deepest care and affection for their people who seem from time to time to be most exposed to occurrences of this kind. They happen, apparently, at particular periods of history. After the Reformation there was a great outburst of such crimes, which passed away, and have only been renewed within the memory of this generation; but the very fact that they are so mysterious, that they are so monstrous, and so totally repugnant to the feelings of every class and section in this country — even the minutest—should be a warning to those who are the guardians of the public peace that we live in times which in this respect are not ordinary times, and that special caution should be taken that terrible occurrences of this kind should not be lightly treated. This is not the moment to enter largely into this subject. We are now invited to express and record our deep horror of the monstrous act which has been done, and our sincere and heartful thankfulness that the attempt to inflict upon this nation so great a calamity has failed. In proportion to the love which this nation feels for Her Majesty, in proportion to the benefits which her long and brilliant reign have conferred on those who have the blessing to be her subjects, in that proportion will their response to such an invitation as this be earnest and heartfelt; and I am sure that in no part of Her Majesty's Dominions, and in no class of her subjects, will the response be so sincere and so warm as from the loyal subjects who constitute your Lordships' House.

Motion *agreed to, nemine dissentiente*, and a message sent to the Commons to communicate to them the said Address and to desire their concurrence therewith.

CLAIMS OF PEERAGE, &c.

RE-APPOINTMENT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Moved, "That the Select Committee appointed on the 8th of July 1881 to inquire into the present state of the law as to claims and assumptions of titles of peerage in the United Kingdom and in Scotland and Ireland respectively, and the means of proving and establishing the same; and as to the proceedings and claims to vote at elections of Representative Peers of Scotland and Ireland respectively; and whether it is desirable that the present state of law or practice as to any of the matters aforesaid should be amended; and also to inquire into the present procedure and practice of this House in its Committee of Privileges; and whether such procedure and practice can be amended so as to diminish the delay and expense incident to the determination of claims of peerage and claims to vote at elections of Representative Peers of Scotland and Ireland respectively, be re-appointed."—(*The Earl of Galloway.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

The Lords following were named of the Committee:

M. Abercorn.
E. Mansfield.
E. Belmore.
E. Redesdale.
V. Sherbrooke.
L. Balfour of Burley.
L. Stewart of Garlies.
L. Inchiquin.
L. Ker.
L. Moncrieff.
L. O'Hagan.
L. Watson.
L. Brabourne.

The Committee to meet on *Tuesday* the 21*st instant*, at Four o'clock, and to appoint their own Chairman.

ARMY (INDIA)—MILITARY DRAFTS.

MOTION FOR A RETURN.

Earl FORTESCUE, in moving for a Return upon the subject, said, that he and other sanitary reformers, years ago, represented to Lord Cardwell the concurrent testimony of the best medical authorities that our soldiers ran increased risk, in such a climate as that of India, if sent out under the age of 20. He had heard lately that a considerable number of lads had been sent out under that age; but he hoped the rumour would prove nearly, if not quite, unfounded. At the same time, it seemed to him highly desirable that the public should be officially informed of the true state of the case.

Moved for, "Return of the number of non-commissioned officers and soldiers below the age of 20 who have been sent to India from 1st January 1881 to 1st January 1882, giving the designations of the regiments to which they have been respectively supplied."—(*The Earl Fortescue.*)

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, that the present conditions under which drafts were sent to India almost precluded the possibility of soldiers being sent there under the age of 20, or until they had had a year's service in this country. Drummer boys and other lads employed in analogous capacities were, of course, exceptions to the rule. He would have no objection to supply the Return moved for by the noble Earl.

Motion *agreed to.*

Return *ordered* to be laid before the House.

UNIVERSITIES OF OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE ACT, 1877—THE STATUTES.

MOTION FOR A PAPER.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY, in whose name the following Notice stood on the Order Paper:—

"To move that the Statutes laid on the Table of this House by the Oxford and Cambridge University Commissioners during the present Session be printed,"

said: My Lords, the Motion I have risen to make is that these statutes which have been laid on the Table be forthwith printed. It is provided by Act of Parliament that after they have remained on the Table for 12 weeks they must become law, if no objection is raised to them in either of the Houses of Parliament. These 12 weeks are designed to enable the Legislature to express an opinion upon the subject; but if, instead of being circulated, these statutes are locked up in a drawer, it is obviously difficult for the two Houses to express any views upon them. My object is to try and stimulate the printer into allowing us to have the benefit of these statutes without delay. Noble Lords opposite must not think that I am making any attack upon them. I remember several years ago, when they were last in Office, I used to press for increased activity on the part of the printers, and noble Lords opposite used to protest that they were powerless in the matter. When in Office myself, I also experienced the difficulty of getting Papers printed, and was in my turn pressed to make the printers move fast, and I had to give a similar excuse. On whom rests the responsibility for the printers' delays is one of the mysteries of the British Constitution, and I have brought forward this Motion as an experiment, not knowing whom it will affect. It is possible that if your Lordships express a desire on the subject, the mysterious person, whoever he is, who manages the printing office may be kind enough to take your wishes into account. There is no other point which I wish to raise now, though there are many questions in connection with these statutes which it is desirable that we should discuss. But, of course, there would be considerable difficulty about discussing them before we have seen them.

Moved, "That the Statutes laid on the Table of this House by the Oxford and Cambridge University Commissioners during the present Session be forthwith printed."—(*The Marquess of Salisbury.*)

THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY said, that the circumstances under which these statutes appeared before their Lordships were rather peculiar. The Commission appointed to draw up the statutes and lay them before Parliament had ceased to exist; and though provision was made for the work to go on, notwithstanding the termination of the labours of the Commissioners, some inconvenience had arisen from the fact that the Commission had ended before the completion of the work intrusted to it. If the Privy Council did not agree with the statutes made by the Commissioners, they had power to send them back for alteration so long as the Commission continued in existence; but as things stood now, the Commission having ceased to exist, it was all the more incumbent upon Parliament to examine the statutes, in case it should be found that any of their provisions were not quite in accordance with the principles upon which the Act instituting the Commission was originally based. There were two Acts which affected the questions which he wished their Lordships to consider. They were the University Tests Act and the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Commission Act. The first of these Acts very carefully provided that instruction should be given in religion to members of the Church of England, according to their own views, and also that the chapel services should be duly maintained as in former times in the various Colleges. A good deal of dissatisfaction had been caused throughout the country by an apprehension that the provisions of this Act had not in all cases been complied with by the Commissioners in drawing up the statutes which were now recommended to their Lordships for acceptance. He had received a Petition very numerously signed by parents and other persons interested in the welfare of the young men who frequented the University of Oxford, pointing out that the provisions of the Tests Act had been practically disregarded. He wished especially to call attention to the statutes of one particular College, in the case of which it could hardly be contended that the directions contained in the Tests Act had been properly complied with. He alluded to Lincoln College. This College had, until a recent period, been a Society, the Fellows of which were all required to take Holy Orders within a certain time after their election. The Tests Act had, of course, altered the character of that College, as it had that of other Colleges; but, at the same time, it had provided that religious instruction should be imparted to members of the Church of England, and that the chapel services should be properly maintained. Now, the arrangements suggested by the new statutes in connection with this College were such that none of its members need be clergymen of the Church of England; and, therefore, if the chapel services were to be maintained, it might soon become necessary that they should be maintained by a person brought in *ab extra*, who would not be a member of the Governing Body of the College, and who would be in the very subordinate position of a chaplain hired for the purpose of reading the services. The arrangements made in the new statutes for the appointment of such a chaplain seemed to him to be of an extraordinary character. Two persons were to be appointed, in the event of there being no qualified member of the College willing to accept the office; and these two persons were to receive between them the munificent sum of £100, being liable to dismissal from year to year. That could scarcely be called maintaining the chapel services in the manner in which they were maintained before the passing of the Tests Act. Nothing could be more harmful to the young men than their seeing these services neglected by the ruling Bodies of the Colleges, the chaplain receiving as their deputy a salary certainly not equal to that of the College butler. He had an acquaintance with the University extending over 50 years. When he first went there the prevailing opinions were the old-fashioned opinions of the Church of England; but those principles afterwards became less popular than they were in his earlier days. No doubt, a good deal of improvement had resulted from the subsequent change of opinion, there having in the next generation been a very strong clerical party, differing from that which had preceded it, but full of zeal for religion. But now, whether the fact was due to the perverseness of human nature or to some other cause, it was, unfortunately, true that a totally opposite state of things existed in the greater part of the University. Nothing could be more unwise than that the predominant opinions of any one generation on the subject of the instruction of the young men in our great Universities should be stereotyped for ever. If it was true that opinions by no means popular throughout England, though very popular in the neighbouring country of France, which regarded clericalism as the greatest of all evils, and where clericalism was sometimes confounded with Christianity itself—if it was true that such opinions were at all prevalent in the Universities—nothing could be more unwise than that the Legislature should stereotype for all time a view of education which the nation did not endorse, and which must lead to a separation between the religious sentiments of the country at large and those of the great Universities to which they intrusted their sons. For these reasons he held that the utmost care should be taken in connection with these statutes; and he saw no other mode in which such care could be exercised than by Parliament performing laboriously and honestly the duty of examining these statutes. For the fulfilment of that duty they had only eight weeks left to them. He feared without careful attention infinite mischief might be done —the Universities might cease to occupy the great place they had always held in this country; and, secondly, there would be the injury to the young men themselves, who would be subjected to unfortunate influences. Besides, there would be this fresh danger, which he considered a very real one—that religious men throughout the country would determine that they would not submit to the present state of things, and that, therefore, they would found smaller societies, and thus a narrow system of teaching would spring up in the place of the wide and wise system which had hitherto existed in the Universities. He therefore hoped that the House would turn its attention to the statutes, and not merely have them placed on the Table as a matter of form.

Earl SPENCER said, he did not rise to follow the remarks of the most rev. Prelate (the Archbishop of Canterbury). He joined with him in the view that these statutes were of the greatest importance; but, at the same time, he could have wished that the most rev. Prelate had waited until the statutes were in their Lordships' hands before discussing, and to some extent criticizing them. If the regular discussion, which no doubt would take place, were forestalled, a prejudice might be raised against the statutes before any opportunity was given to the Commissioners, or those who represented them, to state their views. With regard to the printers, he believed what was said by the noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury) was not quite correct. When Papers were presented by Command they were printed at once; but when to be printed according to statute, it was not done unless some of their Lordships made a Motion to that effect. The initiative did not rest with the Government. A Motion having been made, however, the statutes would be printed forthwith, accordingly, and circulated, if it was the pleasure of the House.

The Marquess of SALISBURY said, the word "forthwith" had been accidentally omitted at the end of his Motion.

Motion *agreed to*.

House adjourned at five minutes to Six o'clock during pleasure.

House resumed at five minutes past Eight o'clock.

The Lord Thurlow—Chosen Speaker in the absence of the Lord Chancellor and the Lord Commissioner.

ATTEMPT UPON THE LIFE OF HER MAJESTY.

Message from the Commons that they have agreed to the Address and have filled up the blank with the words ("and Commons"): Ordered, That the Lord Steward do wait upon Her Majesty humbly to know what time Her Majesty will please to appoint to be attended with the said Address.

House adjourned at a quarter past Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 6*th March*, 1882.

MINUTES.] — Select Committee — London Parochial Charities and Parochial Charities (London), *nominated*.

Supply — *considered in Committee — Resolutions* [March 3] *reported*.

Private Bills (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Accrington Branch Canal*; Rugby Gas*.

Public Bills — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Arklow Harbour* [96]; Places of Worship Sites* [97].

Third Reading—Consolidated Fund (No. 1)*, and *passed*. [New Title.]

QUESTIONS.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND)—COUNTY OF DERRY LUNATIC ASYLUM.

Mr. LEWIS asked, Whether there have very recently been eleven governors of the County of Derry Lunatic Asylum appointed by the Lord Lieutenant; whether there were more than two vacancies in the existing number of governors when such appointments were made; whether all such persons so appointed were of the same political party, and the large majority of them prominent supporters of the Irish Solicitor General in the recent contest for Derry County; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will explain to the House what was the necessity and object of such a large number of persons of one political complexion being appointed at this time?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER), in reply, said, it was the fact that 11 Governors of the County of Derry Lunatic Asylum had been recently appointed by the Lord Lieutenant. There was no prescribed number of Governors; but owing to deaths, resignations, and non-attendance, it became necessary to make new appointments. The 11 gentlemen recently appointed were Liberals, and the majority of them supported him (the Solicitor General for Ireland) in the recent election, as they had supported Liberal candidates on former occasions. Their qualifications were unquestionable, and the Board at present consisted of 24 Conservatives and 16 Liberals. There was no emolument connected with the office.

MR. LEWIS asked, what was the necessity and object of such a large number of persons of one political complexion being appointed at this time?

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER) thought he had already answered the Question. On account of resignations and non-attendance, it was found necessary to re-inforce the Board. There had previously been much dissatisfaction with the constitution of the Board, which, in a county mainly Liberal, had consisted of 24 Conservatives and 5 Liberals.

STATE OF IRELAND—ALLEGED ASSAULT ON MR. BOYLAN.

MR. REDMOND asked, Whether the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland has received a letter from Mr. Boylan, of Edenderry, King's County, respecting the assault alleged to have been committed upon him on the 16th of January last by Captain L'Estrange, R.M.; and, whether he intends to take any steps to afford protection to Mr. Boylan in the discharge of his important duties as schoolmaster, and to mark his sense of disapproval of the conduct of Captain L'Estrange, R.M., or to order an independent inquiry into the occurrence on the occasion in question?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, the Chief Secretary for Ireland has received Mr. Boylan's letter, and the matter is under his consideration.

CHILI—MURDER OF DR. MACLEAN.

MR. FRASER-MACKINTOSH asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, What steps have been taken towards obtaining compensation to the representatives of Dr. William Maclean, Physician to the British Minister, from the Government of Chili, for the murder of Dr. Maclean by Chilian troops at Chorilles, Peru, and within the Minister's residence, on 13th January 1881?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Her Majesty's Minister in Chili has been instructed to bring this case to the notice of the Chilian Government, who have promised that an inquiry shall be instituted. The relatives of Dr. Maclean have been informed that the case will be duly considered with the other British claims against the Chilian Government.

CENTRAL AFRICA—DISTRICT OF LAKE NYASSA.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Foreign Office have any information of the reported intention of the Portuguese Government to occupy the district adjoining Lake Nyassa, in which the Blantyre Mission is situate; and, whether such occupation has the approval of Her Majesty's Government, as being a step likely to diminish the Slave Trade as now carried on by Portuguese subjects on the coast of Mozambique?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, the report mentioned by the hon. Baronet reached Her Majesty's Government from Zanzibar; but they have been since positively assured by the Portuguese Government that it is without foundation.

COMMERCIAL TREATY WITH SPAIN—NEGOTIATIONS.

MR. O'SHEA asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government are in a position to give the House any information as to the negotiation of a commercial treaty between this Country and Spain?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Negotiations, Sir, are taking place between this country and Spain; but I cannot at present say more.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARRESTS UNDER THE ACT.

Dr. COMMINS asked, Whether Michael Gibbons, Patrick Gibbons, and John L. Gannon, arrested in the county Roscommon, on the 7th of May 1881, as suspects of assembling for the purpose of disturbing the public peace, are still detained, although Thomas Gibbons, arrested at the same time and on the same charge, has been long since liberated; whether there is any, and what, difference, between his (Thomas Gibbons') case and theirs; and whether it is a fact that no agrarian crime or outrage of any kind has been, either for many months before or since, committed in the district in which these men lived?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, Michael and Patrick Gibbons and John L. Gannon are still detained. Thomas Gibbons was discharged principally on account of his age. With regard to the latter part of the Question, in this district agrarian and other outrages have been committed both before and since the arrests. On the 6th of January last a mob of 50 persons attacked a police patrol and succeeded in carrying off one of their rifles.

Dr. COMMINS asked, Whether the alleged intimidating persons from paying rent, assigned as the cause of the arrest of John P. Hayden and George F. Fannon in Roscommon on the 8th ultimo, consisted in their canvassing the ratepayers in favour of the re-election as Poor Law Guardians of Roscommon Union, of two candidates, Messrs. Nond and Burke, at present imprisoned suspects; whether the arrest was made between twelve and one o'clock in the morning, although the warrants had been laying some time with the police authorities; whether the prisons of Monaghan and Omagh, to which they were removed, were the two prisons farthest removed from Roscommon and the most inconvenient of access; whether the authorities were aware, when removing Mr. Hayden to the latter, that the Governor had only a few days before died of fever, produced by its bad sanitary condition; and, whether the Government are aware that Mr. Hayden has been acting for his brother, Mr. Luke P. Hayden, the editor and proprietor of the "Roscommon Messenger," who has for nearly five months been imprisoned as a suspect in Galway Prison, and that the detention of both brothers under the circumstances practically precludes them from taking any part in the management of the paper?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, in reply to the first inquiry in this Question, I must remind the hon. Member that it has been repeatedly announced in this House, and for very obvious reasons, that the circumstances causing arrest will not be stated; and I fear I am infringing on that principle in even saying that these persons were not arrested for the cause suggested in this inquiry. As to the other inquiries in the Question, the arrests were made at about midnight, in order to avoid excitement and as the train left in an hour afterwards. The warrants were not for some time lying with the police; they were dated the 7th of February, and the unfortunate death of the Governor of Omagh Prison did not occur until the following day. Monaghan and Omagh Prisons are not the most remote from Roscommon, nor the most inconvenient of access. I am informed that the Government were aware that Mr. John Hayden is brother of Mr. Luke Hayden and acting for him in reference to the paper referred to.

Mr. REDMOND asked, If it is a fact that Mr. Francis Campbell, on making application in the ordinary way to visit some of the suspects in Armagh Gaol, on the 16th February last, was refused admission and informed that no one living either in the county of Armagh or of Tyrone would be allowed in; and, if so, whether the authorities of the Gaol were acting in accordance with his instructions?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, the facts are as stated in the Question. The reason was that small-pox of a very virulent character was prevalent in the district; and the medical officer, with the view of protecting the prisoners from the danger of infection, deemed it necessary, with the sanction of the prison authorities, to give directions that, until further order, no person residing in the district should be admitted into the prison.

MR. LEAMY inquired if the right hon. and learned Gentleman meant to say that small-pox existed in the entire of the two counties?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Unhappily, it exists both in the counties of Armagh and Tyrone; but I am unable to say in what portions.

CUSTOMS—THE NEW WAREHOUSING SCHEME.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, in introducing the new warehousing scheme for the Customs, the Government intend to abolish the existing clerical establishments, and to offer the clerks situations as officers of the Outdoor Department; whether the acceptance of those situations will involve longer hours of attendance than those the clerks have hitherto been required to give; whether the pay and prospects of clerks placed on the new outdoor classification would not be inferior to their pay and prospects on the clerical classifications; and, what course the Government propose to take with respect to clerks who may be unable or unwilling to accept a transfer to the Outdoor Department?

SIR TREVOR LAWRENCE also asked, Whether the Government propose to use the full powers, conferred by Clause 7 of the Superannuation Act of 1859, to grant two-thirds of their salary and emoluments to Customs clerks disestablished by the proposed changes in the warehousing system; also, what steps the Government have taken to find suitable employment in other branches of the Civil Service for the Customs clerks, whose situations are to be abolished by the new warehousing scheme?

SIR HENRY PEEK also asked, Whether it is proposed by the Treasury to insist upon the clerks in the warehousing departments of the Customs either accepting employment in the Outdoor Department or retiring upon pensions; and, whether a sufficient number of Indoor situations could not be found for clerks unable to accept the Outdoor employment, if fair terms of retirement were offered to the whole of the Customs' service?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Sir, it may save the time of the House that I should answer the Questions of the two hon. Members for Mid Surrey at the same time as that of the noble Lord. The Treasury is endeavouring to effect the important object of the entire assimilation of the warehousing systems of the two Revenue Departments with as little injury as possible to any of the individuals concerned. With this object they have directed the Board of Customs, as a preliminary, to take steps for ascertaining which of the clerks in the Warehousing Departments of the Customs would desire to retire upon the ordinary abolition terms of Section 7 of the Superannuation Act of 1859, and which of them would desire to be transferred to the Outdoor Service. The offers of retirement will have to be considered, subject to the condition that they are reconcilable with the good of the service and with due regard to economy. I may here observe that although, under the new system, the duties of the Warehousing Department, now performed at the Custom House, will be performed at the warehouses, those duties will continue to be largely of a clerical character. Many of the present clerks will, therefore, be well fitted for the clerical work in the Outdoor Service which will be required under the new system. Personal allowances will be made to officers so transferred when the salaries of their new posts are less than those of which they are now in receipt. The Government has, moreover, not lost sight of the possibility of allowing room to be made in other departments of the Customs for warehousing clerks displaced by the change, provided that clerks of corresponding rank in those departments are willing to take the terms of retirement offered to the warehousing clerks. By these various means it is hoped to provide for the great majority of the clerks in question; and, until we have learned how far they are efficacious, it is not desirable to consider the question of finding employment in other Departments of the Civil Service. In reply to the second part of the Question of the noble Lord, I have to state that the hours of attendance will, in fact, begin somewhat earlier than is now required, but that the same attendance might, as far as terms of service go, be required now; and, as regards the third part, so far as relates to the prospects, it would be difficult to say whether the gain or the loss would, on the whole, be the greater.

LUNATIC ASYLUMS (IRELAND).

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether, considering the very unsatisfactory arrangements at present existing for the care, maintenance, and medical treatment of insane persons who are detained in private houses in Ireland, under the Acts 5 and 6 Vic. c. 123, and 38 and 39 Vic. c. 67, and the admitted evils connected therewith, he will advise Her Majesty's Government to bring in a Bill to abolish altogether the system of lunatic asylums kept by private individuals for personal gain in Ireland, and to substitute instead a system of self-supporting institutions under the management and control of paid officers, whose only pecuniary interest in them would be the salaries attached to their respective offices?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, this is a question of policy which should be addressed to a Cabinet Minister, and not to the Attorney General for Ireland.

CUSTOMS—COFFEE AND CHICORY.

Sir JOHN HAY (for Mr. Hubbard) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether any and what reply has been given by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to a Memorial from the merchants interested in the coffee trade, presented on the 6th February last, urging the withdrawal of a Treasury Minute, dated on the 20th January, which purported to sanction the importation, under a duty of 2*d.* per pound, of coffee or chicory, roasted and ground, and of any other vegetable matter, however worthless, mixed, without any restriction upon the proportion, with coffee or chicory; and, whether he will lay upon the Table of the House, to be printed, a Copy of the Memorial, with the signatures appended, and of the reply returned to the memorialists?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH, in reply, said, that the Treasury Order simply permitted the importation of a mixture of chicory and coffee, while it was now allowable to import coffee by itself, and chicory by itself. No alteration whatever had been made with regard to the sale of the mixture which had of late been permissible by law. The question of the advisability of allowing the sale was one that related rather to the Adulteration Acts than to the Customs tariff. There was no objection to laying the Correspondence on the Table, if the hon. Gentleman moved for it.

ARMY—MILITIA OFFICERS.

Mr. O'SHEA asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether Militia officers are ineligible for the classes of instruction in field works and surveying at Chatham; and, if so, whether any exception has been made to this rule?

Mr. CHILDERS: I find, Sir, that in 1877, my Predecessor, Viscount Cranbrook, stated, in reply to a Question from my hon. Friend the Member for Frome (Mr. H. Samuelson), that he could not give leave to officers of Militia Infantry to study at Chatham. This rule has been observed, except in the case of one or two officers actually residing at Chatham. I see no reason to extend this permission further.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—SCIENCE AND ART IN EAST LONDON.

Mr. BRYCE asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether it is the intention of the Science and Art Department to take steps to carry out the promise to establish a Science and Art School in connection with the East London Museum at Bethnal Green, which was given by the Lords of the Committee of Council on Education, by a letter written at their direction, and dated December 12th, 1870, which appears among the Parliamentary Papers of the Session of 1872?

Mr. MUNDELLA: Sir, I have looked into the Correspondence to which the hon. Member refers, and I find that there was an understanding 12 years ago that part of the buildings of the Bethnal Green Museum should be devoted to a Science and Art School. But since then the whole of the premises have been required for the purposes of the Museum. The subject was considered by the late Government in 1874 and 1879, and they did not feel themselves justified in establishing such schools on other than the ordinary conditions. I cannot see how we can fairly be called upon to establish and maintain

Science and Art Schools at the East End of London on any other conditions than those which are applied to the Provinces.

THE NEW COURTS OF JUSTICE.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether he is able to inform the House when the Royal Courts of Justice will be fully opened?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE, in reply, said, that the builders would complete their work by Easter; but after that there would still be a good deal of work to do. He thought the Courts would be fully opened about midsummer, before the Summer Circuit.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—LEASE DUTY ON AGREEMENTS.

MR. GIBSON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Commissioners of Inland Revenue claim the ordinary ad valorem lease duty on agreements, under the Irish Land Act, made out of Court between landlords and tenants, and known as originating notice "No. 33;" whether such claim has been disapproved of by the Land Commission; and, whether this penalizing of voluntary agreements, made between landlords and tenants under the Irish Land Act, has been sanctioned by the Treasury?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Sir, the Board of Inland Revenue did not raise this question of their own motion; but it is one upon which depends the legal validity of the agreements, which are not binding unless properly stamped. I understand that the point was, in fact, raised by the Land Commission. A case has been submitted to the Irish Law Officers, and an early opinion is expected. It is not a matter in which the Treasury has any discretion; but it must be decided according to the interpretation put upon the Stamp Acts.

THE VATICAN—DIPLOMATIC INTERCOURSE—MR. ERRINGTON.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Mr. Errington is still residing at Rome as the medium of information between Her Majesty's Government and the Papal See under Lord Granville's letter of confidence; if so, how long Mr. Errington is to remain at Rome in this capacity; and, whether Her Majesty's Government still persist in refusing to place on record in the Foreign Office, in accordance with constitutional practice, the communications on public affairs between Her Majesty's Secretary of State and Mr. Errington?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, I have no further information to give to the House on this subject, having on four occasions fully stated the views of Her Majesty's Government. In regard to the latter part of the Question, as to whether Mr. Errington is still at Rome, Lord Granville has no information that he has left that city, neither has he any wish that he should. The length of Mr. Errington's stay depends entirely upon himself.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF gave Notice that he would take an opportunity of calling attention to the subject.

NAVY—ARMAMENTS—THE NEW SIX-INCH GUN.

LORD HENRY LENNOX asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that several of the new six-inch guns, forming the first instalment of breech-loading guns for the Royal Navy, have been, on trial, found defective; and, whether it is possible to take effectual precautions against the recurrence of such failures?

LORD EUSTACE CECIL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether there is any truth in the report that several of the heavy six-inch breech-loading guns supplied for the Royal Navy by contract have broken down under proof trial, whilst those supplied by the Royal Gun Factories at Woolwich have in no instance failed; and, if so, whether it is in contemplation to limit, as far as possible, the manufacture of guns by contract?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to the two Questions put to me by the two noble Lords, I have to state that it is not the case that any of the Navy six-inch breech-loading guns supplied for the Navy by contract have broken down. The first instalment of these guns, 14 in number, have passed proof, and have been received into the service. In the second instalment, there were a few which exhibited external defects, but none of an unusual character, or likely to involve their rejection. These defects sometimes occur in guns made at Woolwich. The worst case of defect has been already remedied, and the gun has been re-proved satisfactorily. I see no reason to make any change in the policy of obtaining some of these guns by contract.

RELIGIOUS DISSENSIONS (GIBRALTAR) —DR. CANILLA.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Roman Catholic church at Gibraltar has been broken open by the Governor's orders, with the view of installing Dr. Canilla as vicar apostolic, against the wishes of the Roman Catholic population?

Mr. COURTNEY: Sir, some months since Dr. Canilla was appointed by the Pope Vicar Apostolic of Gibraltar; but it soon appeared that the choice was not generally popular. Among the laity a claim was raised to resist the exercise by Dr. Canilla of his functions, especially in the church of Santa Maria Coronada, on the ground that they were entitled by immemorial right to administer, through their representatives, the temporalities of the Catholic communion in Gibraltar. Without pronouncing any opinion on that claim generally, it can in no case extend to the church of Santa Maria Coronada, the property of which, as we are advised, has always been, and remains, vested in the Crown, by which it has been simply assigned during pleasure for the purposes of Catholic worship. Dr. Canilla having, under these circumstances, applied to the civil authority to be protected from molestation in proceeding to the church of Santa Maria Coronada, and while performing Divine offices there, steps were taken which may, perhaps, best be given in the words of a telegram from the Governor—

> "March 2.—Canilla fixed noon for entry into the church. Arrangements made accordingly. Great agitation this morning. Crowd assembled in the church at 6 a.m., when opened for early service, and barricaded it. Cordon of strong pickets closed all the streets leading to the church, and cleared the intermediate space. Crowd expelled from the church in 40 minutes. Three arrests made. Route of Canilla guarded by picket, which kept the crowd at a distance. He came under escort to the church, and after service was escorted home. Protection to church and Canilla continues. Quiet restored."

Since the proceedings of Thursday order has not been disturbed in Gibraltar.

ARKLOW HARBOUR BILL.

General Sir GEORGE BALFOUR asked the Junior Lord of the Treasury, If Government will lay the Papers relating to Arklow Harbour upon the Table before the proposed Bill is read a second time?

Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE, in reply, said, that the Government had no objection to lay on the Table a selection of the Papers, which would fully show the circumstances under which they thought it necessary to carry out the original scheme for the improvement of the Harbour.

FLINT COUNTY (POLICE FORCE)—PROTECTION TO THE PERSON OF THE PRIME MINISTER.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the Correspondence which has passed between himself and the Court of Quarter Sessions of the county of Flint, in reference to the payment of the extraordinary expenses incurred by them in providing additional constables to protect the First Lord of the Treasury; and, whether he will state the number of warnings, respecting the necessity of protecting public servants, which he has caused to be addressed to other local authorities?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I should be happy to give the hon. Member any Papers I possibly can. The communications from the Flint Court of Quarter Sessions will be given if the hon. Member moves for them; but the police communications cannot be given.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON: The number of men?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I could not do that; the subject is of a confidential nature.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES—REPORT OF THE REGISTRAR GENERAL, 1880.

Mr. J. HOLLOND asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, When the Report of the Registrar General of Friendly Societies for 1880 will be issued?

Lord **FREDERICK CAVENDISH**: Sir, there has been unavoidable delay, mostly due to the printer, in bringing out the second part of the Report for 1879; and, according to the Rules of the House, the Report for 1880 cannot appear until the previous one is completed. As soon as this has been done, Part 1 for 1880, which is already prepared, will be presented.

ALKALI ACT, 1881.

Sir **R. ASSHETON CROSS** asked the President of the Local Government Board, What steps have been taken to give effect to the provisions of "The Alkali Act, 1881?"

Mr. **DODSON**: Sir, after the passing of the Act, the Local Government Board applied to the various sanitary authorities throughout the Kingdom for a return of the works in their respective districts and upon the receipt of these Returns the Board gave notice to the manufacturers to make the necessary application for registration. A considerable number of applications have been received, and certificates of registration issued; but the period for registration will not be completed before the end of the present month. In the meantime the Board have appointed four additional sub-inspectors, and arranged as to the districts for inspection, and the work of inspection will now be proceeded with as rapidly as possible.

PARTNERSHIPS BILL, 1880—LEGISLATION.

Mr. **MONK** asked the honourable Member for Liverpool, Whether, considering that the Partnerships Bill was read a second time in a previous Session without opposition, he is prepared to remove the opposing Notice which he has placed against the Second Reading of that measure?

Mr. **WHITLEY**, in reply, said, that the Bill which the hon. Member had introduced contained several exceptional provisions affecting the mercantile and commercial community, and his object in giving the Notice was to obtain for it full consideration. He could not see, because the Bill was read a second time at the fag-end of a Session, when it could not be fully considered, why he should withdraw his opposition to it.

CROWN RENTS (IRELAND).

Captain **AYLMER** asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether instructions have been given to Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, to proceed against any of the landowners of Ireland, whose rents have been withheld by their tenants, for the amount of Crown or quit rent due by them?

Lord **FREDERICK CAVENDISH**: Sir, in cases where the persons liable have pleaded inability to pay, or have tendered a portion of the arrears due on account of quit rent to the Crown in Ireland, the time for payment has been extended. But where no satisfactory excuse has been given, or the Crown's claim is disputed, legal proceedings are being taken for recovery of the amount due.

UNION OFFICERS' SUPERANNUATION (IRELAND) BILL.

Mr. **CALLAN** asked the Junior Member for Leeds, Whether he purposes to meet the objections of the Irish Members to certain of the provisions of the Union Officers' Superannuation (Ireland) Bill, which takes away from the Poor Law Guardians the right of granting superannuation allowances in certain cases, and confers it on the Local Government Board, in order to re-introduce it in an amended form?

Mr. **HERBERT GLADSTONE**, in reply, said, the Government would not move to discharge the Order for the Second Reading of the Bill; but in Committee they would propose clauses with the object of leaving the power to grant retiring allowances in the hands of Boards of Guardians, and which would give to all Union officers the right of appeal to the Local Government Board.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TOWN PARKS, &c.

Mr. **MARUM** asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is in a position to state the result of his promised consideration of the "Town Parks" question under "The Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881," with a view to legislation; and, if so, what steps may be taken therein; and, whether the Government is prepared to propose legislation during the present Session to encourage the planting of timber trees in Ireland by statutory termors under the same Act, in reference to which important subject provisions were frequently brought forward by Irish Members during the passage through the House of that measure?

Mr. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, that some legislation might be desirable with regard to town parks; but he was obliged to say that, viewing the present condition of affairs, and the pressure on the time of the House of Commons, he did not think the period had arrived when the Government should ask Parliament to entertain that subject. As for the latter part of the Question, he was not aware that there were any grounds for proceeding as the hon. Member proposed.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE—THE CHANNEL TUNNEL SCHEME.

Mr. SEELY (Sen.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether the Government would cause a Report to be made to this House, either by a Commission or a Committee of this House, as to the improvements that could be made in the passage by sea between England and France (particularly after the harbours at present in course of construction at Calais and Boulogne are completed), in order that, when this House has to consider the advantages and disadvantages of the proposed tunnel under the Channel, the comparison may be made, not between the passage by the proposed tunnel and the sea passage as it is at present, but as it would be after it was so improved?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, what I would say is that it will be, perhaps, a very important matter for the House, as well as for the Government, to consider when the subject is ripe for determining by what form effectual inquiry shall be made into the whole of this subject. I doubt, however, very much whether it would be expedient, and certainly the Government are not prepared to recommend, that at the present moment, in anticipation of the regular and complete inquiry which must come, a partial inquiry should be instituted as to the proposal made by my hon. Friend.

LAW AND POLICE (METROPOLIS)—PERSONAL SECURITY ON THE THAMES EMBANKMENT.

Mr. Alderman W. LAWRENCE gave Notice that next Thursday he would ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention had been drawn to the remarks of Mr. Justice Hawkins in the late trial for the manslaughter of an unfortunate young man on the Thames Embankment, without any provocation whatever? Mr. Justice Hawkins said that it was to him perfectly astounding that a brutal and sanguinary outrage of this kind—[*Cries of* "Order!" *and cheers*]—should have been committed on the Thames Embankment, and should have occupied so long a time in its committal without a single policeman being present. [*Renewed cries of* "Order!" *and cheers.*] Mr. Justice Hawkins, in passing sentence on the prisoner Galliers of 10 years' penal servitude, said that he could scarcely have believed that so much ruffianly lawlessness prevailed in the streets of the City, or that it could have been allowed to run its course unchecked. [*Cries of* "Order!" *and* "Hear, hear!"]

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, as there is a good deal of interest taken in this subject, I may as well answer the Question at once. I do not propose to go into the remarks of Mr. Justice Hawkins, and it would not be proper to make any remarks upon them. As there seems to have been a considerable amount of public alarm created in regard to the matter, and as I think it is always much better to take too much rather than too little precaution on such occasions, I have given instructions that the police shall be strengthened on the Thames Embankment. At the same time, I must be allowed to say that, in my opinion, I certainly ought to do nothing to encourage what I believe to be an unfounded apprehension. I must also be allowed to state, after making the most careful inquiry into the subject, that since this very atrocious outrage on the 18th of December, the Thames Embankment has been singularly free from any disquiet or disorder of the kind.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—RETURN OF JUDGMENTS.

Sir HERVEY BRUCE asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, When the Return of the number of cases that had come before the Land Courts under the Land Act would be laid before the House?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): I believe the Return has been ordered to be printed.

Sir HERVEY BRUCE: It was referred to by the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland on Thursday.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Yes; it has been laid on the Table, and, I believe, ordered to be printed. I understand that the printing is going on at this moment.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION — THE SECRETARY—EXPLANATION.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, that, with the indulgence of the House, he might be permitted to make a personal explanation in reference to a matter on which he had unwittingly hurt the feelings of a very worthy public servant, Mr. Godley, the Secretary of the Land Commission. He (the Attorney General for Ireland) was reported in *The Irish Times* to have stated on Friday in the House that Mr. Godley was sharply reprimanded by the Land Commission, who, at the same time, informed him they did not consider the circumstances were such as to justify his removal. He (the Attorney General for Ireland) was also reported in another paper to have said that Mr. Godley was reprimanded in strong terms. He believed he said simply—at all events he had intended to say—that he was reprimanded. Mr. Godley, writing to him (the Attorney General for Ireland) on the matter said—

> "That if the Land Commissioners had adopted the tone in respect to him which he (the Attorney General for Ireland) had represented them to adopt, he (Mr. Godley) certainly should not and could not with any feeling of self-respect have retained for a single day his position as Secretary."

The facts were that the Commissioners, undoubtedly, expressed disapproval. He (the Attorney General for Ireland) had used the term reprimanded; but they said that, in any expression of disapproval of their Secretary, they were unanimous in feeling that they entertained a deep sense of the value of his services and of the importance of retaining them, and they refused his resignation upon public grounds. Mr. Godley wrote to him (the Attorney General for Ireland), and stated that he spontaneously offered his resignation to save embarrassment to the Commissioners, to whom he was loyally attached; but they refused it, and placed on record the opinion he (the Attorney General for Ireland) had already cited. The learned Judge at the head of the Land Commissioners was in Cork at the time, and not in Belfast, as he (the Attorney General for Ireland) had supposed; and that learned Judge now explained that what he desired to express was the minimum of blame with the maximum of appreciation of Mr. Godley's value. The learned Judge added—

> "I sincerely trust, in justice to Mr. Godley, and in compliance with the requisition of the Land Commissioners, you will see your way to set this right, for Mr. Godley naturally feels it very acutely."

In conclusion, he would thank the House for listening to his explanation.

Mr. LEWIS asked, if the Government had any objection to the production of the Correspondence quoted by the right hon. and learned Gentleman?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): This is not a Correspondence at all; it is a private letter addressed to myself, and not one in which the Government are at all concerned.

Mr. LEWIS: Are there any letters or papers or minutes of the Land Commissioners relating to the subject which the Government will produce?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): I have no knowledge of any Correspondence besides the private letter, the substance of which, by the indulgence of the House, I have already put before them.

Mr. LEWIS gave Notice that at the earliest possible moment he would draw the attention of the House to the subject, and to the statement which the Attorney General for Ireland had made for the purpose of exculpating himself and the Commissioners.

MOTIONS.

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PARLIAMENTARY OATH — MR. BRADLAUGH—RESOLUTION.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I am anxious, Sir, to put two Questions to you on a matter of Privilege. In the first place, I wish to know, whether the House has been made acquainted with the return made to the Writ issued for a new Member for the Borough of Northampton. In the second place, I wish to know, whether the Resolution at which this House arrived on the 7th of February, respecting Mr. Bradlaugh's not being permitted to go through the form of taking the Oath, is still binding upon Mr. Bradlaugh, in the event of his coming up to the Table and offering to take the Oath?

MR. SPEAKER: With respect to the first Question of the right hon. Gentleman, I have to say that the certificate of the return of Mr. Bradlaugh for the Borough of Northampton has been communicated to this House in the usual way, and is now on the Table of the House. With respect to the second Question of the right hon. Gentleman, I have to say that I have considered very carefully the operation of the Resolution of the 7th of February as it affects Mr. Bradlaugh, and that I have come to the conclusion that that Resolution applied to Mr. Bradlaugh personally as Member for Northampton. When Mr. Bradlaugh ceased to be Member for Northampton, that Resolution, in my opinion, ceased to be operative; and although he has now been again returned as Member for Northampton, I cannot consider that that Resolution has revived, or is now in force.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Then, Mr. Speaker, as the Resolution to which I have referred, and which you have alluded to in your answer, was a Resolution that was adopted by this House, after full consideration, and by a very large majority, I apprehend that if Mr. Bradlaugh should now present himself again to take the Oath, it would be thought right to raise again the question as to permitting him to take the Oath, and the House would have that again submitted to it. But, as we are all aware, Mr. Bradlaugh, or any other Member who is returned, may elect his own time for coming to take his seat. He may do so either at the beginning of the Business, or at the end of the Business. If he should elect to come forward at the end of the night's Business, which may be at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, it would be difficult to really take the sense of the House—which would then be thin and exhausted—upon what must be regarded as a question of great importance. I have, therefore, thought it would be right, as Mr. Bradlaugh has not presented himself to-night, that I should take the earliest opportunity of submitting to the House a Motion which will have the effect of reviving or re-affirming the Resolution that was adopted on the 7th of February.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I rise to Order. I wish to ask you, Sir, whether it is open to any hon. Gentleman, before an elected Member has come to the Table to take the Oath, to call for the Writ, and to base any Motion upon that Writ? I ask you this particularly in regard to the Motion which the right hon. Gentleman has shadowed out, because I believe that the only Motions which have yet been put in such cases are Motions for a new Writ, the elected Member being disqualified by Statute from taking his seat.

MR. SPEAKER: As I understand the Motion indicated by the right hon. Gentleman, it affects the right of a Member of this House to take his seat, and it is intended by it to renew a Resolution which the House arrived at during the present Session; and as it is one which concerns the Privileges of this House, I consider that the right hon. Gentleman is within his right.

MR. DILLWYN: I rise to Order. I wish to ask, Sir, if any hon. Member is in Order in rising to propose a Resolution on a question of this sort, and thereby interposing and preventing the House passing to its ordinary Business?

MR. SPEAKER: I thought I had clearly stated, in reply to the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), that the right hon. Gentleman is within his rights.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I make the Motion as a matter of Privilege. What I propose to move is to this effect—

> "That this House, having ascertained that Mr. Bradlaugh has been re-elected for the Borough of Northampton, doth re-affirm the Resolution made on the 7th of February last, and doth hereby direct that Mr. Bradlaugh be not permitted to go through the form of taking the Oath prescribed by the Statutes 29 Vic. c. 19, and 31 and 32 Vic. c. 72."

The Resolution at which the House arrived on that occasion was substantially the same as that at which it arrived last Session upon Mr. Bradlaugh's second election for Northampton; and now that he has been elected for the third time, I ask the House to pass a similar Resolution, for it does not in any degree alter the position of the House of Commons in regard to the question of taking the Oath. The ground upon which the great majority of the House objected to Mr. Bradlaugh going through the form of taking the Oath remains exactly the same—namely, that we consider that we are parties to the taking of the Oath, and that we consider that the taking of the Oath by Mr. Bradlaugh in the circumstances known to the House is in the nature of a profanation of that Oath. I need not on this occasion go into the arguments which have been repeated so often, and of the nature of which the House is fully aware, and I should only be fatiguing the House were I to do so on this occasion. I shall, therefore, content myself, Mr. Speaker, with placing this Motion in your hands.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That this House, having ascertained that Mr. Bradlaugh has been re-elected for the Borough of Northampton, doth re-affirm the Resolution made on the 7th of February last, and doth hereby direct that Mr. Bradlaugh be not permitted to go through the form of taking the Oath prescribed by the Statutes 29 Vic. c. 19, and 31 and 32 Vic. c. 72."—(*Sir Stafford Northcote.*)

MR. MARJORIBANKS: It is only, Sir, because I believe there is a very general consensus of opinion in the House that this matter of Mr. Bradlaugh's election can only be dealt with by legislation that I venture to submit to the House for its favourable consideration an Amendment to the Resolution moved by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. The Amendment is—

"That it is desirable that the provisions of the 29 Vic. c. 19, and 31 and 32 Vic. c. 72, should be so far modified as to permit every elected Member of this House to take the Oath or to make the Affirmation prescribed under those Statutes at his own option."

Now, Sir, I am bound to confess that I am what many of my Friends near me will consider somewhat unsound on the Bradlaugh Question. I am one of that very large section of this House who regard Mr. Bradlaugh's actions and opinions with something very like disgust. I do think Mr. Bradlaugh had a very strong position in regard to the House; but I think he has again and again thrown away the strength of the position. He has repeatedly brought forward the weak part of his argument, and has by his action done all he could to excite prejudice and hostility, both among hon. Members and among the outside public, against him. Mr. Bradlaugh has attempted to take the Oath, first by force, and then by unworthy—I may almost say childish—manœuvres——

MR. LABOUCHERE: I rise to Order. I wish to ask whether the word "unworthy," applied to a Member of this House, is in Order?

MR. SPEAKER: I did not catch the context, and I am not prepared to give a positive statement in the matter.

MR. LABOUCHERE: The hon. Member (Mr. Marjoribanks) has described the conduct of Mr. Bradlaugh as unworthy. [*Cries of* "No!"] Well, he said that he had been guilty of an unworthy manœuvre.

MR. SPEAKER: I am not, under the circumstances, prepared to interpose in the matter.

MR. MARJORIBANKS: The result of Mr. Bradlaugh's action has been—first, that the opposition to his taking the Oath has been grounded more upon personal dislike of Mr. Bradlaugh—[*Cries of* "No, no!"]—I assert that most distinctly—dislike of Mr. Bradlaugh rather than on the consideration of any broad principle of what is right or expedient for the good of the country; and, secondly, it has resulted in the exclusion of Mr. Bradlaugh from a seat in the House by an un-English Resolution, and on the very uncommon grounds—first, because he did not comply with a religious test; and, secondly, because he was prevented from complying with that religious test. The arguments as to the legality or the illegality of the action of the House of Commons have been urged, I may almost say, *ad nauseam*, and I will not enter into these arguments; but the experience of the last two years must, I may say, have proved that the House is, either legally or illegally, perfectly competent to exclude, and can exclude, and that it will go on excluding Mr. Bradlaugh, until some change is made in the regulations under which Members of the House take their seats. We may deplore the fact that Mr. Bradlaugh has been elected. We may deplore the fact that so many of a large constituency like Northampton so far identify themselves with Mr. Bradlaugh as to think he is the only proper Representative of them in this House; but surely, if that is the case, he ought to be allowed to take his seat, for it is far better that expression of these opinions should be given in this House, and find their natural outlet in this House. I find that a Paper was presented to the House a day or two ago in regard to the practice of foreign States in this matter. I see in that Paper that in Belgium and Italy there is an Oath required, but there is no invocation of the Deity. The Members swear that they will be faithful to the Constitution. Then in France and Germany neither Oath nor Affirmation is required, and in the United States and Holland Oath or Affirmation is optional. ["Agreed, agreed!"] I do not wish to enter into any long speech in moving this Amendment; and I do entreat this House, remembering that the honour of the House has so often and so greatly been compromised, to give favourable consideration to this Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is desirable that the provisions of the 29 Vic. c. 19, and 31 and 32 Vic. c. 72, should be so modified as to permit every elected Member of this House to take the Oath or to make the Affirmation prescribed under those Statutes at his own option,"—(*Mr. Marjoribanks*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I prefer the Amendment of my hon. Friend (Mr. Marjoribanks) to the reasons which he gave for it. I think he was carried away by his own eloquence when he asserted that Mr. Bradlaugh has been guilty of unworthy manœuvres. You have ruled, Sir, that the phrase is Parliamentary; and, therefore, I do not complain of it having been used; but, at the same time, I must say that Mr. Bradlaugh has not had recourse to any unworthy manœuvres. Mr. Bradlaugh's view of his position has been entirely supported by the Prime Minister and by the Law Officers of the Crown. Therefore, if the reflection of my hon. Friend can be made at Mr. Bradlaugh, it can also be made against the Prime Minister and

the Law Officers of the Crown. I am sorry to have again to repeat what Mr. Bradlaugh's view of his position is; but either hon. Members will not understand, or will persist in shutting their ears on the subject. Mr. Bradlaugh's contention has always been this—that he derives his right to go up to the Table of this House and take the Oath from the fact of his election, that he has a statutory duty to perform in doing so, and that this House is violating the Law and the Constitution in preventing him from doing that duty. I say, therefore, with all respect for the House, that if there are brawlers in this matter, Mr. Bradlaugh is not the brawler. I am sorry I must trouble hon. Gentlemen opposite by reading some extracts from a few speeches. I know that is a form of eloquence to which they object, but I really stand here defending the Constitution of this country. And not only so, but I am also defending the rights both of the electors of Northampton and the right of every elector in the country to choose whom they will to represent them. Well, hon. Gentlemen will remember that a former House of Commons put itself in opposition to the people. I allude to the case of Mr. Wilkes. We all know how that ended; but when I am told that a Resolution of this House is superior to the Law of the land, I claim to read some observations made by men who are recognized as almost, I may say, the fathers of the Constitution. In the debate with regard to Mr. Wilkes—[*Cries of* "Reading!"] Well, yes; I am going to read some extracts. They are not very long. In that debate Edmund Burke said—

"The right to incapacitate is not to be trusted with this House. The Constitution has not given it to us, because it would end in the destruction of the House."

Mr. Wedderburn, in the same debate, said—

"Precedents there are none to support the proposal that the House has the power to declare the law with regard to the qualification of Members."

Mr. Wedderburn further said—

"No man who is by any right eligible can be rendered ineligible by any ordinance, by anything less than an Act of Parliament."

Mr. Grenville said—

"If a Resolution of the House is in the teeth of an Act of Parliament, it is in the teeth of the law. Where is the Gentleman who will rise up, and tell me that it is law?"

Mr. Grenville did not live in the present day—

> "If a Resolution goes against the principle of the law, it is null and void."

Mr. Cavendish said—

> "I lay it down as a principle that no Resolution of the House can make a minority a majority, and I do, from my soul, abhor, detest, and abjure as unconstitutional and illegal that damnable doctrine and proposition that a Resolution of the House of Commons can make, alter, suspend, abrogate, or annihilate the law of the land. If it can, Sir, of what use are your Statute books? They are useless, if a Resolution can supersede them."

Now, Sir, I gather from the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman that it forbids Mr. Bradlaugh to go through the form prescribed by the Statute of taking the Oath. The Statute prescribes that Mr. Bradlaugh shall take the Oath as defined by the Standing Orders of the House. The Standing Orders simply state that Mr. Bradlaugh—and I do not think any lawyer will controvert it—has a statutory right to go to the Table of the House and take the Oath. The contention of the right hon. Gentleman, as I understand it, is that the House has the right to interfere, and by Resolution forbid him from exercising his statutory right. I apprehend, however, that the extracts I have read are perfectly germane to the question, because those extracts lay down incontrovertibly, constitutionally, and legally, that one Estate of the Realm, be it this House or the other, has got no right to prevent anyone from fulfilling what may be his statutory rights or his statutory obligations. I am surprised at the right hon. Gentleman coming forward with this Resolution before Mr. Bradlaugh came to the Table. As I understand, the right hon. Gentleman does so because it would be wearisome to come down so early as the hour of Prayers.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Oh! no, no. I referred to waiting till the end of the Business.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Oh, very well; it is wearisome at the end of the Business. That is pretty much the same thing, and I trust it will be always wearisome to any hon. or right hon. Gentleman in this House who attempt to interfere with the rights of the people. The right hon. Gentleman could not point to any single precedent for the course he is pursuing. He adopts a new course, which many hon. Gentleman on this side of the House think unconstitutional, simply to save him the little trouble of remaining until the end of the Business. I apprehend I am perfectly right in saying that I am upon the firm basis of the Constitution in resisting this unconstitutional Resolution of the Leader of the Conservative Party. Let me ask what is the distinction between a Resolution like this and absolutely disqualifying a Gentleman from sitting in this House? It will be remembered that on the day Mr. Bradlaugh was expelled, the hon. Member for the City of Dublin (Dr. Lyons) brought forward a Resolution that Mr. Bradlaugh should be disqualified from again sitting in Parliament; the hon. and learned Member for Launceston (Sir Hardinge Giffard) got up, and, after paying a compliment to the Parliament which turned out Mr. Wilkes, asserted that he was not prepared to go so far and that, and that he would not accept the proposition that this House had got the right to disfranchise any individnal from his right of sitting in the House, if he were a duly elected Member. But I ask if there is any distinction between the two? Would it not have been more fair to Mr. Bradlaugh and my constituents had hon. Gentlemen supported that Resolution, rather than allow Mr. Bradlaugh to be re-elected by the constituents of Northampton, and then, before he comes to the Table, declare that he is not a fit and proper person to go through the form that is necessary for him to do to take his seat in this House? I will only say this at the end—the House of Commons has before now come in conflict with the people, and the House of Commons always has had, I thank Heaven, to succumb to the people. Let not the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends suppose that Mr. Bradlaugh is supported only by the constituents of Northampton. Hon. Gentlemen are surprised at Mr. Bradlaugh's popularity in this country. They say how can it be that a man who advocates what, I agree, are objectionable opinions with regard to religion can become popular? But let right hon. and hon. Gentleman understand this, that he has become popular notwithstanding his advocacy of those objectionable opinions with regard to religion; and that he has become popular mainly by the course adopted by hon. Gentlemen opposite. They are doing their best to make Mr. Bradlaugh a martyr; and I say Mr. Bradlaugh was not only supported by the Radicals of Northampton, but I am strictly within the truth in stating that during the recent election, I suppose 200 or 300 telegrams were received from political clubs in all parts of the country, urging the electors of Northampton to stand to their man. Whether Mr. Bradlaugh is to be elected once again, or a dozen times again, I can only say he will be elected and re-elected as long as he maintains the principle which the people consider their right—that of sending the man they choose to represent them. I would only say this further in regard to the Amendment proposed by my hon. Friend. It may be objected by hon. Gentlemen opposite that it would leave it open to Mr. Bradlaugh again to come to the Table. I will only say that I will engage on the part of Mr. Bradlaugh—[*Cries of* "Oh, oh!"] Well, I do not think hon. Gentlemen will say that Mr. Bradlaugh has ever violated his word to come into this House; and I will engage for him that, provided the Amendment passes, and provided a Bill is brought in, and proceeds with reasonable speed—["Oh, oh!"]—I mean two months—provided that Bill is prosecuted with fair and reasonable speed, Mr. Bradlaugh, until a decision has been come to by a majority, will not present himself at that Table.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, the right hon. Baronet opposite (Sir Stafford Northcote), in submitting this Motion, has set us, or at any rate me, an excellent example in avoiding a re-statement of the arguments he used on a former occasion—arguments with which we are perfectly familiar. On the same ground, I purpose taking the same course, and it shall only be in the briefest words, to explain the reasons which would govern me in supporting the Amendment which has just been moved. Sir, that Amendment expresses the judgment of the House, to the effect that there ought to be legislation upon this subject, and it proposes to place the expression of that judgment in lieu of the Motion which has been submitted by the right hon. Baronet to-day. I am bound to say that in supporting the Amendment, I do so in reliance upon Mr. Bradlaugh, without any knowledge of the matter, but in reliance upon his forbearance and respect for this House, at least to this extent, that were legislation adopted—I think I am justified in making it as an inference from the speech that has just been made—we should have nothing to fear from Mr. Bradlaugh in regard to a possible repetition of scenes which we all regret.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will permit me to explain. I want to get this clear. What I said was, provided this be followed by legislation.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am speaking within the limits of the assurance laid down in the statement made by the hon. Gentleman himself in his speech. I do not mean for ever, but I meant with reference to such language as he used. But with regard to the Motion before us, I observe, unfortunately, that it is a distinct step in advance. Previous Motions against Mr. Bradlaugh have been consequent upon attempts made by Mr. Bradlaugh to do certain acts, and they may in that sense be termed defensive. But it is obvious that this Motion has no reference to any express or apparent intention or act of Mr. Bradlaugh. It is founded upon expectation that he will do an act; it is not founded upon any act he has done, or attempted to do. In that sense, Sir, the Motion is a step in advance, and I cannot help saying, to me it appears a step less against Mr. Bradlaugh and more against the constituency than the steps which we have heretofore adopted. In truth, Sir, it comes perilously near to a Vote of Personal Disqualification; and I am bound to say, without in the slightest degree, Sir, contesting your decision as to the power to make a Motion of that kind, I really know not to what Motions, founded upon the appearance of actions in this House, it may not form a possible precedent. Therefore my objections, which I need not re-state, if they told against the previous Resolution, tell with much greater force against the Motion that is now made. On the other hand, I consider that from my point of view—be it what it may, whether it be the same as that which Mr. Bradlaugh and others are as competent to judge as myself—from my point of view I offer a concession not, perhaps, to be valued or acknowledged in voting for the Amendment now before us, because so far as I am able to understand the case, the law does not require to be changed for the purpose of relieving us from this difficulty. I approve of a change of the law, but I do not regard a change in the law as a necessity for disposing of the present case. Yet I am quite willing to vote for it, and I am quite willing to vote for it on two grounds—in the first place, that I am extremely glad—for I hold that we have no title whatever to dispose of the question, which is a question for the conscience of Mr. Bradlaugh as to the propriety of his conduct in taking the Oath—yet I am extremely glad that we are to be relieved from the position in which we are now placed, that he may be prevented taking the Oath. And, further, I am also glad to think that the proposal to legislate on this subject, while it affords authentic declaration of the intention of the House, may afford to many hon. Gentlemen who have heretofore voted for repressive measures against Mr. Bradlaugh, a means of escaping from—["No, no!"]—a means of escaping from what I think many of them, or some among them, at least, must feel to be an increasingly painful position. Those are the grounds, Sir, on which I shall give my vote in favour of the Amendment of my hon. Friend; and I do trust that the House may be disposed to adopt that Amendment rather than to prolong a struggle which it is in the power of the House to prolong, and which it may succeed in prolonging for a considerable time, but which can only have one end, and that end adverse to the views which are now prevailing in the House.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I desire to take notice of one expression of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, which I think is calculated to give a wrong impression as to the course of action which I have adopted. He says this is a distinct step in advance, and that we are not taking a defensive, but that we are assuming a sort of offensive attitude. Now, Sir, that I entirely deny. We have had Mr. Bradlaugh's statement, and that has always been perfectly consistent, made upon several occasions on which he has come to this House for the purpose of taking the Oath. He has always told us that he did not come of his own choice, but that he came in obedience to what he considered to be a duty imposed upon him by law. That has always been advocated by Mr. Bradlaugh, and has been repeated by the hon. Gentleman his Colleague to-night. We are therefore perfectly certain there is nothing that can have changed Mr. Bradlaugh's views in that matter, and we are perfectly certain, therefore, that it will be in Mr. Bradlaugh's view that he will come to the Table and propose to take the Oath. Well, then, Sir, the hon. Gentleman the other Member for Northampton says—"You propose to come and take this precautionary step, because you do not wish to have the trouble of a struggle occuring late at night." That is not the point, I must be excused for saying, which I pressed on the House. As a matter of fact, at the end of Business it almost invariably happens, and the whole House know it perfectly well, that you have a thin attendance of Members; and this being an important question, and one upon which the judgment of the House ought, I contend, to be pronounced when the House is full, and when Members attend to the Business, I proposed that it should be taken now, rather than wait. Sir, it seems to me that you might be placed in a very difficult position if Mr. Bradlaugh chose to make his appearance without your having any instructions on the subject, and if the view of the House is the same as it was previously at the beginning of the Session, which I think it is, it ought to be re-affirmed, so that you might have that to guide you which you would have had had it not been for this re-election. The Prime Minister says that my action is now much more directed against the constituency than against Mr. Bradlaugh himself. Sir, I deny that it is directed against the constituency. We do not dispute the right of the constituency to return Mr. Bradlaugh. If we did dispute that right, undoubtedly there would be a case for Mr. Corbett, who was the other candidate, to claim the seat. But no such question is raised. What we do object to is to a certain step being taken which is necessary to enable Mr. Bradlaugh to take his seat. Is that an unusual or unprecedented case? It is precisely the case of Baron Rothschild and Mr. Salomons. We never contested the right of the City of London to elect Baron Rothschild; nor did we contest the right of the constituency to elect Mr. Salomons. Baron Rothschild took the Oath, subject to a certain modification in its words, and the House refused to allow that taking of the Oath with that modification of words to be regarded as equivalent to a taking of the Oath as required by law. Our contention is that Mr. Bradlaugh cannot take the Oath without a modification of its spirit and meaning, and that is the contention, whether we are right or wrong, we have always made. We therefore say that as Baron Rothschild was re-elected, I believe, some five or six times before he ever obtained the right of sitting in this House, similarly Mr. Bradlaugh has been re-elected more than once, and we are still in a position in which we may refuse, and ought to refuse, to allow him to go through the form of taking the Oath, when, as we hold, he is incapable of doing so according to law. With regard to the Amendment, that is a question which is entirely apart from the personal question of Mr. Bradlaugh sitting. It is a question which ought to be argued independently of that consideration when it is brought forward. If a Bill is to be brought forward for the alteration of the law, let us see that Bill, and then discuss it. Otherwise, I decline to be a party to pledging the House to a Resolution in favour of such a Bill before we have received it, and also in connection with the particular case before us.

Mr. HUSSEY VIVIAN: I approach this question from an entirely different point of view from that of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister. I should support the Resolution of the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) if it stood alone; but I also intend to support the Amendment proposed by my hon. Friend the Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks). I disagree entirely with the arguments used by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), who said that the House was not within its rights in prohibiting and preventing the other Member for Northampton from coming to the Table and taking the Oath. We have done so because we believe he is incapable of fulfilling the conditions imposed by the Statute, and that is our justification for the course we have pursued. I have voted against Mr. Bradlaugh being permitted to take the Oath on previous occasions, because I could not be a party to sitting by and seeing that which, in my conscience, I believe to be profanation; and so often as this question comes before the House, if it unfortunately does come again, I shall vote in the same sense. But the Amendment is of an entirely different nature. I suppose there can be very few Members—probably none—on my side of the House who would disagree with the opinion that the time had long gone by when any religious test ought to be imposed on any Member who sought to take his seat in this House. On the other hand, I believe there are very few, if any, hon. Members on the opposite side of the House who would assert such an opinion broadly. The time for such tests has long since passed. Hon. Members opposite may feel, as I do, very reluctant to do anything which can in any way clash with the votes which they have given; and while they may taunt Liberal Members that this Amendment is really a Bradlaugh Relief Amendment, I shall not fear any such taunt, for the simple reason that I am asserting a broad, sound Liberal principle, that religious tests ought not to stand between Members who are elected, and who seek to take their seats, and it is upon that ground, and that alone, that I shall support the Amendment.

Mr. CHAPLIN: Sir, I think it must have escaped the attention of the hon. Member who has just sat down (Mr. Hussey Vivian), that there is one conclusive argument against the acceptance of the Amendment—namely, that in that case the Resolution of my right hon. Friend the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) will be negatived this night. Then, supposing the proposal for legislation were entertained, and that legislation were introduced, and that the decision of the House was given hostilely, what would be the next thing that would happen? Mr. Bradlaugh, I presume, would walk up to the Table in the exercise of the right he claims, and demand to take the Oath. The Resolution of my right hon. Friend having been negatived, it would be contrary to the Rules to propose it again in the present Session. It is all very well. This is a very ingenious little trap; but I do not think the majority of the House of Commons are at all likely to walk into it. I entirely agree with my right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition that the two questions are entirely distinct. Let us pass this Resolution in the first place, forbidding Mr. Bradlaugh to take the Oath; then, if right hon. Gentlemen opposite should think fit to introduce legislation after, let them bring in the Bill, submit it to the House, and I have very little doubt in my own mind what will be its conclusion upon the matter.

MR. GOSCHEN: I confess I do not like the spirit in which the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Mr. Chaplin) has approached the question. We have not got to think of what the hon. Member calls "ingenious little traps," but how the House of Commons can be rescued from a great difficulty, which I hope everyone who is mindful of the dignity of the House of Commons would wish to solve. In what position does the Motion of the Leader of the Opposition, who is in this matter the Leader of the majority, as we have been told, leave this House? Does it relieve it? No; it leaves it precisely in the same position as it was left last year after his Motion was carried, with the possibility of the same scenes being re-enacted, and with the necessity of the House remaining, if I may use the term, in a kind of state of siege, defending itself against the entrance of Mr. Bradlaugh by such means as he may employ. Is that a position in which the House of Commons wishes to remain; and is it not the duty of everyone in this House to endeavour to settle and get rid of the question which was so difficult, and which has not, I may add, increased the credit of the House of Commons? Whatever view we may take of Mr. Bradlaugh taking the Oath, whether it has been legal, or whether it has not been legal, we may, at least, hope to find an issue from the difficulty; because I refuse to believe what has been repeatedly asserted —that it is convenient to the Conservative Party to keep this question open. I do not believe that for the sake of keeping up a kind of belief that on this side of the House there is a kind of protection of Mr. Bradlaugh's doctrines, that for the sake of keeping up that belief, they would seek to see continued scenes which have not increased the credit of the House. I think we may fairly appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition—who on this question has the majority—to come forward on this occasion and give us some hopes that he will assist in the settlement, and the final settlement, of this question. We expected that he and his Followers would, at least, speak warmly and hopefully of carrying out legislation which is to put an end to the scandal which exists. What course did the right hon. Gentleman take? He said he would judge when he should see the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman and those who support him do not pledge themselves to any Bill when they accept this Resolution. The principle is simple enough. We all know it, though we attempt to disguise it—it is that every Member elected may make an Affirmation or Oath at his option. Is not that simple? Is it difficult to conceive the clauses by which that plain and simple principle may be embodied in a Bill? I think it would be worthier of the Party opposite if they would give up the attempt to embitter the opposition to Mr. Bradlaugh, and assist not only this side of the House, but the work the House has to do. If the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman opposite is carried to-night we may be in the same position again. We rest the case mainly on this, that we must get rid of the scenes here, and in support of that I shall vote for the Amendment of the hon. Member for Berwickshire, and I hope there will be many, even on the Opposition side of the House, who will be ready to follow in that course.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he wished to remind the House that last year they occupied a very different position from that in which they would now be placed if the Amendment were carried. Last year the Speaker was armed by a Resolution of the House with power to prevent a scandal which would shock so much the religious feeling of the country. If, however, his right hon. Friend's Resolution were now rejected, and the Amendment agreed to, the House would be placed entirely at the mercy of Mr. Bradlaugh. As far as he could understand the matter, there would be nothing except an abstract Resolution between the House and that profanation which they all deprecated. He was willing to accept the pledge given by Mr. Bradlaugh through his brother Member for Northampton; but let hon. Members consider what it was.

It amounted to this—that if the House would kindly adopt the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman below the Gangway, Mr. Bradlaugh would undertake not to come up and try to take the Oath for a certain time. [An hon. MEMBER: An uncertain time.] His brother Member for Northampton said he might wait two months; but he would not pledge himself to any particular time—it might be two months, it might be less.

MR. LABOUCHERE, interposing, expressed a hope that he might be allowed to explain. He did not say that he assumed that the Amendment would be followed by legislation. Of course, that legislation could not take place in a day or in a week. The hon. Member, as well as everyone else in the House, knew perfectly well what he meant when he said that Mr. Bradlaugh would not come to that Table if a Bill were prosecuted. He said it might be two months or three months. He would also say that Mr. Bradlaugh would, under those circumstances, give the fullest notice to the House before he came up to the Table.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he quite accepted what the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had just said. He understood that Mr. Bradlaugh was not to be bound as to time; but let hon. Members see in what position that placed the House. They had no promise of a Bill to follow this abstract Resolution. The Prime Minister, who had done a great deal undoubtedly to endeavour to get Mr. Bradlaugh into the House of Commons, had not said a word about bringing in a Bill. And supposing a private Member were to bring in a Bill, did anybody suppose he would have the slightest chance of passing it? They all knew perfectly well that he would not, and therefore the House would be put into this position. At any moment Mr. Bradlaugh might say—"You are not advancing with the Bill as fast as I like, and I will come down to the House of Commons and try to take the Oath; for you have barred yourselves from trying to stop me by passing the Amendment."

MR. WHITBREAD said, that in the early stages of this question more than one right hon. Member on the Front Opposition Bench took the view that legislation was the proper mode of dealing with the difficulty. He hoped they were in the same mind still. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire, in a speech on a former occasion, dwelt at considerable length on this point. He (Mr. Whitbread) hoped the right hon. Baronet was of that opinion still; if not, his second thoughts would be much worse than his first thoughts. It was but reasonable to suppose that the majority which carried the Amendment, if it were carried, would be ready to carry on legislation on the question. From whom would opposition come to such legislation? It was not to be feared from that side of the House. If hon. Gentlemen opposite feared a profanation of the Oath, and the Amendment were to pass, all they had to do was to meet the other side fairly and to abstain from obstructing the Bill. He did not wish them to abstain from expressing their opinions, but only asked that there should be no undue obstruction. If they would meet them fairly and take a division on the Bill, at a reasonable time, on its merits, and be satisfied with the decision of the majority, whatever it might be, they need fear no profanation of the Oath. But was it really the profanation of the Oath that they did fear? They had admitted over and over again that should Mr. Bradlaugh be returned at the General Election, they could not prevent him going up amongst the first Members and taking the Oath at the Table. Was it, then, really the profanation of the Oath that they cared for; or was it that some astute Party managers thought they had got a good question, and that they would like to keep the question alive? They on his (Mr. Whitbread's) side of the House thought Mr. Bradlaugh had a right to go to the Table and take the Oath; but they offered a way out of the difficulty, a way recommended by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire—the only way which they saw of avoiding profanation, because if a General Election came, he (Mr. Whitbread) thought it was reasonable to expect that Mr. Bradlaugh would be again returned, and then he would come to the Table, and before the Members present would take the Oath in a manner very like a profanation of it. They offered them a way out of the difficulty—namely, by the introduction of a Bill to deal with it. If the Conservative Party would only not prevent legislation, a Bill could be passed without any undue waste of time, and the profanation of the Oath would not take place. He wished to remind the House of these facts, because hon. Members opposite had not treated them in so temperate a manner as they did on the first occasion, when they offered to assent to legislation on the subject.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he regretted very much that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon should have attempted to introducein to this debate any question of Party, either on one side or the other. ["Oh!"] It was, he thought, hardly worthy of the right hon. Gentleman to say that the Conservatives wished to keep this question open for Party purposes. This was a matter which most deeply affected not only every Member of that House, but the religious feelings of millions of people of all Parties and of all creeds. He declined to speak of the matter as a Party question, inasmuch as it was one which had moved the hearts and feelings of many religious people in the country. The hon. Member who had just spoken (Mr. Whitbread) had alluded to a speech of his made a long time ago on this subject, when it came before him for the first time as a Member of the Select Committee. That Committee almost unanimously decided that it was absolutely impossible by law for Mr. Bradlaugh to make the Affirmation which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster desired him to make. Upon the other question as to whether he should be permitted to take the Oath, the Committee upon that point also were unanimous in holding that such a taking of the Oath would not be a taking the Oath at all within the meaning of the Act, but would be an act of profanation. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster thought that there was only one thing to be done—namely, to allow Mr. Bradlaugh to take the Oath. For his own part, he had ventured to suggest that as Mr. Bradlaugh could not make an Affirmation, neither was he to be allowed, under the circumstances, to take the Oath, and that if the Government desired to get him into the House, their only method of getting rid of the difficulty was to introduce legislation on the subject. That opinion he had always held and expressed; he said so now, and all the more strongly because he had never concealed the fact that he objected to such legislation all the more earnestly because it was introduced for the express purpose of letting in Mr. Bradlaugh. Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen would remember perfectly well how great a difference there was in doing things for one particular purpose and in doing them for the advance of the general principle, and he did not see how the Amendment would have any real effect, because the moment the Bill was introduced, he was quite certain it would be so attacked and tied and bound up with the case of Mr. Bradlaugh, that it would have no chance of passing, and many Members who would be quite ready to support the general principle would vote against it. The hon. and learned Attorney General had made a speech on the subject and had promised to introduce a Bill—[The Attorney General (Sir Henry James): No, no.]—but they had never seen anything of it, and it appeared to him that they were in absolutely the same condition at that moment as they were at the beginning of the Session. The Amendment must be considered as a Motion for allowing Mr. Bradlaugh, whenever he chose, to go through the form of taking the Oath, and either the Government must help him in that, or they must come to the Resolution that they came to before. He should certainly vote for the original Motion proposed by his right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote), because it appeared to him that the Amendment was simply brought forward as a loophole by which certain scruples might be explained away, and hon Members prevented from voting in accordance with conscience.

Mr. WALTER said, that when the question was first brought before the notice of the House, he ventured to express an opinion that the matter would never be settled until an Act was passed substituting a simple Affirmation for an Oath. Various opinions were expressed as to the advisability of adopting alternative systems enabling Members either to take the Oath, or to make Affirmation. For his own part, he thought considerable objection existed to such a course, which would tend to divide Members into two classes—into those who considered the Oath was the proper form to take, and those to whom the Affirmation was the proper form. Now, he objected to such a course. He had certainly said before that nothing would induce him to consent to Mr. Bradlaugh's taking the Oath; he had twice voted against it, and he should always continue to act in the same manner, because he held such an Oath to be no Oath at all, considering the known opinions of the hon. Member for Northampton. The proposal of the Leader of the Opposition was an operative proposal, and was necessary for the present crisis; but the Amendment had no operative effect at all, it was simply an abstract Resolution. He should be perfectly ready to-morrow to vote for a Resolution framed in the spirit of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks), because it carried out his view; but he did not think the House could make a sort of bargain with Mr. Bradlaugh, of which his Colleague was to be the guarantee. Such a course was unbecoming the dignity of the House. He should like to know why the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, whose opinions on the subject they knew, had not bestirred himself sooner in the matter? He (Mr. Walter) was not insensible of the difficulties the right hon. Gentleman had to encounter; but he believed that there were many hon. Gentlemen opposite who, in their consciences, thought there was only one way out of the difficulty, which was to be found in the introduction of an optional test, or by simply substituting an Affirmation for the Oath. There was a great deal to be said against promissory oaths altogether. They were entirely different to those administered in Courts of Justice. A declaration of allegiance to the Sovereign required no Oath whatever to confirm it, for the penalty of breaking it would be not perjury, but treason. If it were necessary to impose a test of any kind whatever, tacking it on to a declaration of allegiance to the Crown was not the proper means of doing it. He should support the Leader of the Opposition; but, at the same time, he was perfectly prepared to vote for any well-considered proposal for the purpose of substituting a simple Affirmation for an Oath.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, he would not detain the House for more than a very few minutes. No one would accuse him of being, or having been, guided by Party feeling on this subject. He wished to call attention to a letter, written by Mr. Bradlaugh, in order to show what was the position, with which the House had to deal, in Mr. Bradlaugh's estimation. This letter was addressed to the Editor of *The Daily News* on the 14th of February last, and was as follows:—

> "With reference to your paragraph in to-day's issue, will you allow me to say that I have not this Session made, nor have I promised to make, nor do I intend to make, any communication to the Serjeant at Arms, with reference to my action in fulfilling the duty imposed on me by law as one of the Members for the Borough of Northampton. I reserve to myself the right at any moment, consistent with statute, and with the Standing Orders and Rules and Orders of the House, to claim to take my seat, though I shall probably select an occasion which seems to me least injurious to Public Business."

Now, that was the formal and public declaration of Mr. Bradlaugh, who, he (Mr. Newdegate) must say, had been perfectly consistent. Mr. Bradlaugh held that that House was acting illegally, and he defied the House with the sanction of the constituency of Northampton. He (Mr. Newdegate) was sorry that that one constituency of Northampton had undertaken to defy the House, and to set its knowledge of law above the knowledge of the Court of Appeal in this country; for the Court of Appeal had declared that Mr. Bradlaugh was liable to a penalty of £500 for the first vote he had given in the House. Mr. Bradlaugh's audacity in raising the question of the legality of the action of the House was, indeed, surpassing. Mr. Bradlaugh, as an avowed Atheist, had not taken, and could not take, the Oath of Allegiance according to the Statute. That Oath was intended to be binding upon every Member of the House before he could fulfil the duties of his position. Hon. Members spoke as if there were no limits to the Constitution—no limits, that was to say, by statute. This was somewhat surprising. They might as well declare that a woman, an alien, a clergyman, or even a Cardinal, might sit in the House, when the fact was that all these were excluded by the authority of the Statute Law, as was Mr. Bradlaugh. Some hon. Members, whose wise moderation he generally admired, had on this occasion disappointed him (Mr. Newdegate). But the hon. Member for Berkshire (Mr. Walter) had pointed out that Mr. Bradlaugh wished to proclaim to the country that the House of Commons dared not uphold the law of its own Constitution against the will of a single constituency. Was that the position which the House of Commons wished to assume, or have ascribed to it? It might be right that the House should consider the subject with a view to legislation; but with regard to the proposal of the sitting Member for Northampton, that Mr. Bradlaugh should, by agreement with the House, consent to abstain from his misconduct—that he should not obtrude himself upon this House, or violate its Orders, or defy or insult the Speaker, upon condition that the House should proceed thus under penalty to legislate at the dictation of the constituency of Northampton, was, to his (Mr. Newdegate's) mind, intolerable. Was that a position which the House of Commons was prepared to occupy? He (Mr. Newdegate) had read to the House the published declaration of Mr. Bradlaugh himself, and he must say that the present offer of the hon. Member for Northampton was so qualified, that it simply meant that Mr. Bradlaugh would subject the House of Commons to renewed indignities unless it proceeded under a sense of such penalty to deal with this subject in the way of legislation. But if the House were to consent, how could this House answer for the conduct of the House of Lords? The House of Lords knew that the Oaths were the very foundation of order in this House. If the necessity for taking the Oath of Allegiance were to be abrogated, any Member might deny the existence of God and found a Motion upon it; any Member might deny the right of Her Majesty to the Throne; any Member might deny the right to the succession of the Prince of Wales. All this was precluded, because each of those proposals was distinctly contrary to the Oaths of Members. It was the duty of the right hon. Gentleman the Speaker, if any such proposal were made in the House, to rise at once from the Chair and to state that the proposal must be withdrawn, that the debate thereon must cease, and the speech thereon be held to have been unspoken, because the whole was contrary to the Oaths of Members. There must, then, be some limits to the action of Parliament, and the limits he had described were assigned in the reign of Queen Elizabeth as the condition of this House being admitted to a share of the Imperial power. The object of Mr. Bradlaugh was to strike down the distinction between a Parliament and a Convention, which was an Assembly under no obligations. In the United States of America they resorted to Conventions, when there was a difference between the two Houses of Congress, or between Congress and the Supreme Court; but under what condition? That one question only should be decided by each Convention, and that afterwards Congress should immediately resume its functions within the limits assigned to it. This country was asked to go further in the direction of unrestrained Democracy, and in favour of absolute Atheism, than the Great Republic of the United States had consented to in its own case.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY said, he had voted from the very first against allowing Mr. Bradlaugh to take the Oath, and had done so, as had other hon. Members, simply in order that a profane and improper act might not be committed. He begged to say that in the course he had adopted he was not actuated by Party spirit, and he protested against any hon. Gentleman on the other side saying or insinuating that votes given by hon. Members on this side were given from any other motive than that which ought to be respected in the eyes of all. Further, he must remind the House that this matter was represented in another light out-of-doors. The constituencies out-of-doors were persistently told by the hon. Gentleman who dared to come to the Table to take the Oath, that his exclusion was designed to prevent his bringing forward his Motion for a reform of the Pension List. That he also branded as a calumny, and there could be no real credence of it in the heart of the man who made it. Mr. Bradlaugh himself did not believe it. He knew perfectly well that the only ground against him was the religious ground, and his (Mr. Mitchell Henry's) opinion had always gone in that direction. In the present difficulty it would be most inconvenient and undignified for the House to make a bargain with Mr. Bradlaugh. Personally he had always thought it a great hardship that only three classes of persons, Quakers, Moravians, and Separatists, should be allowed to affirm. An alteration of the law was the true solution of the question. Not only now, but for all future time, and he could not understand why it was that when this difficulty arose first a measure of that kind was not introduced. The question could then have been fought out as a matter of principle, and not have been brought into the condition it was in now. Nor did he understand why, if he voted for this Amendment, he should be stultifying the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. He had one more remark to make. The House had put no disability on Mr. Bradlaugh; it was Mr. Bradlaugh who had attempted to impose a disability upon the Members of the House. His conduct in pretending at the Table that he could not conscientiously take the Oath, and then, when he found inconvenience arise, coming and saying, "Oh, I will take it," was as repugnant to his fellow-Atheists, as to any hon. Member of the House. Mr. Holyoake was as good an Atheist as Mr. Bradlaugh, and he had expressed his disgust and disapprobation of the conduct of the hon. Member for Northampton. He said it showed most clearly that his objections were not really conscientious. They knew nothing officially about Mr. Bradlaugh until he had refused to take the Oath, giving as his reason that it was not binding on his conscience. But for that statement, Mr. Bradlaugh might have taken his seat unchallenged long ago; but it was impossible now to accede to the request that no judicial cognizance should be taken of a piece of information that had been forced upon the House. Mr. Bradlaugh's object was to exhibit to the people out-of-doors his own disbelief in the existence of God and the insincerity of the religious feeling of the House, which, rather than be inconvenienced and embarrassed, would, he imagined, at his approach save itself all trouble by permitting the Oath to be profaned. If the House of Commons allowed him to go to the Table and take the Oath, they would afford him the strongest argument that could be given to prove to his disciples that there was no reality in their belief in a Superior Being. For that reason he should never vote for any course that would result in the Oath being taken by Mr. Bradlaugh. He would not allow Mr. Bradlaugh, if he could help it, to take the Oath; but, at the same time, he would cheerfully, readily, and heartily promote such a reform of the law as would relieve the consciences of all men who did not desire to swear, and permit them to express their allegiance to the Crown by making an Affirmation, which would be equally binding upon them as the Oath itself.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he presumed that if the Resolution excluding Mr. Bradlaugh were rejected, it could not be moved again this Session, while the acceptance of the Amendment would be a mere Platonic method of changing the law as to Affirmations. Mr. Bradlaugh had offered, by the mouth of his Colleague and Ambassador, to give the House a reasonable time to pass an Act abolishing the Oath; but it must be remembered, in the first place, that that House could not alone pass an Act abolishing the Oath. Such an Act must be passed first by that House, then by the House of Lords, and must finally receive the sanction of the Sovereign. It was proposed by the Mover of the Amendment that unless not only that House, but the House of Lords and the Sovereign, removed all obstacles in the path of Mr. Bradlaugh's profanation of the Oath within what might seem a reasonable time to Mr. Bradlaugh, Mr. Bradlaugh would come up to the Table, would insist upon taking the Oath—taking the name of God in vain, and profaning a solemn religious declaration to the scandal of all religious men throughout this country. Was it to be left to Mr. Bradlaugh to decide whether a reasonable time had elapsed for the House of Lords and for the Sovereign to remove the obstacles to his doing that which would enable him to further his atheistic propaganda? The hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry) had plainly stated that point of the case. Mr. Bradlaugh had never ceased to assert his intention of making that House a platform for the spread of Atheism; and he had received encouragement from the Premier himself, who had promised Mr. Bradlaugh that if he would but wait a reasonable time the Oath should be abolished. What stronger proof of the mockery of Christianity, of the falsehood and hollowness of Christian men's profession of their faith, could be laid before the ignorant masses of this country than the proof the Premier proposed to place in the hands of Mr. Bradlaugh? He was surprised to hear from the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread) such an argument as that which he had addressed to the House. He stated the question in all its nakedness and all its deformity, for he said that if they wanted to stop the profanation of the Oath, they must make haste to pass an Act for the relief of Mr. Bradlaugh. Such an argument was really a menace. An Act of such a nature would, in the opinion of many, be removing the last vestiges of the religious foundation of the Constitution, and ought not to be proposed without an appeal to the wishes of the country at large. The hon. Member said that if the House hesitated to pass such an Act, the very profanation they dreaded would be inflicted upon them. A more unworthy argument than that was never addressed to any Assembly, and he was surprised that the hon. Member had been so carried away by his allegiance to the Premier as to suggest that if the House desired to save the Oath from profanation they must abolish the Oath altogether. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) had been supposed to be somewhat independent of his Party; but he regretted to find that he also was wanting in principle, for he had insinuated again and again that Party motives were at the bottom of the resistance to Mr. Bradlaugh. He (Mr. O'Donnell) did not admire the intelligence of those hon. Members who believed that statement of the case. But, coming to the Premier's statement itself, it was summed up in his recommendation that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks) should be accepted as "an escape." An escape from a difficulty entirely recommended itself to the mind of the Premier; it was so characteristic of the right hon. Gentleman. He was never satisfied with the two plain courses of either saying "Yes" or "No;" but he must find a third course out of a difficulty, and in the present instance he had tried to find an escape for his Followers. His proposal for abolishing the freedom of Parliament by his contemplated Rules of Procedure was not unworthy of his proposal to abolish the Oath. How long was the discussion on the Rules of Procedure to be continued? Suppose Mr. Bradlaugh thought they were taking an unreasonable time with the discussion of the Rules, then was the Premier to stand up and adjure them to make haste with the Rules of Procedure, in order to allow him to bring in a Bill to prevent the profanation of the Oath? If there were an honest purpose behind the policy which was sought to be pressed upon the House, the Amendment would not be proposed as a substitute, but as a rider and in addition to the Resolution. If that course were taken, both the dignity of the House of Commons and the sacredness of the Oath would be protected, for they would be asked to vote in the first place, pending legislation, that Mr. Bradlaugh was incapable of taking the Oath, which he declared to be an idle form. That would be an honest policy. It would prevent the profanation of the Oath, and give expression to the wish of those who thought that the Oath ought to be abolished and Affirmations substituted. But, instead of that honest policy, they were asked to disarm the House as against Mr. Bradlaugh. The Amendment was one with no practical object, except that of legitimatizing the contingent profanation of the Oath under the protection of the good offices and the benediction of the Premier of Great Britain.

MR. MONTAGUE GUEST said, that, as one of those who had voted consistently against Mr. Bradlaugh taking the Oath, he felt it his duty to give the reason which would induce him now to vote for the Amendment. His opinion was that it would be best that every Member returned to the House should be allowed to take the Oath or to affirm, at his discretion, and he should vote for the Amendment upon the understanding that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister gave his assurance that Her Majesty's Government would bring in a Bill to give this option. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] At all events, it was right and proper that a Member should be able to do what the Amendment proposed, and if it were carried he understood that it would be the duty of the Government to give effect to it. They knew perfectly well that if any private Member attempted to bring in a measure of this kind, there would be little chance of his carrying it; but, on the other hand, if the

Government took the course he proposed, he believed they should find a solution of the difficulty. If, therefore, the Government would give the assurance he wished for, he should be delighted to vote for the Amendment. If this course were not taken by the Government, Mr. Bradlaugh might come at any time and do what he had already done, thereby profaning the Oath.

Sir HARDINGE GIFFARD said, he desired to take the ruling of the Chair on the Question whether the Amendment was in Order? The Resolution of his right hon. Friend (Sir Stafford Northcote) dealt with a Question of Privilege, and it would prevent Mr. Bradlaugh, under certain circumstances, which, of course, it was not necessary then to recapitulate, coming to the Table and taking the Oath. The Amendment, he submitted, had no relation to the Resolution, for it did not refer to Privilege at all, but it committed the House to an abstract Resolution as to the necessity for, and propriety of, legislation upon the subject. He was recently witness to a ruling of the Speaker which seemed exactly in point. There was a Motion to issue a Writ for the county of Meath upon the ground that the person elected was not qualified to sit. To that it was sought to move an Amendment for an Address to the Crown, the effect of which would have been that a free pardon should be given to the person elected, and so remove all disability arising from previous conviction. The Speaker held that, in the circumstances, the Amendment was out of Order, and could not be put. He submitted that this Amendment, in the form it had taken, that of giving the go-by to a Question of Privilege, was out of Order and ought not be put.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Resolution of the right hon. Baronet is to the effect that Mr. Bradlaugh be not permitted to go through the form of taking the Oath prescribed by the Statutes 29 *Vict.* c. 19, and 31 & 32 *Vict.* c. 72; and the hon. Member for Berwickshire proposes an Amendment that those particular Statutes shall be amended in the direction indicated by this Amendment. I am bound to say that, in my judgment, the Amendment is consequently quite relevant to the Resolution. It is true, as stated by the hon. and learned Gentleman, that on a former occasion, when it was proposed to issue a new Writ for the county of Meath, an Amendment was offered to the effect that Michael Davitt should receive a free pardon, and I did not consider that that Amendment was relevant to the Motion before the House. In this case the relevancy seems to me clear and complete; but on that occasion it did not appear to me that the proposed Amendment was relevant. Therefore, I am bound to advise that the Amendment of the hon. Member for Berwickshire is in Order.

Earl PERCY said, he rose merely for the purpose of obtaining a clear understanding from the Prime Minister upon the question raised by the hon. Member for Wareham (Mr. Montague Guest). The time when the House was in a difficulty was the time when it should take the greatest care what it did in its anxiety to get out of it. The hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) had made a proposal to the House which, clearly understood, meant that a Bill should be introduced by the Government to abolish the Oath, or that a Bill should be introduced for that purpose by a private Member, and every facility be given by the Government to that private Member to enable him to pass his Bill. It was notorious that a Bill of the kind referred to would meet with strong opposition in some quarters of the House, and that it would have very little chance of passing unless it was a Government Bill or secured Government time. The Prime Minister would be misleading the House if he were to induce the House to vote for the Amendment of the hon. Member for Berwickshire and did not intend to adopt one of these alternatives. He was surprised to hear the Attorney General say that the Opposition prevented the introduction of a Bill last Session, because the Opposition could not have done that if the Motion had been brought on before half-past 12 o'clock; but the fact that it was not threw considerable doubt on the *bona fides* of the Government, who brought on the Motion only when they knew the minority could stop it. He asked the Prime Minister whether they intended either to bring in a Bill or to give up Government time to a private Member's Bill?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I might, Sir, perhaps, refuse to answer a question such as that put by the noble Lord in connection with insinuations of want of *bonâ fides.* I do not feel myself bound to answer any question put in such a way. But as the question has been put in a very different manner by another hon. Member, it is right that I should explain what I stated. I gave no intimation either one way or the other upon the subject, but simply spoke in favour of the principle of such legislation. If the House should be pleased to adopt the Amendment of my hon. Friend, then, undoubtedly, it would be the duty of the Government to consider what would be the best course to take, and whether a measure brought in by the Government would be the best mode of facilitating legislation. It would be the duty of the Government, in good faith, to address itself to the question, and to arrive at such a decision as might, in its opinion, be most likely to attain the end desired by the majority.

MR. MELDON said, the question before the House was one of such great importance that he did not wish to give a silent vote upon it. The House should clearly understand what its position would be if the Resolution of the right hon. Baronet opposite was negatived. He therefore wished to ask, whether, if the Resolution were negatived, there would be any power of preventing Mr. Bradlaugh presenting himself before a measure had been carried? As to the Amendment itself, there were only two arguments that he desired to address to the House. The first was that Members who had voted against the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh previously, and now voted for the Amendment, would be in a peculiar position. The misfortune was that a vote for the Amendment was ostentatiously a vote in favour of Mr. Bradlaugh, from which nothing could whitewash a Member in the eyes of the outside public; and yet there had been numerous occasions when such a Motion might have been brought forward and such a construction could not have been put upon it. There was another argument of much greater weight. If the Amendment was carried, it appeared to him that it would be a direct negative to the Resolution which the House had hitherto adopted. What was the legislation which the Amendment advocated? It was that Mr. Bradlaugh, or any other Member, had a right under present circumstances to go to the Table, and at his option either take the Oath or make a Declaration. Therefore, if Mr. Bradlaugh chose to come to the Table, and was willing to take the Oath, there would be no power in the House to prevent the profanation of the Oath. The proposed amendment of the law would, he conceived, in no sense make any difference. He, therefore, asked Mr. Speaker what would be the effect of negativing the Resolution, and whether, in the event of the Amendment being carried, the same Resolution could be moved again during the present Session?

SIR EDWARD REED said, that before that question was answered, he wished to ask whether, if the Amendment was carried, they should negative the Resolution?

MR. SPEAKER: In answer to the question of the hon. and learned Member for Kildare (Mr. Meldon), I have to say that it is true that no Motion which is substantially the same as one which has been already negatived can again be made in the same Session. The House will know how to meet any situation that may arise without transgressing its own Rules.

MR. LEWIS (who rose amid loud cries of "Divide!") said, he would only stand in the way of a division for a few moments. He wished it to be distinctly understood that as far as the Speaker's ruling could be interpreted by the House —["Oh!"]—Gentlemen on his side of the House took the ruling from the Chair in the way in which it was given —namely, that the Speaker thought that some plan could be devised by that (the Opposition) side of the House if the occasion arose to repeat that Resolution in some other form. After all, the real question which remained to be decided was this—would the House practically permit Mr. Bradlaugh to take the Oath or would it not? It was perfectly plain that if Mr. Bradlaugh was not satisfied with the expedition of the proposed legislation, he might a month or two hence present himself to the House, and there would then be all sorts of objections made to any Resolution that might be made similar to that now proposed by the right hon. Baronet. Anyone who voted in favour of the Amendment must be understood by his constituents and the country as voting in favour of the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh, and upon no other question whatever.

Mr. CALLAN said, he rose to a point of Order. He wished to put a question to the Speaker, in order to prevent any mistake on the part of hon. Members. If the Amendment were resolved in the affirmative—that was, if the House resolved that the words of the Motion of the Leader of the Opposition should not stand part of the Question, and the Amendment was then put as a substantive Motion and carried—he asked whether, if Mr. Bradlaugh came to the Table on any future occasion and a Motion similar in terms or similar substantially in intention to prevent Mr. Bradlaugh from taking the Oath were brought forward by an hon. Member, the Speaker would accept such Motion and rule it to be in Order?

Mr. SPEAKER: I would assure the hon. Member most respectfully that I have quite enough to do to deal with points of Order as they arise; and I must decline to answer questions anticipating points of Order that may be hypothetically raised.

Question put.

The House *divided* :—Ayes 257; Noes 242: Majority 15. — (Div. List, No. 37.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Resolved, That this House, having ascertained that Mr. Bradlaugh has been re-elected for the Borough of Northampton, doth re-affirm the Resolution made on the 7th of February last, and doth hereby direct that Mr. Bradlaugh be not permitted to go through the form of taking the Oath prescribed by the Statutes 29 Vic. c. 19, and 31 and 32 Vic. c. 72.

Mr. MARJORIBANKS: I beg to give Notice that to-morrow I shall ask leave to bring in a Bill to amend the law with regard to Parliamentary Oaths.

Mr. O'DONNELL: I beg to give Notice that I will oppose any Bill not brought in by the Government on that question.

ATTEMPT UPON THE LIFE OF HER MAJESTY.

ADDRESS TO HER MAJESTY.

Message from *The Lords*,—That they have *agreed to* an Address to be presented to Her Majesty, to which they desire the concurrence of this House.

Address to Her Majesty,—That the Message of *The Lords*, communicating the Address of their Lordships to be presented to Her Majesty, be now taken into Consideration:—And the same was read as followeth:—

"Most Gracious Sovereign,

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal Subjects, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled, beg leave humbly to express to Your Majesty our horror and indignation at the reckless and wicked attempt made on Thursday last against Your Majesty's sacred Person, and our heartfelt congratulations to Your Majesty and the Country on Your Majesty's happy preservation from danger; and humbly to assure Your Majesty that we make it our earnest prayer to Almighty God that, as He has long preserved to us the blessings that we enjoy under Your Majesty's beneficent Government, He will continue to watch over a Life so highly prized by Your Majesty's loyal subjects."

Mr. GLADSTONE: I rise, Sir, to move that this House do concur in the humble Address to Her Majesty which has been read; and in doing so, the House having heard the terms of the Address, which I believe will command universal concurrence, it is not necessary for me to add more than a very few words. It is always a subject of pain for us to hear that the honoured life of Her Majesty has been exposed to danger, but that pain is deepened into horror when we learn that this danger has been brought into existence by the wilful and wanton act of one of Her Majesty's subjects. It is a grievous and a painful thought, somewhat, however, mitigated by this remarkable consideration—that whereas in other countries similar execrable attempts have at least been made by men of average, or more than average, sense and intelligence, and whereas there the real, or at any rate the supposed, cause has been private grievances or public mischief, in this country, in the case of Her Majesty, they have been wholly dissociated from grievances, wholly dissociated from discontent, and upon no occasion has any man of average sense and average intelligence been found to raise his hand against the life of Her Majesty. On each occasion of the kind morbid minds, combined with the narrowest range of mental gifts, have been the apparent cause by which persons have been tempted to seek a notoriety denied to them in every legitimate walk of life. Sir, Her Majesty has deeply felt that sentiment of thankfulness which even overpowers and overshadows the sentiment of pain on this occasion. She has felt it, not only for herself, but for those other lives which were wickedly and recklessly exposed, even with a more absolute want of cause or pretext than might be said to be the case in the instance of Her Majesty. The Princess Beatrice, we are rejoiced to learn, has shown on this occasion remarkable courage, together with an entire forgetfulness of herself from her absorption in the attempt upon the life of her illustrious Mother. It would not have been according to usage, and it would, perhaps, have formed an inconvenient precedent, had we proposed to Parliament to include in this Address reference to any other life than that of the Queen. But I am sure that the sentiment which is experienced by Her Majesty of joy at the deliverance of others from the danger is likewise one that finds its place in the minds of every one of us. Well, Sir, having expressed our horror and indignation at the attempt upon the life of Her Majesty, we must all rejoice to see the testimonies which that nefarious attempt has brought forth from every quarter of the globe. Not from this country alone, and not from Her Majesty's subjects alone, but from every nation of civilized mankind there has been conveyed to Her Majesty the expression of the very same feelings with which we ourselves are animated. It is now for us to give formal and authentic utterance to these feelings in the shape of this Address — an Address which, I believe, could not, even if it were couched in the most florid terms, go beyond the real and sincere sentiments of every Member in the House. We shall thus convey to Her Majesty, in a solemn and authentic form, the assurance which, in one sense, indeed, She does not need, for She is well aware of the feelings which govern us in this matter; but which will, at least, form a public record of the price that is set by the whole of Her subjects represented in the Commons' House of Parliament upon the continuance of Her Majesty's precious life and of Her beneficent reign —a reign already prolonged beyond that of any other Queen in this country, but destined, as all of us must hope, to still count many happy years of prosperity and blessing to the nation. I beg to move, "That this House do concur in the Address which has been adopted by the House of Lords."

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, I am quite sure it is unnecessary for me to add any words to those which have fallen from the Prime Minister expressing our concurrence in this Address. It is now 40 years since this House was called upon to address Her Majesty in somewhat similar language, and those 40 years having strengthened Her hold upon the affection and gratitude of her people, the feelings which animated our Predecessors animate us even more strongly still. We all know with what incredulous surprise we heard in the first instance the other night the news of an attack upon Her Majesty; with what anxiety we learnt that it had been of a character to endanger Her precious life, and with what relief and thankfulness we received the news that no injury had actually been sustained. I am sure we all feel with the Prime Minister additional cause for thankfulness that the Princess Beatrice should have shared in the escape of the Queen from this great danger. One so justly loved and admired as Her Royal Highness deserves, and will receive, our deepest sympathy. But it is especially to Her Majesty's escape that we turn our thoughts. We cannot but feel that She, who has always been so prompt in the expression of her sympathy for others, has a claim upon our sympathy independently even of considerations of loyalty; and when my right hon. Friend speaks of the expressions of sympathy that have come from every part of the civilized world, we cannot but feel that it would indeed be surprising if a Sovereign who has commanded so much of the respect and admiration, and even the affection, of foreign nations, and who has never been slow to express her sympathy with any misfortune that may have befallen other nations with whom we are in alliance—it would be strange indeed if She had not received this assurance from us. I will say nothing more, except that I cordially echo and support the Resolution now submitted to the House.

Then the said Address being read a second time;

Resolved, *Nemine Contradicente*, That this House doth *agree* with The Lords in the said Address to be presented to Her Majesty.

And the blank therein was filled up with the words "and Commons."

Ordered, That a Message be sent to *The Lords*, to acquaint their Lordships that this House hath *agreed to* the Address to which The Lords desired the concurrence of this House, and have filled up the blank with the words "and Commons;" and that the Clerk do carry the said Message.

QUESTION.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—RETURN OF JUDGMENTS.

Mr. LEWIS inquired of the Prime Minister, When he believed the Return as to the business of the Land Court would be in the hands of Members? It was a matter of the most serious importance, now that the debate on the Land Act was about to be resumed. Would the right hon. Gentleman take steps to have these Returns in the hands of hon. Members before Thursday night?

Mr. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, the Return was in the hands of the printers. It was not voluminous, and he was at a loss to understand why its appearance should have been so long delayed.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

LAND LAW (IRELAND)—OPERATION OF THE ACT.—RESOLUTION.

ADJOURNED DEBATE. [THIRD NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [27th February], that the Question then proposed,

> "That Parliamentary inquiry, at the present time, into the working of the Irish Land Act tends to defeat the operation of that Act, and must be injurious to the interests of good government in Ireland,"—(*Mr. Gladstone*,)

—be now put.

Previous Question again proposed, "That the Original Question be now put."—(*Mr. Gibson.*)

Debate *resumed*.

Mr. CHARLES RUSSELL said, he would ask the permission of the House to state the grounds upon which he intended to vote for the Motion of the Prime Minister and against the proposition of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson). He desired at the outset to point out a misconception as to the character of the Prime Minister's Resolution, which appeared more than once during the course of the debate. It was not a question of conflict between the two Houses of Parliament. It was not a case in which the House of Lords was infringing upon the domains belonging exclusively to the House of Commons; neither was it a case in which the Commons were seeking to infringe upon any domain of the House of Lords. It was a case in which the Lords had an undoubted right to inquire into the matters proposed. But the Executive Government of the country, upon their responsibility, had come to the conclusion that in the present condition of things such an inquiry would be prejudicial and injurious to the public interests, and in the discharge of their duty they (as was their equally undoubted right) asked that Assembly—the Representative House of Parliament—to endorse their disapproval of the inquiry, as calculated to lead to injurious results. In "another place" a noble and learned Lord likened the conduct of those who had pressed this inquiry to that of children who, having planted flowers in the ground, proceeded in a few days to pluck them up by the roots in order to see whether they were growing. He (Mr. Charles Russell) might be permitted to say that they seemed him to be mischievous children who were seeking to pull up flowers they had not planted, and which it was shrewdly suspected they did not desire to take root. In judging of the probable scope and effect of this inquiry it seemed to him to be essential to look to the language of its advocates in and out of Parliament. It seemed to be lost sight of that the agitation for the inquiry dated from a great meeting of landlords held in Dublin at the beginning of the present year. At that meeting the Land Commission was abused in language neither dignified nor just. Fault was found with the social status of the Sub-Commissioners, protests were made against their decisions, and resolutions were passed declaring against further reductions of rent, and crying out for compensation. The logical outcome of arguments like these would be a Resolution asking for a repeal of the Land Act. In fact, such a Resolution was submitted to the meeting, but not carried. How was the discussion carried on by the Representatives of the landlord class in the House? A right hon. Gentleman who lately filled a responsible Office in connection with the Irish administration did not think it unworthy of his position to apply to the Land Act of 1881, passed after such protracted discussion in that House, and assented to by the other House of Parliament and by the Sovereign, language describing it as confiscation and robbery. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) likewise strongly abused the Act, and if his arguments pointed to anything, they pointed to a repeal of the measure altogether. The senior Member for the University of Dublin, feeling the cogency of the arguments addressed to the House by the Prime Minister, attempted to put the question upon a much lower platform. He, in fact, said they desired to make no attack on the judicial administration of the Act; but he pointed out that there were many matters which could be properly inquired into without touching that question. He (Mr. Charles Russell) begged leave to point out that that was not the object indicated in the speeches of those who advocated the inquiry in "another place." But it very soon became apparent that the cautious limits within which his right hon. and learned Friend desired to keep the discussion were outstepped by other Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House. That the object which he described was not the real object of the inquiry appeared notably in the speeches of the hon. Member for Coleraine (Sir Hervey Bruce) and the hon. Member for West Surrey (Mr. Brodrick), but still more notably in the speech of his Colleague the junior Member for the University of Dublin. If the inquiry was to be a real inquiry, directed to the objects of its promoters, the arguments of the Government against its impolicy were strengthened tenfold; and if it was not to be a real inquiry, but the harmless and innocent thing described by his right hon. Friend opposite, it was clear that it could not satisfy the objections of those who projected it, and it would be more becoming and dignified for the House of Lords to yield to what, he had no doubt, would be the emphatic expression of the opinion of the House of Commons, that such an inquiry would be impolitic and obnoxious. He did not think it was within the competence of the Committee to give any assurance like that contained in the letter of the ex-Lord Chancellor, that they would not inquire into the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners. The Committee was merely deputed by the House of Lords to make the inquiry, and if an assurance was to be given which would be regarded as authoritative and binding, it should be by a Resolution of the House of Lords itself; but though the Committee had given an assurance that they would not re-hear cases already tried, which was not in their power, they were still at liberty to inquire into the grounds and facts of the decisions, which would have a very injurious effect on the minds of the people of Ireland. These might be matters proper to be inquired into; but an inquiry regarding them could not take place without materially weakening the status and the independence of the Commissioners. As showing the alarm with which the proposed inquiry was viewed in Ulster, whose people had evinced the strongest desire to avail themselves of the benefits of the Act, he read the Resolution lately adopted by a meeting of the tenant farmers of Tyrone protesting against the inquiry in the strongest manner, and a telegram from a gentleman in Antrim, who stood as tenant farmers' candidate at the last election, stating that if the Act was to have any effect, confidence in it must be restored by the House of Commons. It seemed to him that the Commissioners had been very unfairly treated in the discussion that had taken place in the House. He had probably watched their decisions as carefully as any man, and had addressed tenants' meetings since they had been given; and at those meetings he had carefully avoided expressing any opinion as to the judicial action of those gentlemen, and for the reason that it was impossible for any man, however desirous of being fair-minded, to give judgment in a case as to which he had not before him all the facts. He desired to point out that the course that had been adopted in criticizing the action of these Commissioners was without parallel. They were a judicial body appointed to administer an Act of Parliament; and if they did not administer that Act with a due regard to the intention of the Legislature when passing it, the Act itself provided the proper remedy for the Constitutional review of their decisions—namely, the Court of Appeal. He held it was unjust to the Commissioners, and unworthy of those who made these criticisms upon them, to treat them as they had been treated in those discussions. He was of opinion himself that if the Commissioners erred at all it had not been in favour of the tenants, but in favour of the landlords. It was said this inquiry was necessary, because the Act had falsified the promise by which it was obtained. It was said that the responsible Ministers of the Crown had expressed the view that it would not be followed by a large reduction of rent. This line of argument seemed to him to be extremely curious. The Act was passed for the relief of the tenants; and if responsible Ministers of the Crown had expressed such a view, all he could say was that it was only another proof that Ministers in that House, whether they were Ministers *in esse* or Ministers *in posse*, had a great deal still to learn about the condition of Ireland and how to deal with it. He had objections to any inquiry at all at this time; but he had special objections to an inquiry by the House of Lords, because he had no faith in their impartiality. He did not desire for one moment to suggest that any Member of that House would knowingly yield himself to an unfair bias, but because the occasions were few on which men could lift themselves above class interests and class prejudices. When he looked at what had been the persistent and consistent action of the House of Lords in reference to this question it was an amazement to him how the Irish Members opposite, of whose intelligence he had a high opinion, how they could hope that an inquiry by the House of Lords could redound to the benefit of the tenant. What had the history of the Lords been in relation to this question? They opposed the Land Act of 1870, although their opposition did not go to the extent of throwing out the Bill; but they took from it a valuable provision with which it had left the Commons. In 1872 they appointed a Committee to inquire into the Act; and that inquiry, as anyone who took any interest in the history of this question must have known, either had, or was supposed to have, a prejudicial effect in paralyzing the action of the County Court Judges in administering the Act and in minimizing the advantages it bestowed upon the tenants. Could any hon. Member forget their action in 1880 in regard to the Limitation of Costs Bill, brought in by the hon. Member for the County of Longford (Mr. Errington)? That small measure of protection for the Irish tenant passed the Commons, and the House of Lords did not thing it unworthy of their dignity and position to scout it, and it had never been passed since. There was another and more important Bill to which he should refer. It was the Compensation for Disturbance Bill. That unquestionably was an Act of exceptional legislation, based upon principles which should only be invoked upon rare and exceptional occasions. The House of Lords threw out that Bill after the Government had said in this House that it was necessary for the protection of the Irish tenant. That conduct of the House of Lords was, in his judgment, the strongest justification, and one of the strongest sustainments, of the action of the Land League. It would have been a generous act on the part of the House of Lords to have given that mild protection to the Irish tenant thought by the Commons to be so needed. Taking this to be the history of the House of Lords in reference to this question, could the Irish people look with other than distrust upon any inquiry initiated by them? There was another matter with regard to which he desired to say a word. That was as to this cry for compensation. He might, at least, express the hope that this cry would not play the part that had been played by another question, that of "Fair Trade," which was a fruitful theme for platform speeches outside the House, but which had found very weak and inarticulate expression in the House. He hoped this question would be formulated with precision and brought to an early decision. It had possessed the minds of Irish landlords and prevented them from arranging with their tenants outside the Court, as they imagined that by doing so they would be prejudicing their position, or prejudicing themselves as to some question of compensation. Compensation for what? Compensation by whom? Was it compensation for being, by Act of

Parliament, prevented from continuing a system of rack-renting? Was it compensation for being deprived of the right to confiscate the property of the tenants? In connection with this question he might mention an agreement voluntarily arrived at in the West of Ireland between some tenants and their landlord, where the rent under which they had struggled for existence for years and years had been reduced 50 per cent. Nature had not been kind to the place. It was upon the shore facing the Atlantic. The climate was not propitious. The people paid their rents by toiling in England and Scotland during the harvesting operations. Out of their holdings they could not do it. Of late years the labour market had been closed to them; and in view of such a case as this, he asked whether a claim for restitution might not be based upon juster grounds than this claim for compensation of the landlords? Upon the principles of compensation now proposed, the greater the rack rent to which a landlord had subjected his tenant the more he would get, whilst the fairer had been his rent the less. He wished to refer to the conjunction that had taken place on the other side of the House with reference to this Motion. It was a strange conjunction, arrived at by a diametrically opposite course of reasoning. Hon. Members above the Gangway said that this inquiry was absolutely necessary, if the ruin of the Irish landlords was to be averted. Hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway said that the inquiry was absolutely necessary, because the Land Act was perfectly worthless to the tenants. It was perfectly clear that both of these propositions could not be proved; and neither proposition, on being examined, would be found to be true. He believed that this Land Act did contain elements of great good to the Irish people and to the Irish tenant class, if they could secure them. He was of opinion that there had been gross exaggeration with respect to the decisions of the Commissioners; he did not mean wilful misrepresentation, but misrepresentation arising from a mistaken idea of what had occurred. It had been said that they proceeded upon a stereotyped plan of reducing rent. Nothing of the kind. In some cases they had small reductions, in some cases large reductions, in some very large reductions, in others they had made no reduction at all. He might quote an instance from the property of the representatives of a deceased proprietor in the County Antrim. That gentleman purchased the estate at a price which paid 5 per cent on the existing rental. Within 20 years, notwithstanding that neither he nor any of his predecessors expended 1*d*. on improvements, even the dwelling-houses and farm-buildings having been erected by the tenants, the rents were all nearly doubled. These tenants, the Commissioners asserted, could not pay those increased rents out of the produce of the soil. The reductions of rent made by the judicial action of the Courts were less than the reductions made out of Court between the landlords and tenants themselves. On the Montgomery Estate, near Bally Bay, in the County Monaghan, the agent, Mr. Reeves, met the tenants, and, after inquiring into each case on the merits, allowed reductions varying from 25 to 50 per cent, to commence from September last. The tenants were so delighted that they chaired Mr. Reeves from the hotel to the railway station. From a Return which he had taken the trouble to calculate he found that the reductions made, either by what he would call the compulsory decisions of the Courts, or by the mutual consents which received the sanction of the Courts, amounted to only 25·65 per cent. Those reductions made out of Court varied between 3 per cent and 58·35 per cent. The general average of those reductions was 36 per cent, as against only 23 per cent on the cases judicially decided by the Sub-Commissioners. This was a complete answer to the exaggerations of those who spoke about the "sweeping reductions of the Sub-Commissioners." This demand for an inquiry resolved itself, he believed, into an attack upon the administration of the Act by the Sub-Commissioners. Its administration, strange to say, by the County Court Judges had not been attacked, although the reductions made by them averaged more than the reductions by the Sub-Commissioners. [Mr. SEXTON: How was it with the County Court in Mayo?] He was not at that moment able to speak of Mayo; but he believed his statement of the average to be thoroughly accurate. He was not aware of a single instance in which rent had been judicially reduced where the landlord or his witnesses came forward to maintain that the existing rents were fair. [An hon. MEMBER: Mr. Bence Jones.] He (Mr. Charles Russell) thought Mr. Bence Jones was no exception; indeed, he thought Mr. Bence Jones applied himself to ventilating his opinions in English newspapers, rather than to maintain, before the Sub-Comsioners, that his rents were reasonable. He felt bound to ask, were the Irish landlords the only landlords who had suffered from reduced rents? He had lately read, in *The Mark Lane Express*, returns from 16 counties in England showing the rents of new lettings, and the rents at which those farms were held previously. The figures showed an average reduction of 30 per cent. Surely, in face of this fact, there was no foundation for the statements so rashly made outside that House that the reductions of the Sub-Commissioners had been unreasonable. Turning to his hon. Friends from Ireland below the Gangway he asked, how could they justify their statement that the Land Act had done no good? Was security against arbitrary and capricious eviction on the notice to quit no benefit to the Irish tenants? He said sincerely he had too much respect for the intelligence of those hon. Members to believe that they for one moment thought the Land Act was no good; and the strange alliance they had formed in opposition to the Prime Minister's Resolution found its reason—he would not say its justification—on some other ground, that other ground he believed to be implacable hostility to the Government. He himself believed the Land Act contained elements of future good to the Irish tenants. For much of this good he looked to a wise and liberal application of the Bright Clauses. His right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) spoke of the failure of the Bright Clauses, and contended this was one matter for inquiry. The great, though not the only, difficulty existing about the application of those clauses was the question of price. The landlords would be perfectly willing to sell at so many years' purchase on existing rack-rents. The tenants would be willing to buy at so many years' purchase of the new judicial rents. Until these differences were settled the Bright Clauses could not work and be thoroughly successful. He desired to call attention to what he believed to be the real and crucial difficulty in this whole matter, and that was the question of arrears. This question had not been adequately dealt with by the Act, and he said so when the Act was being passed. The mass of accumulated arrears was lying like a nightmare on the breast of the country. He did not doubt the existence of dishonest refusal to pay rents in many cases in Ireland. He regretted to be obliged to admit also that a certain amount of demoralization existed over the country; but, nevertheless, the fact remained that a great mass of the Irish tenants could not pay, and ought not to be expected to pay, the arrears of the present rent. But while he held those strong views he said no inquiry was necessary into the matter of arrears, because no delay could be brooked by the tenants, and the Government by this time ought to have sufficient materials for dealing with the question. Another weakness of the Act arose from the fact that, even in the most sanguine view of progress, years must elapse before the 70,000 cases now in Court could be settled. What would be the result? The Act contained no provision by which the reduction of rent could be made retrospective, and the man who had not got a reduction now must go on paying presumably unjust rents for one, two, three, four, five years, until a decision was arrived at. The landlords had not loyally sought to have effect given to the Act. Cases had been communicated to him in which landlords, when tenants went into the Land Court, resorted to a counter-move by issuing writs from the Superior Courts for the recovery of arrears. By proceeding in the Superior Courts and getting judgment of *fieri facias* those landlords were entitled, for the arrears of what the tenant believed to be unjust rents, to sell the tenant's interest and deprive him of all benefit under the Land Act. And so this career of extermination went on; and, further, the manufacture of future tenants went on from day to day and from month to month. He submitted, as strongly and as earnestly as he could, that this was a matter which ought to be dealt with by the Government, if they desired to remove that friction which now existed as to the relation between landlord and tenant, if they wished to give their Land Act scope and full effect.

There certainly would be some risk of loss to the Treasury; but, on the other hand, it would have a compensating effect. It would be a pacifying agency. In the interest of the tenants, in the interests of landlords, many of whom he admitted had been hard pressed and sorely tried in the crisis through which they were passing, but, above all, in the interest of the peace of the community, he said this was a question that ought to be dealt with. He ventured to refer to a speech made on this very question by the late First Lord of the Admiralty, upon the discussion of the Bill in Committee, in which he did not hesitate to to say and declare that, in his view, in order to give this Land Act fair play there ought to be a "clean sheet." The question should be dealt with as if a national bankruptcy had taken place. As regarded the small tenants, there should be a composition of arrears spread over a number of years, making it a charge on the tenant, the State taking some risk in the matter. That would be a scheme which would receive support on both sides of the House, and a scheme which would be just to the landlord and the tenant. He (Mr. Charles Russell) desired to point out the unreasonableness of the impatience with regard to Ireland which had possessed the English mind, because all at once there was not instantaneous peace and universal pacification on the passing of the Land Act. He wished to convey that that feeling of impatience was unjust and unreasonable, because, however quick the administration under it might be, however just and liberal its interpretation, the effect of the Act must be a matter of slow and gradual progress; and at the present time, in view of the figures he had just laid before the House, it was perfectly obvious that but a very small portion of the people of Ireland had been touched by these provisions, and unless this question of arrears were dealt with, a very large class of them would be, practically, debarred from its provisions altogether. He very much doubted whether the Irish landlords had realized the serious crisis through which they were passing, and the obligations which that crisis had placed upon them. He desired to make no attack. He desired to make no imputation that could be avoided; but he said that the history of Irish landlordism had not been creditable to the Irish landlords. There was probably on the face of the earth no parallel of a small class gathering into their hands, as the Irish landlords had gathered into theirs, the dignities, the power, the fixed property of the country. Their power for good or for evil was enormous; and he feared, speaking of them as a class—but he admitted the existence of many exceptions—he feared it must be said of them, and history would record judgment against them, that they had not used their power well, but misused it. He did say that to a large extent the misuse of their powers—so enormous, so uncontrolled—a misuse which, so long to its shame be it said, had been sanctioned by the Legislature and public opinion, was the condition of Ireland to be attributed to-day. In the face of the existing crisis, what was their attitude?—they still stood by their rights, opposing all reform. They called aloud to the Executive to give the full weight of the Executive power to carry out their civil rights; and, without offence he said it, they did not content themselves by inveighing against those who had sought to reform the law, but proclaimed, as it were, from the housetops their own loyalty. He did not doubt their loyalty; but the safety of the community rested not upon the loyalty of the few, but on the loyalty of the people—a loyalty resting on the assured foundation of the content of the people from a sense of benefits received. It was because he felt that this Act was intended to give the Irish people some stake in the country, some interest bound up with the interests of peace and order, that he was opposed to an interference, however slight, with its beneficent operations. The great bulk of the Irish people had little to lose. To the great bulk of them the law had shown only its stern visage; and it was hardly too much to say that the embodiment of the law to them, and the embodiment of the glories of this great Constitution, were too often but the landlord's agent and bailiff, and the *posse comitatus* of the evicting sheriff. It was because he believed that this Land Act was calculated to do good that he asked the House to join in this Resolution, which was an expression of condemnation of the proposed inquiry at this time by the House of Lords. He looked upon this inquiry as calculated to awaken distrust in the Irish mind, not to strengthen, but to weaken the operation of the Act. He regarded it as inopportune, as premature, as likely to be injurious in its consequences; and he believed it would be looked upon by the bulk of the Irish people as an attempt by the landlord class to minimize the benefits of the Act, and as an attempt to exercise a baneful terrorism upon those who were charged with its administration.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON observed, that the hon. and learned Member who had just spoken said that the safety of a country did not depend on the loyalty only of a few, or of a small class, but upon the loyalty of the whole people. In those words he most cordially agreed with the hon. and learned Member; but the House would have observed that, throughout this debate, those hon. Members who spoke on behalf of Ireland had alluded to only a portion of the population of Ireland; and in the course of this debate he had not heard one word said, so far as his memory served him, of any other class than those of the tenants and the landlords. The tenants and landlords of Ireland, taken together, formed only a moiety of the population of Ireland. If the Government went on in its course of legislation, founded on unsound principles, without making any attempt to cure any of the principles on which that legislation had been administered, they would find that they had to reckon not only with tenant farmers, but with the labourers, both in the towns and in the country. The hon. and learned Member gave an historical *résumé* of what had taken place in Ireland during the autumn; and he said this Committee of the House of Lords dated from the time of the landlords' meeting in Dublin. He (Lord Claud Hamilton) was not at that meeting; but he had seen many gentlemen who were there. He had carefully read, over and over again, the report of the proceedings and of the speeches delivered at that meeting; and he ventured to say that, in the whole of the present century, no meeting of men who had been robbed of their private rights for the supposed benefit of the community at large had been conducted with so much moderation, and in a spirit of so much fairness. With the exception of one speech, the whole tone of those speeches was one of the greatest moderation possible for men suffering under great wrong. The hon. and learned Member criticized some observations which had fallen during the past two years from his right hon. Friend the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther). He was bound to say that on some occasions his right hon. Friend had spoken in a very outspoken manner; but from the introduction by the Prime Minister of his Land Bill in 1870, his right hon. Friend had been entirely consistent in his views regarding that measure and all kindred legislation connected with Ireland, and though some Members might occasionally doubt the wisdom of such outspoken observations in large assemblies, he gave his right hon. Friend credit for consistency in the expression of his views. The hon. and learned Member, he thought, was inaccurate in stating that the inquiry into this Act dated from the time of the landlords' meeting. What really took place? It would be in the recollection of the House that, at the close of the debate on the Land Bill last Session, the Conservatives in that and the other House strongly pressed the Government to announce the names of the gentlemen whom they intended to appoint as Chief Commissioners to administer that Bill. They all felt that it was essential to the interests of all classes in Ireland that the Act should be administered with perfect fairness and integrity; and it was, therefore, necessary, before finally agreeing to the passing of the Act, that they should know who the three gentlemen to whom that office was to be intrusted were. It was believed, on the whole, that the names of those three gentlemen were entitled to the confidence of the landlords, the tenantry, and all classes in Ireland. But what occurred after their appointment? The Land Act had been in operation for two months without almost any participation in the proceedings by the Head Commissioners. They had instead Sub-Commissioners, giving decisions all over the country according to their own ideas, and not based upon reasons or principles, laid down by the gentlemen whose appointment had been sanctioned by Parliament. Those who contested the Act in the beginning then felt that they had been deceived; and it was not with regard to the Head Commissioners, but with regard to the action of their subordinates, that the House of Lords projected this inquiry. The whole object of the Committee of the House of Lords was to ascertain the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, as to the general principles on which the Land Act was administered in Ireland. He quite admitted that the House of Lords adopted a very unusual course; but it should be remembered that the legislation they proposed to inquire into was unparalleled in history. The First Lord of the Treasury and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, who were the prime movers in this legislation, had not such a knowledge of the Irish people as would justify their recommmending the adoption of such a measure as the Land Act to the House of Commons. The two right hon. Gentlemen between them had lived some 140 years, and both resided within a few hours' distance of Ireland, yet they had not spent six months in the country which they now were turning upside-down by their legislation. He could not believe in the sincerity of legislators when they failed to make themselves acquainted with the character of the people for whom they made laws. The Irish legislation of the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government had been condemned by many eminent statesmen, and notably by Lord Grey—a wise and experienced statesman, who had warned the right hon. Gentleman prior to his accession to Office of the result of his policy. But what did the right hon. Gentleman say? He said these were the apprehensions of an old woman.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Where did I say that?

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON: Mid Lothian.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Never.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON: The words were "merely apprehensions of an old woman."

Mr. GLADSTONE: Never.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON said, he would bring the speech down, and show it to the right hon. Gentleman to-morrow evening. Of course, as the right hon. Gentleman had denied, he could not proceed with it then. The right hon. Gentleman had referred at Knowsley to the refusal of the Corporation of Dublin to confer the freedom of the city on Mr. Parnell and Mr. Dillon; and he had no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman at that moment entirely believed what he said. [Mr. Gladstone: And I do so still.] The Dublin Corporation was not a "focus," and never had been a "focus," of real public opinion in Ireland very luckily. There was, shortly afterwards, a fresh municipal election in Dublin; and this focus of national public opinion, with two months' experience of the working of the Land Act, at its very first meeting after the election, passed, by a considerable majority, a vote giving "the freedom of the city" to Mr. Parnell and to Mr. Dillon, and so, he thought, had once more convinced the right hon. Gentleman that his knowledge of the Irish people was extremely superficial indeed. Hon. Members for Ireland sitting below the Gangway on that side of the House represented the opinions of the South and South-West of Ireland, and the Government was every day playing into the hands of those hon. Gentlemen. Every single pound that was unjustly reduced from the rent of a landlord was so much in the hands of those hon. Gentlemen. They were playing their game in an able and judicious manner, and that he confessed, although he absolutely dissented from their views in almost every particular. What was the effect of the Land Act? It had produced a fearful amount of litigation; every man's hand was at his neighbour's throat, and tenants who had hitherto lived in amity with their landlords were now forcing them to incur law expenses through the instrumentality of the local solicitor. Rents would be reduced throughout Ireland, and landlords would, consequently, be compelled to leave the country, after discharging those who were now employed upon their estates. He believed, also, that the country would suffer from a widespread demoralization, and that tenants would soon cease to be particular about the truth of their statements when striving to obtain a reduction of rent. Already the Chairman of Quarter Sessions in Monaghan had stated in Court that the value put upon their holdings by some tenants desirous of having their rents judicially fixed was so high as to shock and horrify him. The hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) had recently made some personal allusions to him in the House, with reference to the management of an estate belonging to his noble Relative (the Duke of Abercorn). He had since ascertained that the hon. Member had made those allusions in no offensive spirit; and, although the hon.

Member was somewhat severe in his exterior, he was sure he possessed a kindly heart, and he had made those allusions on the spur of the moment, without thinking of the pain they were liable to inflict. At the commencement of this Parliament a Question was put upon the Paper in that House reflecting upon the conduct of his noble Relative; and, although the Question was entered on the Minutes, it was never put, because there was no truth in it. The tenants on the Donegal estate of his noble Relative were so much annoyed and disgusted at the imputation contained in that Question that they met together and passed a resolution eulogizing his noble Relative as a landlord. On this very property, since the passing of the Act, some 50 or 60 of these very tenants had gone into the Court to claim a reduction of rent from the landlord whom, but a short time ago, they had described, in a spontaneous resolution, as a just, superior, and model landlord. He did not blame these tenants, for they would hardly be human if, after seeing such a measure of confiscation passed by Parliament, they should abstain from having recourse to the Court, utterly regardless of whether their landlord was good, bad, or indifferent. The power of landlords was a power for good. He regretted that this power, as far as concerned Irish landlords, would soon cease to exist. Landlords at present were often represented by agents, to whom they intrusted large powers, and who took a prominent part on their employers' properties, and in promoting in the neighbourhood charitable and philanthropic movements. Soon, however, landlords would dispense with agents and conduct their business with their tenants in a strictly rigid and legal manner through the medium of attorneys. Would that conduce to a kindly feeling between the landlords of Ireland and their tenantry? Yet such must be the inevitable result of the interference of the Court between the parties. When tenants should have had their rents judicially fixed, how, when bad seasons recurred, would landlords be likely to entertain their petitions for a reduction? The landlord would feel disposed to say—"I will have my pound of flesh; I will stand upon my rights, or such of them as the Prime Minister has left me." There would be thousands of cases where the charitable feelings of the landlords would be tied up, owing to the measure of the right hon. Gentleman. The great charities of Ireland would feel the change also. It was not to be supposed that the tenant farmers would bestow any of their remitted rent in supporting them, and they would languish in consequence. Did the Prime Minister imagine that his measure would endear their homes to Irish landlords? They had heard a good deal from the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster with regard to absenteeism. Did the right hon. Gentleman believe that the landlords would live in a country where all the enjoyments of life had been taken from them, while they had only to cross the Channel, leaving their rents to be collected by an attorney? Landlords had been treated as almost a proscribed race, and, except on the large properties, they would leave the country; and when the "garrison," as they had been termed, had been driven out, the Government would find Ireland not quite so secure an appanage of the Crown as it was now. When that came about, how would they dispose of the general business of the country? Even hon. Members below the Gangway would admit that country gentlemen discharged their county business with efficiency. Many of them were Chairmen of the Boards of Guardians in their districts; and to that fact, and to the presence of other landed proprietors and their agents, the Prime Minister was indebted for not having votes of thanks and sympathy passed to Mr. Parnell and Mr. Dillon, and other gentlemen, at a very large number of Board meetings in Ireland. Every one of those would now be turned into a little political debating society, for the purpose of discussing the separation of the two countries. The fact was, the Act conferred no benefit of any kind upon any person except the present occupier. He would read a passage from a judgment of Mr. Litton, given in Belfast, on January 18, 1882, in which he laid down the principle that a fair rent must be one on which a solvent tenant could thrive, and must be irrespective of any special value the land might have for any particular purpose to any particular tenant. Such value was to be regarded as the tenant's property solely. But the House would remember this. If any landlord chose to break up an estate into farms and let it, or to let farms hitherto held under his own management, he might exact a full commercial rent for it. There would be growing up side by side two different kinds of rent; and he appealed to the House to say whether such a state of things would not create dissatisfaction. And hon. Members must not suppose that the fixing of a judicial rent would really benefit the tenantry of Ireland permanently. In proportion as the rent was reduced the tenant right would rise in value, and an incoming tenant would have to purchase it at a greatly enhanced price. Where would he get the money from? From the gombeen man; and the interest he would pay him, plus the reduced rent, would about equal the amount of rent he would have paid under the present system, with this difference—that a large portion of it would go to the hated gombeen man, who would flourish under the auspices of the right hon. Gentleman. He would like also to ask the Government how many votes they expected to secure when they had managed to get rid of the landed proprietors? Why, over the whole of Munster and Connaught he did not believe there would be a single Member returned to the next Parliament who was not in favour of Home Rule, under which there was really a strong feeling for Repeal of the Union. Leinster would be in very much the same position. As regards Ulster, the right hon. Gentleman would possibly have a certain number of supporters ready to follow meekly in whatever course he chose to lead them, always remembering he had many pleasant gifts at his disposal with which ultimately to reward them. Politics, indeed, as understood in England and Scotland, had ceased to exist in Ireland. At the Londonderry Election the Solicitor General for Ireland occupied the position of a man who had led astray a young woman, and then, to ease his conscience, proceeded to give her good advice. The hon. and learned Gentleman descended to court the votes of the people by appeals to their pockets, by flooding the districts with placards of rents reduced, and holding out hopes of still further reduction if they would vote for his return, and then in this House he proceeded to condemn in the strongest terms those who appealed to "the avarice and greed" of the Irish people. The difference between these principles and those of the Land League was only one of degree. Could the House suppose that the influence of those principles would decrease in Ireland? Why, they were becoming more popular every day, and at the next General Election Ulster would join the South of Ireland in demanding an extension of the Land Act in favour of the tenants, and the Prime Minister would find it all but impossible not to accede to the demand. At first, no doubt, Parliament would reply that all had been done that could be done safely; but they would have some 80 Members speaking on behalf of the people of Ireland, asking for Home Rule, and then Parliament would have to decide whether it would give these hon. Members Home Rule, or have that House, in spite of any *clôture* they might venture to pass, turned into a perfect Bedlam, and all useful legislation rendered impossible. The result would be that, if the present Prime Minister was in power, he would go to the mob and would say—"You shall have your demand;" and he would be the one who would first grant Home Rule to Ireland. What did Home Rule in Ireland mean? Home Rule in Ireland, as was said by the recent convert to Liberalism (Lord Derby), meant separation in a very short time. ["No, no!"] Did they mean to tell him that they could give these Irish Gentlemen a Parliament in Dublin to manage their domestic affairs, without in a very few years their throwing off their connection with England altogether? ["No, no!" *and cheers.*]

Mr. SPEAKER said, he must invite the noble Lord to speak to the Question before the House. He was going very far indeed from the Question before the House.

Lord CLAUD HAMILTON said, he was endeavouring to show that if the right hon. Gentleman allowed the Sub-Commissioners to continue in the course they were pursuing, they would inevitably drift Ireland into a state in which a demand for Home Rule would be made. He was perfectly convinced, speaking as one who had lived the better part of his time in Ireland, that, unless the Prime Minister paused in his career of so-called remedial legislation, the time was not far distant when a serious attempt would be made in that House for the Repeal of the Union which they held so dear, and so necessary for the interests of this country. He believed that the future of Ireland, as far as its relations with England and Scotland were concerned, was most melancholy, and that for that state of things the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster were mainly responsible. His only hope was that these two right hon. Gentlemen might be spared long enough to drink to the dregs the cup of remorse for the misery and degradation that their misplaced policy had inflicted on Ireland, and for the fatal blow that had been dealt by them at the United Kingdom.

Mr. J. N. RICHARDSON said, he thought the House must congratulate the noble Lord (Lord Claud Hamilton) on one of the most outspoken, courageous, high-and-dry Tory speeches to which it had listened for a very long time. He could not profess to agree with much that had fallen from the noble Lord; but he should not follow him through many of the points of his speech, but would only allude to his statements respecting the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, and the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland. The noble Lord expressed his surprise at the ignorance of Irish affairs on the part of the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, after a united lifetime of 140 years. Well, he (Mr. Richardson) thought that, notwithstanding all their faults, if there were a General Election, a seat could be found for both of them somewhere in Ireland. But the noble Lord, though he told them that he had passed most of his life in Ireland, and knew all about it, sat not for an Irish, but an English constituency. Again, the noble Lord said that his (Mr. Richardson's) hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General for Ireland had appealed, during the Derry Election, to the greed and avarice of the electors, or words to this effect; but even supposing that during a heated contest his hon. and learned Friend had at times used language which was not discreet—a thing which he was by no means prepared to admit—even if he had done so, was he any worse than Sir Samuel Wilson, who praised the Land Act of 1881, said it was not good enough for the tenants, and he would vote to enlarge its scope; and then, had he been elected, would have sat down among hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who said it was confiscation and robbery? He (Mr. Richardson) would have preferred being silent during the debate, and might have remained so had it not been for the remarks of the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) the other night. The hon. Member rarely allowed a chance to pass of flinging a taunt across the floor of the House at the Ulster Members, and on this occasion he selected the one who least deserved it for his attack. The hon. Member said that the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson) had advanced greatly in his views since the late election for Tyrone. Now, if there was one man whose views on the Land Question were always advanced, it was the hon. Member for Tyrone. The contest in Tyrone convinced him (Mr. Richardson) that the welfare of the tenant farmers was not the principal motive which hon. Members opposite had at heart. No doubt, they had that interest at heart; but there was something more than that at which they were aiming, whatever that something might be. Artemus Ward said of the wives of the Mormons that they were very singular and also very plural, and so with the speeches of Irish Members opposite during the Tyrone Election. They were very plural in number, and they were very singular, inasmuch as they absolutely tried to convince the farmers that it was their interest to oppose the present hon. Member for Tyrone, one who had advocated their cause for 10 years unceasingly, and to put in his place a Gentleman (Colonel Knox), who, however personally estimable, certainly never showed himself very vigorous on behalf of Land Reform. But he (Mr. Richardson) must pass to matters more germane to the actual subject before the House, else he might be called to Order. The whole course of the debate rendered it evident to him that Her Majesty's Government had acted wisely in bringing forward the present Resolution. Various criticisms had been delivered upon the Act, with many of which he agreed; but none of them were very fierce, except that of the noble Lord. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had, in a manner with which no fault could be found, brought the subject of arrears before the House, and he agreed with many of his remarks. He also most cordially agreed with what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) regarding the fuller development of the Bright Clauses, and the formation of a peasantry proprietary by the rapid purchase of estates of landlords who were willing to sell. But let him point out to the House that the first essential to this end was to have rents rapidly fixed. What man would buy—whether landlord, tenant, or Land Company—unless he knew the rental he was purchasing; or what bank or insurance office would lend towards the purchase of a property on which rents were unfixed? But very different was the tone of a debate to which he had listened "elsewhere" a fortnight ago. There the tone was not one of mild criticism; but the whole gist of it was directed against the Sub-Commissioners. On that occasion a noble Lord said—"What they wanted the Committee to do was to revolutionize the working of the Land Act." No wonder such a statement, coming from such a source, should strike terror into the minds of the Ulster tenants, and lead them to fear that the Commissioners would be biassed in their decisions. Not 10 minutes ago a telegram had been placed in his hands, which read as follows:—"Decisions bad"—that was, adverse to the tenant. The Commissioners were, apparently, afraid of the landlords. [*Laughter.*] Right hon. Gentlemen opposite did not often do him the honour of laughing at his remarks, and he saw no great cause for laughter, so far as they were concerned. Now, what would the effect of this be? Here were tenants who, if things had been let alone, would, perhaps, have been satisfied; but now they had got it into their heads that the Commissioners were frightened, and they would not be satisfied. There was nothing laughable there. Well, the Earl of Kilmorey, in "another place," said as follows:—

> "The Chairmen of the Sub-Commissioners were generally briefless barristers, while the Sub-Commissioners themselves were taken from all classes, the one qualification they seemed to have being the wish to reduce the rents of the landlords in Ireland."—[3 *Hansard*, cclvi. 939.]

MR. GORST rose to Order, and submitted that the hon. Member was not at liberty to make quotations from recent speeches.

MR. SPEAKER said, that the hon. Member was clearly out of Order.

MR. J. N. RICHARDSON begged pardon; but he (Mr. Richardson) could hardly think that the noble Lord was serious in making that charge, especially as in the one case tried upon his estate the rent had been increased. He (Mr. Richardson), who well knew what it was to feel nervous when addressing such an Assembly as the present, could well understand that in the heat of debate an expression might fall from even noble Lords "elsewhere," which, in calmer moments, they would not have used. He could only speak for those Sub-Commissioners with whom he was personally acquainted; but he could assure the House that among those there was no jubilant desire to reduce the rents of landlords. When the Sub-Commissioners, having put the best construction in their power on the Land Act, and having viewed the ground, found themselves compelled to reduce a rent, he was certain they did not do it with any such feeling as had been described, but with a feeling of nervous and anxious responsibility. If hon. Gentlemen and people out-of-doors would go and see some of the farms for themselves, they would not cry out so loudly about injustice. He had not been much in the actual Land Court; but he had made it his business, during the Recess, to visit a good many farms which had been adjudicated upon. He would be sorry to pose before that House as one who professed any great knowledge of land, for that would be untrue; but he had been accompanied by one who did possess such knowledge. He had been always accompanied by the land steward of a near relative—a Mr. Davies. He was an Englishman, who had been 20 years in Ireland, and had been all his life in the employment of a landlord; and when he (Mr. Richardson) and his friend had visited farms in Down and Armagh, and inspected them for themselves, he was bound in honesty to say that, in most cases, the decisions were not, certainly, unjust towards the landlord. He could give plenty of figures, but the House did not like statistics; but he would mention one as a sample of others. It was the case of Atkinson, landlord, Cullen, tenant, and would be found in the Return for County Armagh, laid upon the Table. The old rent was £25 18*s.*; the new judicial rent was £14. Now, that was an enormous reduction; and, before going on the farm, he would be inclined to say—"Surely the Commissioners have made too sweeping a reduction here." But when he went upon the ground and saw the place, he was compelled to admit that the rent was not too low. He saw in his place the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), who, though they seldom agreed with him on their side of the House, was, nevertheless, a true and just English Gentleman. He would venture to say that if the hon. Gentleman, with his knowledge of agriculture, were to visit that farm of Cullen's, he would admit that the rent was not too low; and he would even allow him to bring with him, as his legal adviser, the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton). It seemed to be taken for granted, because 25 per cent reduction had been made up to the present time, that, therefore, this must continue in every case. Again, they could only speak for Ulster; but there very few of the estates of the old Nobility—whose boast it was that their estates were low-rented and humanely managed—very few of these estates, such as the Marquess of Downshire's or the Marquess of Londonderry's, had yet been before the Commissioners. He was aware that there were large estates besides those owned by men of title; but it was natural to suppose that they owned the largest estates. He had counted up the cases, and out of 530 cases tried in Ulster up to the 28th January, only 33 were owned by the Nobility. He had detained the House too long, and would merely conclude by hoping that the Government would press forward with their Motion, and that it would be carried by a large majority. The tenants of Ulster were watching the present debate with the greatest anxiety; and he could emphasize the solemn declaration which the Prime Minister had made respecting the tenantry of Ulster. The Ulster farmers, loyal as they had been in the past, and loyal as he trusted they would be in the future, had had their loyalty often sorely tried by the state of the Land Laws; and they looked to that House to insure to them the benefits of the Act of 1881.

Mr. REDMOND said, he felt it necessary to offer a brief contribution to the debate in consequence of the manner in which the action of the Irish Party and the vote they intended to give had been mis-stated in various parts of the House. They had been charged with a desire to hand over to the tender mercies of a Committee of the House of Lords the interests of the tenant farmers of Ireland. He believed no Member of the House could believe such an accusation, when it was levelled against the Party to whose exertions the Government were indebted for the passing of the Land Act. They had no desire to hand over to a Committee of the House of Lords the interests of the tenant farmers of Ireland. The attitude they took up was easily explained. The Resolution of the Prime Minister laid down the proposition that any Parliamentary inquiry into the working of the Land Act at present would be detrimental to the interest of the country, and that was a proposition against which they must protest. If they were to vote in favour of the Previous Question, it might be supposed that they were indirectly supporting the Lords' Committee, and that was an attitude they did not wish to take up. Therefore, they would take no part in the division on the Previous Question; but when the Main Question was put they would feel it to be their duty to protest by their votes against the statement that no inquiry was needed. He would sooner have an inquiry by a packed and hostile Committee than have no inquiry at all. No matter how hostile the tribunal would be, it would be possible for those who were interested on behalf of the tenants to bring forward evidence which would show incontestably what a miserable failure the Land Act had been as regarded some of its professed objects. He did not say that the Act had done no good and could do none. He quite admitted that there were in it germs capable of development into great good for the tenants; but still he and his Colleagues contended that, as matters stood at present, the great majority of tenants were shut out from the benefits of the Act, evictions were on the increase, and many hardships had not been mitigated, even in an appreciable degree. Some of the most rack-rented tenants were leaseholders, with leases made before 1870, and these were deprived of all benefit. The great majority of tenant farmers in Wexford were such leaseholders; and nine-tenths of the leases were excluded from the operation of the Act, because they were forced on the tenant at the expiration of old leases, and not on tenants from year to year. The very fact of the Act leaving untouched so numerous a body of the Irish tenants brought about the state of things which was predicted by the Prime Minister when he said that if the proposal to exclude all leaseholders was carried every one of these men would become a centre of agitation in Ireland. These were some of the grounds upon which they thought an inquiry should be held into the Act. Another ground for inquiry was the increase of harsh evictions for arrears of rent. At one time the Government spoke of avoiding sentences of starvation, and deprecated their being placed in the odious position of using the power of the Executive to do injustice; but now landlords were called upon to be brave in asserting their rights, and in driving out the poor, half-starved tenants. Words like these were driving to despair the 100,000 tenants who were hopelessly involved in arrears of rent. If they went into Court and asked leave to sell their holdings, the landlord pocketed the full amount of his rent. The tenant farmer was turned out penniless, and thus the process of eviction was made easy and respectable by the Land Act. The Arrears Clause of the Land Act required immediate inquiry and amendment. Its main defects were that, in the first place, it was optional, and the landlords did not take advantage of it; and, in the next place, it provided that a year's rent must be paid by the unfortunate tenants, who, in many cases, were unable to pay a single farthing. Last year, when the Land Act was under discussion in the House, he had proposed that the arrears should be adjusted on the basis of the fair rent which was to be decided for the future; that when the arrears had been thus reduced wherever it could be proved that the tenant was unable to pay them they should be absolutely wiped out; and he had admitted that the landlords would have some claim to compensation for the loss of that part of the arrears which was just. His proposal had been received with disfavour; and it had been asked whether the money for giving such compensation would not have to come out of the pockets of the taxpayers. But would it not be better for the taxpayers to have their money spent in that way than on the maintenance of an Army for carrying out harsh and unjust evictions? Another reason for inquiry into the Land Act was that its provisions were not being carried out in a proper spirit by its administrators. The clause known as Healy's Clause was a thorough provision; but it had not been carried out in a thorough spirit. He had gone through the election for the county of Derry, and he found that, in many cases, extreme dissatisfaction was felt because the Commissioners were not interpreting Healy's clause honestly and fairly. In the North of Ireland rents had been reduced by the Land Court to somewhere about Griffith's valuation; but Griffith's valuation was completed some 17 years ago, and it included the improvements made by the tenants up to that date. Therefore, the property of the tenants in their improvements up to 16 or 17 years ago was entirely confiscated. The noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton) had alluded to the management of the estate of his noble Relative, and had cited, as a conclusive proof that the management of that estate was satisfactory, the fact that in June, 1880, an address was presented to his noble Relative by his tenants characterizing him as a model landlord. There was hardly a landlord, he might inform the House, in the whole of Ireland, no matter how oppressive he was to his tenants, no matter how rack-rented they might have been, who could not produce from his pocket some resolution of this kind passed at some time or another by his tenants. He understood that on the St. Johnston estate of the noble Lord's noble Relative, the agent of the estate made a visit to each tenant, and requested that each of them would spend a few shillings apiece in purchasing a portrait of the noble Lord's noble Relative, which they accordingly did. Again, with regard to the St. Johnston estate, about the same time there was a relief committee established on the estate of the noble Lord's noble Relative—a proof conclusive of the poverty of the tenants. Moreover, shortly before the address was presented a number of notices to quit were served on the tenants, and the address was signed by some people who thought it was simply a prayer to the landlord not to exercise his power harshly towards those tenants. Fifty per cent of those tenants were in the Land Court, and every man on the estate was more than 20 or 30 per cent over Griffith's valuation. He thought it was unfair for hon. Members to stand up in that House, and quote such addresses as serious arguments. They were told that 70,000 tenants had entered the Land Courts. But did the Government suppose that the 500,000 who did not enter the Courts were satisfied with their rents, and that they had transferred their allegiance from the men who had done so much for them in the past, and were suffering for them in the present, to the right hon. Gentleman? The daily increasing number of evictions, the daily despatch of troops to Ireland, the almost hourly arrest of respectable farmers, formed a crushing refutation of any such proposition as that. So long as the great bulk of the tenant farmers of Ireland were shut out from the benefits of the Act, so long as Healy's Clause was dishonestly interpreted by the Commissioners, so long as the Government imprisoned the leaders of the people, and suppressed the organization of the tenants, so long would confidence in the Land Act be an impossibility in Ireland. The Land League had survived the worst blows the Government could strike against it. The Leaders of the Land League, in their prison cells, were to-day more powerful than before they were arrested. Of one thing the Government might rest assured—until they had restored the Constitution of Ireland, neither their Land Act on the one side, nor their Coercion Act on the other, would be able to cajole or terrify the people of Ireland from the attitude of determination and defiance into which they had been driven.

Mr. TOTTENHAM said, that, before he passed to the immediate question before the House, he wished to refer to the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell), who spoke earlier in the evening. He must say that statements more rash and unsupported by facts and sentiments, more ungenerous to landlords, he had never listened to, either in or out of Parliament. He did not propose to inquire how the legal knowledge and the training of the hon. and learned Member justified the principle that, because it was asserted that a wrong had been committed, it was better to continue the perpetration of many other wrongs in support of it rather than to inquire into, and, if necessary, to redress the one that was complained of. Looking at the mode in which the hon. and learned Member had himself conducted certain investigations in the South of Ireland previous to the commencement of last Session, he was not surprised that the hon. and learned Member should have endorsed the action of those whose procedure was so nearly allied to his own, although it was certainly not in accordance with his (Mr. Tottenham's) ideas of judicial investigation; whether by a public official or a private individual. The investigation to which he alluded had been conducted in a spirit the very reverse of impartial or judicial. The hon. Gentleman had made the extraordinary statement that no landlord or agent, whose judicial rents were being fixed, had been able to come forward and say that the existing rents were fair. A more astounding statement, or one more utterly unwarranted by the facts, was never made. The hon. Gentleman went on to say—and this he looked upon as one of the most ungenerous and indefensible statements that could be made—that the landlords of Ireland borrowed money under the Relief of Distress Acts at 1 per cent; while they charged their tenants 5 per cent. [Mr. Charles Russell: I said some.] Whether some or many, such a statement ought not to have been made unless the person who made it was prepared to give names, dates, and particulars. Then the hon. and learned Member said that the tenants in Ireland, just as in England, had been dragged down by bad seasons; and that one good harvest among four was not sufficient to repair their losses. That might be the case; but it was a well-known fact that, whereas England had a succession of bad harvests for several years, Ireland had been blessed by two of the most bountiful harvests within the memory of this generation. The hon. and learned Member said, not only that arrears should not be paid, but that they should not be asked for. He did not understand the hon. and learned Member, when he made that observation, to suggest that the arrears ought to be paid by the Government out of the State funds. He would like to know what the hon. and learned Member proposed the landlords to do in default of receiving their arrears? How did the hon. and learned Member expect landlords, who had charges and liabilities to meet, to do so if they did not get that upon which they depended for their livelihood? The hon. and learned Member had said that the landlords had met the originating notices by service of writs in the Dublin Courts. Did the hon. and learned Gentleman mean that landlords were not entitled to assert their just rights? He had also said that the landlords had misused their powers. But did he forget that the Leader of the Party to which he belonged had said that the landlords had stood their trial, and had, as a body, been acquitted; and was he going to take his stand on a different platform from his Leader? It would appear that the debate was to be conducted to the end on the footing that the bare assertion of the Prime Minister that his Resolution was expedient and equitable was sufficient for those who thought that the ruin of a few thousand families, more or less, was a trifle compared with the gratification of his wishes; and, further, although "force was no remedy" for lawlessness, the application of the principle of force in silence by a majority to arguments which they could not answer was considered a justifiable and dignified course. If any justification or apology were required for the action which had been taken in "another place" and for the present opposition to the Resolution, it was to be found in the spirit in which Her Majesty's Government had met what had been shown to be a grievance of the first magnitude, requiring immediate and impartial inquiry. The spirit of the Government had been that of burking all inquiry, and permitting the daily increasing growth of an evil and an injustice which it was wished to keep hidden from the light of day. He ventured to say, however, that the course they had adopted would neither commend itself to the wisdom of Parliament nor to the country which had permitted such blindfold legislation, and they now proposed to keep the administration of it from the healthy ventilation of public opinion. The Prime Minister had given reasons why the legislation of last Session should not now be called in question; but, in all the arguments of the right hon. Gentleman, he failed to find any sufficient reason why Parliament should continue to permit the perpetuation and daily extension of the continued injustice and wrong which was admitted on all sides to exist, except where such admission would be inconvenient to the credit of those responsible for it. So far from impeding inquiry, the extraordinary course adopted by the Government had afforded facilities for opening up the whole question; for while inquiry was proceeding calmly in "another place," in the House of Commons, by the favour of Her Majesty's Government, hon. Members had been placed in a position to discuss their case at much greater and more convenient length than they could, under ordinary circumstances, have hoped for. The right hon. Gentleman's Resolution stated that inquiry into the working of the Act tended to defeat its operation. As loyal subjects they were prepared to submit to the Act as it was intended by Parliament; but what they sought to prevent was its continuation in its present unexpected and totally unauthorized system of administration. He presumed that the latter part of the Resolution meant that a sufficient number of landlords had not yet been immolated on the altar of sedition, and that it would be injudicious, from the Government's point of view, to stop the supply at present. There was no other way of reading between the lines of this further edition of attempted *clôture*, and it was one which he believed would be very generally adopted. Before he sat down, he hoped to be able to convince some of those who supported the measure last year that their confidence in the statements of its supporters had been grievously misplaced. The Act was presented to Parliament under a flourish of sentiments and principles which had only been conspicuous by their absence in its administration. The main principles put forward by the Prime Minister were that justice was to be the guide; that the Court was not to be a one-sided one; that the administration would be confided to capable and experienced hands; and that no confiscation or injury to owners was intended or anticipated. He maintained that every one of those principles had been violated, and he should be able to show that justice had not been so blind as she was usually depicted; that the Court had been essentially a one-sided one; that the administration had been confided to hands incompetent to exercise judicial functions; and that confiscation in the most arbitrary and universal form was the rule of procedure by these so-called judicial bodies. In the case which he had to set before the House, he desired especially to guard himself against the imputation or assumption that either he himself, or the landlords of Ireland generally, desired to assert that there were no cases in which the action of the Land Courts had been justified; on the contrary, they were fully alive to the fact that there were some cases—admitted by the Government last year to be a minority, in which what was known as rack-renting had been carried to an inexcusable and indefensible limit, and that these cases might have justly received some restrictive supervision. He had never denied that such cases existed, and he had no sympathy for the man who had exacted a rent which the land was not calculated to bear. But what he did find fault with was the indiscriminate manner in which the cry of reduction had been carried out, good and bad landlords having fared alike, and the "rule of thumb principle" having been equally applied to the rack-renter as to him who, in the words of the Prime Minister, Parliament had not a shred of title to interfere with. This was the man who was the greatest sufferer under the present administration of the Act. Having always let his land at moderate rents, he had not received the same return as his neighbours who had let at a higher rate; but he now found himself cut down in the same proportion. In addition to this, he found that his relations with his tenants had suddenly undergone a great change, and that where mutual confidence and goodwill existed before the decisions given in the flying visits of the Sub-Commissioners had raised up distrust and ill-feeling, together with a prospect of litigation and costs, which to many was, in itself, an element of grave fears and anxious consideration. He now came to the action of the Commissioners appointed by Parliament and named in the Act. Their first proceeding was to appoint as their Solicitor Mr. Fottrell, a gentleman who was notoriously connected with the Land League, and who had since culminated his exploits by the authorship of the disgraceful pamphlet which had already astounded Parliament. This was a bad start, and boded little good to those whose interests were to be reviewed by officials of such a stamp as this. Their next step was to issue a Circular, which was distributed all over Ireland, setting forth the advantages which had been given to tenants by the Act, and which was, in plain English, a most direct and pressing invitation to them to come in and avail themselves of what they would do for them. It was headed "Benefits conferred on Irish Tenant Farmers by the Land Act." He would trouble the House with one or two extracts from this remarkable document, as it bore directly upon the proposition, whether or not the Court was a one-sided one—

"Benefits conferred on Irish Tenant Farmers by the Land Act (Ireland), 1881.

"The New Land Law effects a great and most beneficial change in the position of Irish tenant farmers. The benefits it confers may be briefly stated as follow:—Security of tenure—Whenever a fair rent is fixed either by the Court or Commission, or by agreement, or by arbitration, the rent cannot be raised or altered for 15 years, nor can the tenant be disturbed during that period. In the last year of the 15 years the tenant can again get the rent settled, and a new term of 15 years granted, and so on. It is not, therefore, merely a term of 15 years which the tenant gets; but practically a term renewable every 15 years."

Further on, at different points, other similar passages occur—

"If he violates any of the other conditions, the landlord may serve notice to quit; but the Court has power to stop any proceedings on such notice to quit, allowing the landlord damages merely for any injury done him.

"Unfair Leases.

"Where leases have been taken by tenants since the passing of the Landlord and Tenant Act, 1870, containing unreasonable or unfair provisions, and such leases were accepted by the tenant under threat of eviction, or through the undue influence of the landlord, the tenant is entitled, at any time before the 22nd of February, 1882, to apply to the Court to be relieved from the lease, and to hold as present tenant, with all the rights and privileges of such tenant.

"The above are some of the great advantages conferred on Irish tenant farmers by the Land Act (Ireland), 1881, which provides for all security in their holdings, the fixing of fair rents, and the right of free sale; and affords the opportunity to occupiers to become the owners in fee of their holdings.

"It is not intended by the foregoing statement to set forth or include all the provisions of the Act; but only to afford a general view of its more important provisions.

"Any person requiring information can apply by letter to the Secretary, Land Commission, 24, Upper Merrion Street, Dublin."

Now, if any other Court of Law in the United Kingdom had ventured to issue such a tempting programme of the advantages offered to intending suitors, and what they could and were disposed to do for complainants generally of a certain class, he should like to know what would public opinion have thought of the tribunal which could act in such a manner? He would pass on to the opening day of the Court, which a *lapsus lingua* of the Court official declared be a Court of the Land League, and where the still more extraordinary Charge of Mr. Justice O'Hagan was delivered. That Charge set forth the new doctrine of "live and thrive," which the Chief Secretary for Ireland had endeavoured to show was an old and well-established maxim, and expressed surprise that anyone could object to such a just and sensible proposition. Put into plainer terms, it simply meant this—and had been so interpreted by thousands of those who had heard or read the words of the learned Judge—that the tenant was first to live, and live well, upon the farm, whether it was capable of supporting him well or not, and if he happened to have anything to spare, to let the landlord have it. That was the principle, not only on which it had been interpreted by the public, but also by some of the Sub-Commissioners. Here was an instance. In giving judgment at Castleblaney, Mr. Commissioner Kane said—

"That the rents were not excessive or exorbitant, nor could the landlord be charged with harsh treatment."

He went on to say—

"That, even if they paid no rent all, the tenants could not support themselves on their holdings."

Mr. Kane said, in effect—"The holdings have a value; they are rented already below that value; but as the tenants could not make a living out of them, even were there no rent at all, I will reduce the already insufficient payment to the landlord. At the same time, to show my splendid impartiality, I will add half-a-crown to the rent of one of the smallest of these wretched farms." If that was not a ludicrous emanation from a judicial mind, he should be glad to hear what possible argument could be put forward in its defence. They started by saying the rent was not exorbitant or unfair; but, nevertheless, though the rent was a fair one, the tenant could not thrive upon it, and they forthwith proceeded to mulct and punish the landlord, and they positively gave costs against him for what? For having, in their own words, only charged the tenants a fair rent. He had only introduced this instance to drive home a case in point of the "live and thrive" doctrine, as he should have more to say in regard to the Sub-Commissioners by-and-bye. Mr. Justice O'Hagan had endeavoured to show that "live and let live," and "live and thrive," were synonymous terms; but the words could hardly convey any other meaning to the hearer than that the tenant, and he alone, was to "live and thrive," and they bore no analogy whatever to the maxim of "live and let live." But there was another curious incident in connection with it, and that was that in the semi-authorized published report, or record, of the proceedings of these Courts, these words were omitted altogether, clearly showing that Mr. O'Hagan had realized the effect of his dictum, and had directed them to be expunged from the records, so that they might not be brought up in evidence against him. With this theory of "live and thrive" for a starting point, he came to the next step taken by the Court, which was to bring forward in the most marked manner, and with the evident intention of its being taken as the base of operations by the Sub-Commissioners, the Government valuation of Ireland, better known as Griffith's. In every form of the Court, in every notice and every judgment they found this made use of, and a column set apart for its notation. This valuation, which was made 30 years ago, and which they had its author's own words for, was one-third under the fair letting value, a valuation which was based on a schedule of prices of agricultural produce, averaging 61 per cent lower than they were five years ago, and when beef was 35*s.* 6*d.* per cwt., against 70*s.* now, and butter 65*s.* against 120*s.* 4*d.* He mentioned these as the two principal products of the country, which showed the greatest increase in prices. A valuation which had been condemned as unreliable by successive Royal Commissions, and reported on by the Bessborough Commission as

> "Most thoroughly demonstrated that the Government valuation was not a trustworthy standard for the settlement of rents, and that even when it was made it was considered as below the fair letting value of the land."

It was reported on again by the Richmond Commission in the following terms:—

> "And it was conclusively proved that the annual value, as set forth in that document, was not intended to represent, and did not represent, at the date the valuation was made, the rental value of the property."

It was further discarded by the Prime Minister himself as of any value or guide; and in spite of all that evidence against it, it was placed by the Chief Commissioners before their subordinates as a basis for their guidance and decisions. There was too much reason to believe that Her Majesty's Government were well advised as to the probable effect of a general re-valuation on the working of their Act when they declined to have one made, as he said it was their bounden duty, in common honesty, to have done. He had the highest authority for saying that if a general re-valuation were now made the effect would be to raise the value of rateable property in Ireland by a sum of between £3,000,000 and £4,000,000. Such a course as that would, at any rate, be intelligible and straightforward, instead of thrusting down the throats of suitors and the public a State record based upon false and condemned issues. The Sub-Commissioners had stated on several occasions that they were acting on imperative rules. If so, they, of course, must be laid down by their Chiefs, who, on the other hand, said that they had given no instructions, and the Chief Secretary repudiated the idea on the part of the Government. He, however, admitted that each candidate had had a private *séance* with him in his private room, where he put him through his facings, and held a private competitive examination. He asked which version of the probable were they to accept, and what were the inferences to be deduced from these antagonistic statements? If they were sent out without any instructions to create precedents, and lay down rules according to their own sweet will, was it the intention of Parliament that a horde of inexperienced and incompetent subordinates should suddenly be let loose over every Province and county of Ireland to interpret a difficult and complex Act of Parliament in a dozen different ways? Did not Parliament fully expect that a lead should be given and a definite and distinct mode of action laid down, and the first cases heard and decided by those it had specially named to administer the Act, rather than by the crowd of irresponsible agents called into existence by the Government? He held that the intentions of Parliament had been distinctly set aside, and that the faith upon which these pledges were accepted had been most undeniably violated. He now came to the appointment of the Sub-Commissioners, and in dealing with them he wished to be understood as making no charge against the personal character or integrity of any of those persons as individuals in private life; and, for aught he knew to the contrary, they might be most amiable and harmless people in their several walks of life, looking at them from a non-political standpoint. His endeavour would be to show that from their status, experience, personal proclivities, self-interest, and previous employment, many of them were wholly incapable of exercising impartially and fairly the judicial functions with which they were charged. The Prime Minister had laid down the principle that the Court should not in any case be a one-sided Court; and the right hon. Gentleman stated that it had been the object of the Government to avoid what would be justly stigmatized—namely, "partizan appointments." When the House heard the case completed against many of these appointments, it would have, he thought, very little reason to hesitate as to its verdict on both these points. Taking the legal Sub-Commissioners first, he found that there were two Queen's Counsel, eight barristers, and two solicitors. Of the two Queen's Counsel neither of them had any knowledge of land, or the dealings with land. One of them had been a Chancery lawyer, with small practice; and the practice of the other had been principally conveyancing. He did not suppose it would be asserted that either of these employments gave any man, totally unconnected with practical dealings with land, any special qualifications to act as valuator, nor did he think that one or two cases, which he would cite, gave a very high view of one of these gentlemen's idea of impartial justice. In a case heard at Edenderry, judgment was delivered at Maynooth, January 11, in the case of Henry Fitz-George Colley, landlord, aggregate rent of 14 farms, £861 15*s.* 4*d.* Mr. Foley, in giving judgment, said—

> "Mr. Law, on behalf of the landlord, declined to go into evidence; we were consequently left without any evidence as to the value of the land, except what was given on behalf of the tenants. Under these circumstances, inasmuch as there is no conflict of testimony, Mr. Doyle and I are of opinion that the Sub-Commissioners are not obliged to go beyond the evidence adduced before them, and should not alter an independent valuation of the land upon their own judgment for the purpose of determining a fair rent. The judicial rent which we have fixed is accordingly based on the uncontradicted evidence of the tenants' valuators, on which, in our view of the matter, we are bound to act, and it is not to be considered as fixed upon our own opinion of the absolute value of the holdings. We feel called upon to notice the fact that, although the landlord is not resident, he seems to have always taken a great interest in the well-being of his tenantry. Sums, varying from £75 downwards, were given at 5 per cent to several of the tenants for building and other purposes; to others slates, timber, &c. were given. On the bog lands main drains were opened at the landlord's expense, and a school-house built on the property. It further appeared in evidence that, though an income of from £40 to £80 a-year had been received by the landlord for the sale of turf, he voluntarily gave this up lest the bogs should be cut out, and the tenants, who are permitted to have turf free of charge, be left at any future time without that advantage. Having made inquiries as to the dwellings of labourers on the property, we have been informed that the landlord has set aside several houses, with small allotments, to workmen at low rents, and these houses are kept in repair for them free of charge. These observations, we think, are due to Mr. Colley. We fix the judicial rent as follows:—£666 2*s.* 6*d.*"

This, it would be observed, was a reduction of £201 12*s.* 10*d.*, or nearly one-fourth of the rental. This, however, was not unanimous, and—

> "Mr. Commissioner Howlin said he dissented from his Colleagues in these cases, inasmuch as he thought they should have inspected the land, and fixed the judicial rent upon the said inspection. He did not agree in the tenant's estimnte of the fair rent. He abstained, however, from giving his own idea, as he was a minority of the Court; but he wished it to be understood that he had taken no part in determining the judicial rent in these cases."

Upon what principle of law, justice, or equity could such a decision as this be based? He thought any fair-minded man must be open to admit that the acts of this impartial Judge were, at least, deserving of close and searching scrutiny, and that inquiry was imperatively necessary before such gross cases of malversation of justice were permitted further to inflame the minds and the cupidity of an excited peasantry. Of the eight barristers there was not one whose experience, standing, position, or performances at the Bar, would justify his appointment as County Court Judge, where the jurisdiction of the Judge was limited to £100; whereas in this case interests had been ruthlessly cut down and mutilated by these unsworn *quasi*-Judges, amounting, in one single case, to no less than upwards of £4,000. One of Colonel Gascoign's cases in County Limerick was that of a farm of 463 acres of the best land in Ireland, let at a rent of £840, and of which no complaint had been made before. It was held by a man who, it might fairly be supposed, was perfectly well able to make a bargain for himself. The tenant appealed to the new tribunal, and, by a stroke of the pen, he was cut down to £660, which sum, if capitalized at 4 per cent, was equal to a dead money loss to the landlord of £4,500 on that one farm alone; and yet it was said there was no claim for compensation. He would quote a passage from the writings of one of the Commissioners (Mr. M'Devitt), which would show whether his appointment was that of a man with an unbiassed mind—

> "The average yearly profit, and the average yearly cost, of maintaining the tenant and his family to be computed; and after deducting from the amount of profit a liberal provision for the maintenance of the tenant, and such a share of the profit as would be warranted by his interest in his holding, to allot the remainder for rent."

And yet this was the class of impartial and judicial mind to which the interests of the landlords were given over. What would the House think of a solicitor who, in open Court, said that the Court did not care a straw for the evidence of professional or scientific witnesses. This was the statement of Mr. Commissioner MacCarthy; and an astounded and bewildered owner thereupon wrote to the Chief Commissioners to know what he was to do, and whether these opinions were endorsed by them, upon which they were obliged to repudiate, by a letter from their Secretary which appeared in the public Press, the opinions of their own subordinates. The local bands serenaded this Commission at their hotel. Applause in Court, at the decisions, went unchecked; and speeches from the Chief Assistant Commissioner, as to the merits of the Act and the benefits it conferred upon the tenant, were of regular occurrence. This official did not pretend to know anything of the value of land, and he did not go out with his Colleagues when they went through the farce of paying flying visits to the farms in dispute. Coming now to the lay Sub-Commissioners, he thought a more medley crew was never misnamed "judicial or eminent persons." They consisted, among others, of: Tenant farmers — Messrs. Rice, O'Keefe, Garland, Doyle, Lynch, Morrison; Shopkeepers—Messrs. Weir, Ross; Timber merchant—Mr. Cunningham; and a Publican—Mr. Garland. Some of these appointments were such monstrous parodies on the administration of justice that it would be sufficient for his purpose to particularize one or two of them, in order to show the crying necessity for Parliament being fully informed as to the procedure which was being adopted. Mr. Rice was a farmer in the Kanturk Union, County Cork, and several of his relations held farms in the district in which he acted as Commissioner. One brother was a farmer at Conna, County Cork; one brother and one cousin were parish priests; two brothers and one cousin were local attorneys; and one cousin was a prominent speaker at Land League meetings. And to show the favour with which he was now regarded by his Land League friends, he would read an extract from *The Cork Daily Herald* of February 22—

> "A Peculiar Demonstration.
>
> "Fermoy, Monday.
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> "Mr. James Rice, P.L.G., Killally, recently built a fence on the roadside on his Ballincarriga farm, near Kilworth. Soon after it was finished he was summoned at the suit of the County Surveyor, and fined a nominal penalty, on the ground that the road was encroached on. Mr. Rice's numerous friends, considering him badly treated, assembled at the place to-day, and, with several thousands of their workmen, tumbled down the fence and rebuilt one far more substantial in the place indicated by the County Surveyor. It took Mr. Rice's *employés* four weeks to build the first fence; but the second one, half-a-mile long, was completed in an hour."

Yet that man, belonging essentially to the farming class, and naturally having the same sympathies and instincts, was positively sent to adjudicate in a county full of his own relations and friends, and where his own interests also lay, and where he would be almost more than human if he did not lean exclusively to the tenants' side of the question. He should probably be told in reply—in fact, it had already been stated in argument—that one of the strongest recommendations of this gentleman was the fact of his having been a member of the Richmond Commission. That was no argument in his favour, but distinctly the reverse, as he was placed upon that Commission as the representative of the farmers' interest, and as one who would take up and bring out the points on which they might be supposed to feel strongly. And, having been there as a farmer's representative, why should he now be supposed to have changed his skin? But the constitution of this extraordinary Commission did not improve when he came to the other Assistant Commissioner, Mr. O'Keefe, who, notwithstanding the glowing eulogium passed upon him by the Chief Secretary, turned out, in addition to his other qualifications, to be also a farmer in the very district in which he acted, holding a farm himself from Colonel Bernard, within a short distance of his father's farm, which was still held by a member of his family. All his relatives were farmers in the county, and he gave judgment in the case of his father's next door neighbour. If his own landlord's cases went into Court they would be heard by him; and he had adjudicated on a case within four miles of his own farm—namely, Daniel Murphy, tenant, and Captain Morgan, landlord, rent £43, judicial rent £29, or a reduction of 32 per cent. He had been a resident in that district all his life, and the friend and associate of farmers. He (Mr. Tottenham) had stated recently that he should be perfectly prepared to substantiate what he said when he spoke of a chemist's assistant; and he submitted to the House whether a man, who had been assistant to a professor of chemistry, at a salary of £80 a-year, which lucrative office he was obliged to give up in order to obtain the more lucrative one of county and city analyst, at a salary of £100 a-year, was or was not a chemist's assistant? Having half the letters of the alphabet after his name as associate or licentiate of societies of apothecaries or chemists would not alter the fact which he (Mr. Tottenham) had stated; and the House might judge for itself how far all these various diplomas and high-sounding qualifications agreed with a remuneration of £100 a-year and the possession of a small farm in the neighbourhood. He emphatically asserted that it was nothing short of an outrage upon justice, upon public decency, and the intention of Parliament, to send two men, drawn from a class with whom their sympathies and interests might naturally run, into their own native districts and county to play ducks and drakes with the property of a class whose interests in that respect were diametrically opposed. To say that such men were not necessarily partizans of the most advanced type was mere childish reasoning; but he had not done with that Commission yet. He had, as the third member of it, that distinguished conveyancing lawyer, Mr. Reeves, Q.C.; and he really must trouble the House to listen to one of his judgments, which showed how, not only in matters of valuation and fact, but also in matters of law, he allowed his two farmer Colleagues to rule him absolutely, and to influence his better judgment, if he had any. This gentleman had previously told Sir George Colthurst, who owned property in the district, that he left the valuation of rent to his Colleagues. He then proceeded to deliver this remarkable judgment in the case of Hannah Forrest, tenant, and Eliza Morgan, owner, rent of farm £300. Mr. Reeves said—

> "He had not taken part in the fixing of the rent, as he believed this was not a case contemplated by the Act of Parliament. He did not think this was an agricultural holding of the description meant by the Act. It was worked by Mr. Forrest, on behalf of the tenant, in connection with the other lands. In his opinion, it was, to a certain extent, accommodation land, and the parties contracting were the best judges of its value. He saw no reason, however, why he should differ frem the valuation which his brother Commissioners had made; but on the question of law, which was a very important one, he could not concur with them."

The rent was therefore reduced from £300 to £225, the usual standard figure of 25 per cent off. For all practical purposes, both in regard to questions of law and fact, the Act was administered by the two lay Sub-Commissioners; and they had, therefore, this almost incredible composition of the Court in that district—1, legal cipher, who admitted that he knew nothing about value, and would not enforce his opinion, and direct his Colleagues on the legal points before them; 2, interested tenant farmers, who, themselves and relations, held land in the district, and had a direct interest in reducing the rents. It seemed to him that further comment on these facts was superfluous, and that they were in themselves alone the strongest possible argument for negativing the Resolution which they were now discussing. But his case did not end there, and to almost every one of the Sub-Commissioners the same class of objections applied, with greater or less force. They had the case of Mr. Garland, who, up to a short time since, kept a small public-house, called the "White Cross," by the wayside, near Newtown Hamilton, in the county of Armagh, and who, it was believed, was still the actual, though not the nominal, owner. He was also a farmer, holding two farms in the same county, one under Mr. Synnott, of 63 acres, and another from Mr. Cope. He was appointed to the Commission of the Peace in opposition to the Vice Lieutenant of the county; but Lord Chancellor O'Hagan exercised his prerogative, as he had often done before, and appointed him, in spite of the Lieutenant of the county's refusal. Mr. Garland gave up the lucrative office of Coroner of the county, which was worth less than £100 a-year, to become a Commissioner; and when he was canvassing the county for the Coronership, and again in the interest of the present Members, he used the strongest partizan expressions, and made the statement freely that he had always been a tenant righter, denouncing landlordism at the same time. Take another case. Mr. Ross was a small shopkeeper in the town of Monaghan. He afterwards occupied a farm in the same county. He bought a few acres of property in the neighbourhood, on which the rents were promptly reduced—on his becoming a Commissioner—by 20 to 45 per cent. Acreage, 75 Irish, gross rental £108. The cases of two of the tenants would be sufficient to quote. A. Clarke, 45*s.* per acre to 30*s.* per acre; J. Hughes, £12 to £7. He could, if necessary, cite numerous other cases of equally, or more, improper appointments; but it seemed to him that he had already given more than sufficient reasons for full Parliamentary inquiry into this branch of the case, and he believed that other cases would also be cited by other hon. Members in support of that view. He would now examine some of the sayings and acts of that body of eminent persons who were carrying out a judicial and impartial policy, at the expense of the class who have, or rather had, in favour of those who had not, but who now have. One of the first points to be considered was the manner in which the valuations of these farms were made. One instance would suffice. Cleary (tenant), Gascoigne (landlord): 527 acres, best land in Ireland; rent £840, judicial rent £660. This is a fair sample of the mode in which the new system of valuation by electricity is being carried out. The Commissioners in this case having occupied one hour and three-quarters valuing 527 acres—an operation which can be designated by no other name than a *reductio ad absurdum*, but which was of daily occurrence. In the case of John Brady, tenant, which came before the Sub-Commission sitting at Cavan; Mr. Hodder, legal member. The Commissioners delivered the following decision:—

> "In John Brady's case we consider his farm worth its present rent and more, and fix the judicial rent at £19 19*s.* 8*d.* for the next 15 years."

Could anything be more inconsistent than this? If John Brady's farm was worth more than the present rent, why did not the Commissioners do their duty, and state what they considered it to be worth in addition, and fix the rent at its true value? But he now passed on to a more extraordinary case still, that of Mr. Lalor and others, decided upon by the Sub-Commissioners at Urlingford. Mr. Reardon, Chairman, in his judgment, said—

> "As far as we know, or have been informed, the rents have not been altered within the century, and they appear to have been paid with tolerable regularity, except in some rare instances and in bad years. . . . There is the clearest evidence in the soil of the lands themselves that they always have been of excellent quality. Improvements, in the way of building houses, making fences, and some not very extensive draining have been proved to have been made from time to time by the tenants and their predecessors in title, and no claim to these improvements had been made by, or on behalf of, the landlords. . . . Moreover, we find that the tenants and the landlords were on the best of terms, and, as far as we could discover, no unpleasantness had ever occurred between them with respect to the rents paid. . . . All the facts appear to point to one conclusion, and that is, that the rents on the estate are fair, and that we shall accordingly declare."

Mr. Reardon went on to say—and this was especially worthy the attention of the House—

> "In my opinion a fair rent should be such as, having due regard to the property and interests of the landlords, an intelligent and industrious tenant can pay out of the return from the labour and capital expended on his holding, through good years and through bad, without having to apply in bad years for any abatement or reduction. . . . I am satisfied the present rents are not fair rents according to my interpretation of the term. . . . There is evidence that the landlords gave the tenants a substantial reduction in a bad year; and it appears to me that if they thought a reduction proper to be given to them, it is sure evidence that the present rents are too high to be paid by the tenants through bad years and good."

Mr. Reardon concluded as follows:—

> "Making my calculation on this basis, I have come to the conclusion that the following are the fair rents that ought to be fixed."

And then he proceeded to cut down a total existing rental of £208 7*s.* 10*d.* to £174 19*s.* 10*d*, the reduction being £33 8*s.* In this case, also, one of the Commissioners disagreed with the decision. Mr. Seymour Mowbray said—

> "I regret I am unable to concur with my brother Commissioners in the decision they have come to. . . . It appears there has not been any rise of rent on this estate for generations, and the tenants have always paid their rents regularly. This I consider some proof that they were not over-rented. . . . After a careful inspection of the holdings I came to the conclusion that the rents were not excessive."

The legal Commissioner here admitted that the rents had not been altered within the century; that the landlord had made no claim in respect of improvements; that the relations of landlord and tenant were most cordial, and that the rents were fair. But he laid down the principle that the rent a tenant could pay in a bad year should be the standard for fixing the judicial rent. Could anyone imagine a greater perversion of economic law than this? There were also cases where the rents had been reduced by such a trifling amount as to be an absolute judgment on the part of the Court that the rents were fair, and that they had disturbed them out of a spirit of mere wantonness; and, from a numerous list, he would give two or three cases. In Donegal a farm of 215 acres was let at a rent of £53, and the Commissioners fixed the judicial rent at £50, being a reduction of 3¼*d.* per acre over the area of the farm. In another case of a farm of 43 acres in Fermanagh, which was let at a rent of £22 2*s.* 6*d.* the Commissioners fixed the rent at £22, the reduction being less than ¾*d.* an acre. The last case of this kind he would refer to was that of a farm in Kilkenny of 30 acres, the original rent of which—£26—was reduced by the Commissioners to £25 10*s.*, or at the rate of 4*d.* per acre of area. How did these decisions tally with the statement of Mr. Law, formerly Attorney General for Ireland and now Lord Chancellor of Ireland, who, in the debates during last Session on the Land Act, said—

> "The right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson) put the case of a landlord asking a pound or two too much. But could anyone suppose that the tenant would rush into Court for such a sum as a pound?"—[3 *Hansard*, cclx. 1401.]

It appeared that in one of the cases he had quoted the Commissioners did not think half-a-crown too little for the tenant to rush into Court for, and they accordingly reduced the rent by three farthings an acre. Now, with regard to reductions of rents by landlords out of Court. It had been stated that settlements out of Court were being made in many instances, and it was argued that this was a proof that the rents were too high. He (Mr. Tottenham) asserted that it was a proof of nothing of the kind, and that they were the most involuntary transactions on the part of the landlord that ever took place between man and man. They had been entered into, in most cases, by those who had been starved out, who were driven to the last extremity for the means of subsistence, and who so acted at the pressing call for food for their families. This had been done in other instances by those who watched with dismay the Sub-Commissioners on the war-path against their class, and who saw that no justice would be shown them; and it had been done by others to avoid the ruinous cost which was being piled up to add to their deprivation of property. But what was the total number of such cases? He discarded for the present entirely the Return quoted by the Solicitor General for Ireland the other night, and which they were told they might now have in a few days—that Return which had been cast on the back of the printers in default of a better reason why it was not in the hands of Members. He said it was not fair that Members of the Government should avail themselves of information and figures contained in Papers to which other Members of the House had not access for the purpose of debate. They had had the same proceeding last year, and the year before, in the debates on the Land Act and the Compensation for Disturbance Bill. On one occasion the Prime Minister, just at the close of the debate, quoted from a Return which was not in the hands of Members, and hoped it would be in their possession next day. He would therefore proceed, in the absence of any later information, on the only Returns which were before them, and which came down to the 28th January last. From those Returns he could only find that 60 cases were described as having been "settled by consent," and registered by the Courts. He thought the House would require some further reasons and explanation for the extraordinary increase in the number of such cases in last month—which were quoted the other night by the Solicitor General for Ireland as 2,180—before they accepted unreservedly the accuracy of those figures. There was another phase of this Act to which they must also look, and that was its relation to the County Courts, which were incorporated with it as a part of its machinery. The resort to these Courts more or less depended upon the proclivities of the County Chairman; and if the case of the County Mayo were taken as an instance, it would not be difficult to decide what were the views held by the Chairman on the Land Question. Of this Court Mr. Richards, Q.C., was the Judge. There were 1,800 cases for hearing in his Court. He sat from the 24th January to the 17th February, during which time he heard 286 cases, and reduced the rents all round on an average to the extent of 16 per cent. He never went to view a single farm, and there had not been 10 appeals from his decisions. And why not? Because experience showed that if the landlord appealed to the Land Commission it was useless, and worse than useless; it was out of the frying pan into the fire, and only entailed additional costs, and the tenant was too well satisfied with what plunder he had got to risk further litigation. It had been stated that the first cases which had come before the Sub-Commissioners were the very cases of rack-renting which the Act was meant to cover. He said that the cases which he had quoted had not borne out that statement. Had the opinions of the Sub-Commissioner—recorded in open Court that the rents were fair, and that all attending circumstances showed consideration on the part of the landlord, and cordial relations between him and his tenants—borne out that statement? Had the fact that, in 42 cases which had already been heard, the existing rents were so unquestionably low that they could not, in common decency, interfere, and had been confirmed by them and the applications dismissed, borne it out—or had the 12 cases in which they had increased the rent sustained this theory which the House was most disingenuously asked to accept? And how would this insinuation agree with the fact that among the antics—for they could be called by no other name—which had been committed by the Sub-Commissioners, they had in 19 cases reduced by an average of 22 per cent rents which had been fixed prior to 1840—over 40 years ago; that in 12 cases they had reduced by 19 per cent rents fixed from 30 to 40 years back—that was, between 1840 and 1850; and that in 24 cases they had reduced by 25½ per cent rents fixed from 20 to 30 years ago—that was, between 1850 and 1860? Here was a total of over 100 cases, which alone gave a flat contradiction to the assertion that only rack-rented cases had as yet been heard. There were plenty of other cases showing a smaller percentage of reduction; but he was content with those to which he had alluded. Chapter and verse for all his figures could be found by any hon. Member who would take the trouble to analyze the Blue Book of judicial rents which had been laid upon the Table of the House. A Return had recently been moved for in "another place" which, after taking several days to consider, the Government had refused to give. The object of that Return was to oblige the Sub-Commissioners to show to what amount they had valued the tenants' improvements, which they had deducted from the rent. But, no; the deeds of this inquisition would not bear the light, and the Government declined to give any information as to the misdeeds which were being committed, and for which they were responsible and were making themselves accessories. Some of the reasons given for the reduction of rents were amusing. He would take the report of the reasons given by one or two Commissioners, out of the many remarkable utterances they had been guilty of, as the best justifications they could give for their more remarkable decisions. In a case at Loughrea Mr. MacCarthy said—

> "The landlord has recently made a considerable expenditure in drainage, under the superintendence of the Board of Works. This work has been well carried out, and tends considerably to increase the value of the holdings. No additional rent has been charged in respect of it. We observe with pleasure the cordial relations which appear to exist between landlord and tenants."

But, notwithstanding all this, the rent of the holdings was cut down from £74 2*s.* 10*d.* to £63 9*s.*—a fact which he regarded as but a small inducement to the landlord to spend money on improvements to the estate in future. The next case was even more remarkable and amusing still. In deciding with regard to certain claims at Athlone on the 13th of February last, Mr. Commissioner Roche said—

> "The Court took into consideration that this and other farms on Lord Castlemaine's property were adapted for and used as sheep farms. As a consequence of the prevalence of sheep disease for a number of years, sheep farms would naturally be depreciated in value, and the Court would fix the judicial rent at £23 6*s*."

—where it had formerly been £42 3*s*. 10*d*. The same remarks, the Court said, would apply to the farm of James Fagan, tenant, and the judicial rent would be £33, instead of, as before, £41 13*s*. 10*d*., and so on in the case of two other tenants. He said that nothing could be more puerile than this decision, which was in effect that, because sheep had had a disease, the land was not to be supposed suitable for anything else, and that its inherent capabilities must therefore, of necessity, have deteriorated 25 per cent for 15 years. There was a very remarkable case which was heard at Newcastle West on the 8th of December last, relating to a farm of 91 acres, in the occupancy of John and Patrick Sheehy. The farm was held in 1819 by John Sheehy at a rent of £91 17*s*. 6*d*. per annum. In 1841 a lease for 31 years at a rent of £89 12*s*. was granted. After the Famine in 1856, the rent was fixed at £84, which was regularly paid until 1865, when it was further reduced to £70. In this case the Commissioners held that the several reductions of rent were evidence that the original rent was excessive, and they accordingly fixed the judicial rent at £58. So that the rent of a farm which, by the consideration of the landlord, had been three times reduced in 62 years, and which was, at the time the case came on for hearing, let at a rent more than 25 per cent lower than in the year 1819, was further reduced by the Commissioners 16 per cent upon its reduced value of £70, because they thought the original rent of 60 years ago, but which was not the present rent, might have been too high. There was a further class of decisions for which there was no sort of justification. The Sub-Commissioners had, wherever they could, given costs against the landlord. Surely, where the application of the tenant was dismissed, and the rent found by the Sub-Commissioners to be fair, they had no ground for not meting out equal justice and giving costs against the tenant. Yet such was not the practice, and in these cases, out of many others, surely their manifest injustice must appear. On the 20th February last, in the case of M. O'Kane, tenant, the Mercers' Company, landlords, Mr. Commissioner Bourke said—

> "Mr. O'Brien and I have, on the whole, come to the conclusion that the present rent is a fair rent, and gives the tenant the benefit of his improvements. We therefore fix £10 10*s*. as the judicial rent, to commence from the 1st November, 1881, sporting rights reserved, and each party to bear their own costs."

He would be sorry that the words of wisdom which fell from the mouth of Mr. Davison, the timber merchant, should not be heard by the House. That gentleman said, with reference to the case just cited—

> "In this case it is my misfortune to be obliged, for the first time, to dissent from the judgment arrived at by my Colleagues. We visited and carefully inspected the holding. It is very well farmed, and it presents the appearance of great reclamation having been effected. It is naturally a very bad farm, and it is difficult to labour. It consists of bogs reclaimed from heather, and it is interspersed with steep gravelly hillocks, from which stones have been quarried and whins stubbed, and when left for a short time in grass, it has a tendency to return to its original state of whins and heather. I am of opinion that Mr. Murphy's valuation is too high and Mr. Harvey's too low. In my judgment, the fair rent of this holding is £9 10*s*. I am, therefore, very sorry to dissent from the judgment just delivered."

But the action of the Sub-Commissioners was more extraordinary when they gave judgment in favour of the landlord. In a case heard at Tinahely, County Wicklow, before Mrs. Wylie, Barry, and Kenny, Mr. Stafford, tenant, the rent was raised from £19 10*s*. to £24, and yet the costs were given against the landlord. This point of costs also embraced a much larger and more serious aspect than was presented by these cases. The Government were repeatedly warned last year that they were opening the door to untold litigation, and had not that turned out to be literally and absolutely true; and was it not a well-known fact that the country solicitors, and, indeed, almost every lawyer in Ireland, had their fingers in somebody's pocket in connection with land cases of some sort or another? An extract from a letter from a solicitor employed for a landlord in a Northern county would illustrate this in a practical manner. He said—

> "I had 19 cases entered at last sittings; two of them were struck out, one adjourned, and 16 heard—the average rent of the latter being £8 10*s*. The expenses at that sitting, including valuations, amount to about £100."

Which gave an average of £6 5*s*. for each case. He had in his hand an extract from another letter written by an agent, who said, with reference to the expenses connected with fixing fair rents in two cases in the county of Antrim—

> "We were detained four days waiting for our cases to be tried. Valuator, four days at £5 5*s*., £21; maps, £1; counsel's fee and consultation, £12: solicitor for brief, &c. say £8; agents' travelling and hotel expenses, £4—making a total of £46. The total rents amounted, on the two holdings, to about £100 a-year. They were under Griffith's valuation. The judicial rents have not yet been fixed."

He would now take the case of the county of Mayo alone, where there were upwards of 8,000 applications; and, putting these at the very low figure of £4 each case on each side, they had the land at once saddled with an incubus of £64,000, in addition to the other burdens which it had to bear, and that was exclusive of the cost of appeals, which was not yet known. It was useless to reply that the Commissioners had fixed a Schedule of fees, as they could not, and, as a matter of fact, had not, bound the solicitors practising in the local Courts; and it was a matter of notoriety that the solicitors made their own bargains with the tenants—payment in advance being a *sine quâ non.* The Kerry Schedule of fees, determined on and published by the solicitors of the county, showed that the average charge agreed upon was £2 12*s.* 6*d.* per case, and that was exclusive of outlay for counsel's fees and every other expense. One solicitor alone had lodged 1,100 notices, which represented in round figures £2,900 as that gentleman's share of the plunder up to the present, within five months of the beginning of the administration of the Act. Another solicitor that he (Mr. Tottenham) had some personal knowledge of had within a few of 1,000 cases, which, at say £3 per case, would bring up his share of the plunder to £3,000. He was also aware of the case of another solicitor in Belfast, who had lodged between 8,000 and 9,000 cases, and it would be an easy calculation for any hon. Member to ascertain how much would fall to this gentleman's share; and, taking the whole 70,000 cases at the same average, they had the sum of £184,000 already passed into the pockets of the attorneys. That sum was exclusive of outlay, counsel's fees, valuators, witnesses, and the hundred other items which litigation of this kind occasioned. In the Cahiraveen Union 673 notices were lodged by four attorneys, and the costs came to £2,000, or thereabouts. The Commission sat for, he believed, one day, and three cases were heard, and rents reduced to the amount of £27 10*s.*, or three months' interest on the costs that went into the pockets of the attorneys. There was a further question, which was a very serious and important one, and that was the number of cases sent down by the Chief Commissioners at Dublin and listed for hearing at the several places where the Sub-Commissioners held their Courts. In no instance had more than 50 per cent of the cases been heard; and, in very many instances, a much smaller proportion than this had been tried. The landlords and tenants made all their preparations. Each side brought down their solicitors, counsel, valuators, and witnesses, and incurred various expenses, and after hanging about four, five, or six days, were told that their cases were postponed or adjourned until next sittings. This was a subject which demanded the anxious and serious consideration of the Government, on behalf of the tenant as much as on behalf of the landlord. As an instance of the animus which existed against the landlords in Ireland, he would read to the House a document which had been served upon a noble Lord, an owner of property in a Southern county, which document he thought the House would agree was one of the most monstrous which had ever emanated from a solicitor's office. The agent wrote—

> "I send you a copy of Patrick Ryan's claim; it is well worthy of being exhibited as showing the animus as against the landlords. The solicitor who signs it is the solicitor to the Land League. Ryan holds 65a. 2r. 5p. Irish plantation measure, for which he pays £13 2*s.* 0*d.* a-year, or at the rate of 4*s.* an Irish acre. This man was served with a writ, and is amongst the first, unless he pays, to be dispossessed."

The man had not paid, and the sheriff being about to obtain possession from him, this document was served from the solicitor's office:—

> "Form of a Notice of Claim for Disturbance.
>
> 'LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND) ACT, 1870.
>
> "County of Tipperary.—Division of Cashel.
>
> "Patrick Ryan, Tenant of the Lands of Carline, in the Barony of Lower Kilnemanagh and Parish of Donohill, Claimant.—Viscount Hawarden, of 5, Princes Gardens, South Kensington, London, Landlord of the above-named Tenant, in respect of the said land, Respondent.
>
> "The said tenant, Patrick Ryan, asserting that he is disturbed in the occupation of such lands, by the act of his landlord, by having been evicted for non-payment of rent not exceeding £15, and the non-payment thereof having arisen from the exorbitance of said rent, claims compensation for the loss sustained by him in quitting his holding as follows:—

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Seven years' rent thereof (the holding being valued at £12 10*s.* 0*d.* per annum), and the annual rent being £13 2*s.* 0*d.*	91	14	0
The said tenant, Patrick Ryan, also claims compensation for Improvements made on said lands by himself and by his predecessor in title—viz.:—			

		£	*s.*	*d.*
1869	Dwelling-house (slated) built on said lands	250	0	0
"	Out-offices erected on said lands	50	0	0
1850 to 1882	Reclaiming 40 statute acres of said lands, at £20 per acre	800	0	0
1863 to 1882	Top dressing, irrigation, and improving by manures 20 acres of said land at £2 per acre	40	0	0
"	Erecting fences on said lands and removing ditches from same	40	0	0
		£1,271	14	0

"(Signed) P. C. M. GOUGH,
"Solicitor for Tenant,
"33, Upper Ormond Quay,
"Dublin.

"Dated this 8th day of February, 1882."

£1,271 14*s.* was claimed in respect of a holding the rent of which was only £13 2*s.* per annum. There were many other points on which he could enlarge; but he would stand on those he had already brought forward as sufficient for the end in view. At the commencement of his observations he said he hoped to be able to prove four points—namely, that justice had been violated; that the Courts were essentially one-sided; that imcompetent and improper persons had been appointed to administer judicial functions; and that confiscation in a most arbitrary form was being carried on. He submitted that he had established his case in the absence of evidence controverting the facts he had adduced, and that if ever an inquiry into the administration of an Act of the Legislature was justified and called for, it was so in this instance. The conduct of the Government in their appointments, and the conduct of their nominees, had been called in question. The qualifications of those nominees had been distinctly impeached, and a charge had been made against the Government of conniving at and instigating the action of their official creations. A protest had been lodged in the shape of a Petition to the Queen against the present administration and carrying out of the Act. In the face of these charges, put forward in no light or irrelevant manner, but with the weight of evidence of public opinion, and the appeals of their victims in support of the demand for inquiry, was it just, was it expedient, was it decorous, for the Government to shelter themselves behind a plea of expediency, and to endeavour to shift the responsibility of the failure of their Irish policy to the shoulders of those who warned them that their Act would be a failure, but whose representations were unheeded and thrust aside? Was it respectful to Parliament that they should continue to sit through this debate in almost absolute silence, and that they should continue to instigate, by such speeches as that of the Solicitor General on Thursday, and others in previous debates, the persons who were carrying out the Act in a manner not contemplated by the Legislature to persevere in the course which was being so loudly complained of? If considerations of high policy were involved in the general reduction of all rents in Ireland, let them, at least, come forward and say so, boldly and openly, and let them propose such measures of relief to those whose interests were directly affected, as English statesmen had hitherto considered it their duty to recommend to the honesty and fair dealing of the country. But let it not be either insinuated, or openly said, as was now the case, that they carried through Parliament a measure which they now feared to have their administration of investigated, and which, obtained under false issues and misrepresentations as to its effect, was, in its present form of interpretation, a daily-increasing wrong, and an unquestionable fraud on the intentions of the Legislature.

MR. BUTT moved the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be adjourned until To-morrow."—(*Mr. Butt.*)

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, the Government would not oppose the adjournment; but it was understood that another evening's discussion would terminate the debate. As the Motions on the Paper for to-morrow did not appear to be such as would occupy the whole of the evening, the Government would put down the adjourned debate amongst Tuesday's Orders.

MR. J. LOWTHER thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman could only have taken a very hasty glance at the Order Book, when he said there were Motions down for to-morrow which would only occupy a short time. The right hon. and learned Gentleman could not have looked at No. 1, which was followed by several Amendments, and which dealt with a subject, the importance of which, whatever might be the opinions as to the Motion, no one would gainsay. The right hon. and learned Gentleman could scarcely have been in his place when Notice was given to-night by the hon. Member for Berwickshire (Mr. Marjoribanks) of his intention, to-morrow, to ask leave to introduce a Bill dealing with the Parliamentary Oath. Of course, he did not suppose the right hon. and learned Gentleman was really serious in what he had said. ["Oh, oh!"] Well, the right hon. and learned Gentleman could scarcely have been so. He (Mr. J. Lowther) should be deceived in the right hon. and learned Gentleman if he were to hold out any hope—unless, indeed, hon. Gentlemen departed from the intention they seemed to indicate—of being able to bring the debate to a termination in another evening's discussion. The House must remember that, so far as this debate was concerned, to-night had only been a broken night. During a considerable portion of it they had had other matters intruded upon their notice. He only made these observations as he did not wish the right hon. and learned Gentleman or the House to labour under any misapprehensions on this subject.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he thought it would be very inconvenient to adjourn the debate until to-morrow, as there was no possibility of its being reached. It would be to the general convenience of the House that the debate should be adjourned to a time when they knew it was sure to come on. There were Notices of Motion on the Paper about which there might be some difference of opinion.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, that the other night the Business came to an untimely end because the Government did not care to keep a House for private Members; and that was surely a reason why another private Member's night should not be confiscated. If the Government put down the adjourned debate for to-morrow, hon. Gentlemen ought to take advantage of the fact that the Government were keeping a House, and have their Motions fully debated. He did not think it was right for the Government to be allowed to take a holiday whenever they wanted one, and to refuse one to private Members when those Members desired it. He, personally, was of opinion that a great deal of Private Business would be done to-morrow night.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, the hon. Gentleman the Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) objected to the confiscation of a private Member's night. There was no intention on the part of the Government to do any such thing. It should be borne in mind that the conduct of the Government was complained of because they had not put down Government Business in anticipation of the abrupt termination to which a recent private Member's night came. Well, but now, in anticipation of only a small amount of private Member's Business to-morrow, the Government wished to put their Business on the Paper, and objection was taken to that course. There were obviously some hon. Members in the House, according to whose utterances in the House nothing that the Government could do would be right.

Mr. LEWIS said, it would only be fair to hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House that it should be understood that no pledge was given on their behalf that the debate would conclude on Thursday night. Several hon. Members were desirous of speaking, and it would be quite time enough to deprive them of their right when they had the *clôture* on Parliamentary authority. The Government first attacked the House of Lords, and then the House of Commons; and, however it might be with the former, the latter, at all events, were able to take care of themselves, and he, for one, should resist any attempt to bring the debate on the Prime Minister's Resolution to a premature termination.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL said, he would remind the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Chamberlain) that the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington), on Tuesday last, had informed them that it was possible that the House might be counted out about 8 o'clock; and, as a matter of fact, it was counted out at 20 minutes past.

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he thought it would have been more convenient if the Government had put down the adjourned debate for Thursday, instead of to-morrow. As it was, it would be a great convenience if the Government would inform hon. Members after what hour they would not take the discussion to-morrow. As to the final closing of the debate and the division, he was sure there was no desire unduly to delay them; but the Government must recognize the immense importance of the subject they had thought fit deliberately to raise, and must be aware that there were still a great many Members who desired to express their opinions upon it. He himself had been so frequently attacked from the other (the Ministerial) side of the House for a few harmless remarks he had made a night or two ago, that he should like to have an opportunity of vindicating himself. He would beg the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary (Sir William Harcourt) to reconsider the point as to the day to which the debate should be adjourned.

MR. WARTON said, he should like to know whether the Government had given their supporters privately any idea as to when they really intended to take the debate? The Clerk at the Table had read the Motion, "That the Debate be adjourned until To-morrow;" and surely it was not proper for the Officer of the House to put in the day to which the debate was to be adjourned. The first Motion should be, "That the Debate be now adjourned," and the day should be moved afterwards. He (Mr. Warton) would move that the debate be adjourned until Thursday.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "To-morrow," and insert the words "Thursday next,"—(*Mr. Warton,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'To-morrow' stand part of the Question."

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said, hon. Members opposite were pushing the course of throwing obstacles in the way of the progress of Public Business beyond the point it had ever reached within the past few days. This, it seemed to him, made it more obvious that something must be done to facilitate the transaction of Public Business. When the Government wished to get on with the Business of the House, and to take advantage of any spare time which might be afforded them, they were met with Obstruction in this way. It was clear that something must be done to enable the Business of the country to be satisfactorily disposed of.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that the Government having decided that the debate should be put down for to-morrow, he, having entered a protest against that course, should take no further step in the matter, and hoped his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Warton) would not persist in his Amendment. At the same time, he was bound to say that the charge of Obstruction which had been made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman who had just spoken against Members of the Opposition was most unjustified.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I only said this Amendment had been made obstructively.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman's meaning evidently was that this Amendment, if it were persisted in, was one of Obstruction, and justified the adoption of the *clôture.* He (Sir R. Assheton Cross) thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman's observations were utterly uncalled for and utterly unjustifiable. On the other hand, the Government having said that they would put down the debate for to-morrow, hon. Members on that (the Opposition) side of the House would be following an unjustifiable course if they pressed their opposition any further.

MR. WARTON said, that at the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Assheton Cross) he would, of course, at once withdraw his Amendment. The Government would be responsible for all the waste of time that would be likely to occur.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [3rd March] *reported.*

Resolution 1.

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH, said, that, in moving to postpone this Vote for the Salaries and Expenses of the Office of the Irish Land Commission, he wished to explain that the chief valuator was appointed for seven years, and not for one year, as he had previously stated.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Resolution be postponed."—(*Lord Frederick Cavendish.*)

Mr. LEWIS said, he wished to make some observations with reference to the debate which had just been adjourned.

Mr. SPEAKER: The observations of the hon. Member must be relevant to the matter before the House.

Mr. LEWIS said, he was about to refer to the Land Commission. A Return was presented to the House a week ago, which had been referred to in another debate, but which had not been circulated among Members. He could find no trace of its having been printed; and he submitted that it was a most irregular and improper proceeding for a Member of the Government to quote statistics, by which the House was bound and influenced, while the document containing those statistics had not been printed. He protested against that; and while hon. Members were reproached with obstructing Business, the conduct of the Government in this matter showed their haphazard way of doing Business, and the way in which they were prepared to dragoon the House.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH thought the hon. Member was not justified in his remarks. These documents were presented to the House by the Government, and were then taken charge of by the House of Commons printer, who alone was responsible for their circulation. He must entirely repudiate any responsibility on the part of the Government.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER inquired whether the Printing Committee were responsible in this matter?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, the printing arrangements were conducted with the assistance of the Printing Committee.

Mr. CALLAN said, that last year the Printing Committee never sat once, and when they did sit no record was kept of their proceedings.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not speaking to the Question before the House.

Mr. CALLAN wished to refer to the fact that the Printing Committee had not yet been appointed this year. That was a matter of which he must complain.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must repeat that the hon. Member is not speaking to the matter before the House.

Mr. W. H. SMITH asked when it was proposed to take this Vote, as there might be some discussion upon it, and it would be desirable that it should be taken at a time when that discussion could take place?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, that he would take the Vote as soon as he was able; but he thought it was the general wish that it should be taken when the Chief Secretary for Ireland was in his place.

Mr. W. H. SMITH inquired whether the Chief Secretary for Ireland would be in his place to-morrow; and, if so, would the Vote be taken before the adjourned debate on the Resolution now before the House?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he did not propose to put the Vote down for to-morrow.

Motion *agreed to.*

Resolution *postponed.*

Resolutions 2 to 5, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Resolution 6.

Mr. SEXTON asked for an explanation which had been promised on this Vote of an extraordinary item of £150, which was granted to Mr. Rogers in compensation for injuries received in 1868. It had been stated that this gentleman had been injured 14 years ago, and that in consequence of his injuries he had been obliged, a year or two ago, to leave the Public Service. He wished to know how it was that 14 years had elapsed since those injuries were received, and yet compensation was not given until now; while a great many innocent people who had been injured seriously, and almost fatally, by the police were not compensated? If it should be necessary, in order to afford the noble Lord the Secretary to the Treasury an opportunity of explaining this, he would move to omit the item.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, that last year this gentleman had suffered severely from the injuries received in 1868, and had been under constant medical advice; and he had at last been obliged to retire.. Medical certificates from eminent physicians accompanied his application to the Lord Lieutenant; and he could assure the House that this had been an exceedingly hard case, the injuries having been received during the discharge of duty.

Mr. SEXTON: Has he a pension?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: His regular pension.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the noble Lord had promised to lay the Papers respecting this case upon the Table.

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH replied, that there would be no objection to presenting the Papers if moved for.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR begged to give Notice that he would move for the Papers.

Resolution *agreed to.*

Resolution 7.

MR. REDMOND said, he thought one of the items in this Vote required some explanation. If the Vote was only for the Post Office, then he would not challenge it; but if it was also for the Telegraphs he must do so.

MR. GRAY said, he understood this Vote was for the Post Office, and he did not wish to delay the Report for one moment, except to direct attention to one subject which was worthy of attention. The Vote dealt with Post Office Savings' Banks, and he wished to draw the attention of the Postmaster General to the fact that, under the present law, if any depositor deposited in two Savings Banks a total sum exceeding the amount named in the Act the whole sum might be forfeited. He thought this very hard, and that the Postmaster General might look into the matter, with a view to preventing the sacrifice of the whole savings of a man's life owing to what was, after all, a technical rule which anyone might violate without knowing he was doing so.

MR. O'DONNELL wished to receive some explanation on the subject of tampering with letters, and the extent to which that practice went on. He found that the practice had caused considerable inconvenience to persons who might not be reasonably suspected, but who held opinions somewhat different from those at present held by Her Majesty's Government. He said at present held by the Government, because one did not know what opinions they might hold next year. For instance, a lady had complained to him two days ago that letters from herself to a county in the North of Ireland appeared to have been tampered with, and the replies she received from her friends on ordinary business arrived in envelopes having every sign of having been ransacked by inquisitive persons. Sometimes the ends were left entirely open, and the only clue the lady could get to explain this was that one of her correspondents in the North of Ireland was a member of the Ladies' Land League, or Ladies' Aid Society, and a friend in London was a member of the English Land League. Was this to be allowed as a sufficient reason for ladies' letters to be opened and pried into by English gentlemen? He also wished to know what explanation could be given of the practice that circulars suspected of being sent, say, from branches of the Prisoners' Aid Society, or to members urging subscriptions for the charitable objects of those institutions, were, on the pretence that the handwriting of the addresses was recognized, and, on similar evidence, being destroyed wholesale in the Irish Post Office? A legal authority had informed him that that deliberate destruction of circulars and similar things given into the custody of the Post Office authorities, whether by small or big officials, amounted to felony; and he was not aware that the Coercion Act, or any recent Act with regard to Ireland, expressly exempted officials from the punishment of felony. And he was not aware, if that were the case, that special exemptions of that kind were calculated to promote respect for law and order in Ireland. He made this statement on the authority of several sources—that the Post Office burned and destroyed wholesale what it considered to be documents or circulars calculated to promote some object with which Her Majesty's Government did not at present agree. As the President of the Board of Trade had explained, if it was necessary still to pass a certain Bill through the House of Lords, these circulars would be all right; but it no longer being necessary to pass a measure through the House of Lords, these circulars had become of such a character that the officials of the Post Office were destroying them wholesale. He sincerely hoped that if this was taking place it had been kept from the knowledge of the Postmaster General, because it would be a grief to all the Irish Members, who had so often fought side by side with the right hon. Gentleman against the Government of the late Lord Beaconsfield, to discover that he had any part in transactions of this nature. He would ask, in the first place, within what safeguards, and under what warrants, and to what extent the tampering with private correspondence continued? He wished to know who were appointed to read the private correspondence of Irish Members and Irish ladies? For if the Home Secretary alone was intrusted with that function, that might explain his neglect of the Police arrangements in London which had recently been so notable; at the same time, it would be a certain consolation to the Irish Members that their correspondence was solely confided to a gentleman of his discretion. But they wanted to know whether Post Office officials of no particular standing, and with no particular guarantees, were authorized to open and ransack private correspondence? Last year he had stated that he should have no ojection to his letters being opened, on condition that the Post Office would supply sound envelopes in place of the torn envelopes. But that in itself was a matter of serious inconvenience. Members were continually receiving letters with damaged envelopes, and they did not know whom to blame if some of their contents were absent.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN wished to know from the Postmaster General whether all the letters that were opened and read and copied were afterwards forwarded to their destination, or whether any of them were confiscated by the Post Office? That was a simple question, and he hoped it would receive a plain and direct answer. He had good reason for asking that question. Furthermore, he would like to know if due precautions were taken to insure that the contents of any of the envelopes which were opened were safely and duly put back into the envelopes from which they were taken? A few nights ago the hon. Member for Cork City (Mr. Daly) detailed the facts of a most extraordinary change or exchange of the contents of letters—it was a case in which the bank book of a gentleman was put into an envelope, posted by a little school-girl, and enclosing a number of religious pictures. He wanted to have some assurance that cheques and postage stamps and other valuables were not taken from envelopes, and that none of them were mislaid or lost in their transmission through the Post Office, under the process of letter-opening and confiscation which was going on at present under the warrant of the Chief Secretary.

Mr. REDMOND said, he wished to make a suggestion with regard to the opening of letters delivered in England. It was that when letters were opened by the Government they should be delivered either opened or enclosed in a fresh envelope, and should be endorsed—"Opened by the authority of the Government." Since the opening of the present Session he had received several letters which had been opened in the most barefaced and clumsy manner, and in the fastening down very much torn and dirtied. It must be a very humiliating task to close up letters after having been opened; therefore, let the Government be straightforward in the matter—let them deliver the letters open, or, if they closed them again, let them affix some official stamp to show they had been tampered with.

Mr SEXTON said, his hon. Friends had put some questions which they had a good claim to have answered. He felt extremely anxious on one point. He wished to know what the Chief Secretary conceived to be his power under his warrant—Did the right hon. Gentleman believe he had power to open a letter, and, if he thought fit, to seize it and keep it? Did the right hon. Gentleman or any of his subordinates believe that after having copied a letter they had the right to destroy it? He believed the Government did not open as many letters as formerly; perhaps they found the correspondence too dry and uninteresting. He was occasionally troubled with questions from his constituents as to whether he had received this or that letter, so he was inclined to think the system of opening letters still remained in force. The Government had now opened letters for a whole year. Surely they ought to have discovered whether the system repaid them. Surely, if anything improper had been carried on through the medium of the Post Office, they would have at the end of a year been able to institute some criminal prosecution or other. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, he was entitled to infer that a year's trial of this wholesale tampering with private correspondence had been of no avail. They had a right to ask the Government whether their search had been at all repaid

—whether it had proved of the slightest good from a political point of view? He was aware that the officials in the Dublin Post Office had grown so wanton that they did not even take the trouble to open some envelopes; if they thought they recognized the handwriting they did not even take the trouble to copy the letters, but threw the unopened envelopes into the fire. It occurred to him that that was villainy. He could not believe the Postmaster General was entitled to destroy a post letter, although he knew it was contended that when a letter was posted it was public property. It was not known, and never would be known, what letters had been destroyed. He would conclude, as he began, by asking whether the Chief Secretary or the Postal officials considered that, under the warrant of the Chief Secretary, they were bound to send a letter on after having copied it, or whether they considered themselves entitled to destroy it?

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, that, perhaps, the Home Secretary would now tell them—he endeavoured to get the information last Session by questions put to the Government—whether the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General received a specific warrant from the Home Secretary with regard to each letter that he opened, or whether he received a general warrant and opened all the letters addressed to the gentlemen mentioned in the warrant? The question was a very important one; but he believed it was a very moot question with lawyers whether the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General was not exceeding his duty, and rendering himself liable to serious consequences, if he opened a letter without having a specific warrant to do so.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have waited until I could answer all the questions which hon. Gentlemen were anxious to put to me. There was a question put to me by my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). I beg leave to say that in this matter the Postmaster General has no responsibility whatever. The responsibility is absolutely and entirely with the Secretary of State; it is upon him that the law has imposed the responsibility. Another question was asked as to whether, under the warrants issued in this matter, there is power to open and examine only, or whether there is also power to detain? Now, distinctly, there is power to detain, because that is mentioned in the Statute.

Mr. SEXTON: Does "detain" mean to keep altogether?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I imagine so.

Mr. SEXTON: To destroy?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: About the legal power there is no doubt whatever.

Mr. SEXTON: Destroy?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I do not think the word "destroy" is mentioned, and I have not got the Statute with me. Well, then, there was another question put which was a very important one, and that was whether this power could be exercised by subordinate officials? I say most certainly not. The power is absolutely a power which rests upon the responsibility of the Secretary of State, and can only be exercised upon his direct authority. It is an authority which has been placed in the Secretary of State's hands solely for the public safety; and if any Secretary of State exercised such a power, except in cases in which he was satisfied in his own mind, and upon his own responsibility, that it was absolutely necessary for the safety of the State, he would be guilty of a gross breach of duty, and I would say of a gross breach of honour also. I conceive that is the position in which the law has placed this matter. I ought to say the power is with the Secretary of State in England only; in Ireland it belongs to the Irish Government. The Secretary of State has nothing whatever to do with the Post Office in Ireland. Several assertions have been made as to the mode of dealing with letters in Ireland. I must confess I know nothing of the method adopted in that country, but I cannot imagine such a thing as the burning of letters wholesale. Well, then, other questions were asked as to how, and when, and to what extent this power is exercised? This matter was discussed last year, and I gave then the only answer that it is possible for me to give on the subject. This is a power which is given for purposes of State, and the very essence of the power is that no account can be rendered. To render an account would be to defeat the very object for which the power was granted. That was perfectly admitted, after all the discussions which took place on this subject, by the Committee of the House of Commons appointed a good many years ago, and both Houses of Parliament, having examined into the matter, determined to continue the power which then existed. It has continued ever since, and there is no security whatever in the exercise of that power except the responsibility of the Minister to whom the power is intrusted, and if he is not fit to exercise the power upon the responsibility which is cast upon him he is not fit to occupy the position of Secretary of State.

Mr. O'DONNELL: Does the Minister open the letters himself?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have told the hon. Member that it is upon the personal authority of the Secretary of State that the thing is done. With every respect to hon. Members, I must say I can give no further information on the subject. In my opinion, I ought not to do so; it is out of no disrespect to hon. Members that I give this answer, but it is the essence of that power that the Minister responsible should not give information beyond what I have already given.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he must offer his sincere congratulations to the Postmaster General on the fact that upon him there did not rest any of the responsibility for all these transactions; he could hardly imagine a man of the right hon. Gentleman's high character having anything to do with business which involved such proceedings. He did not think the Home Secretary had precisely answered the questions put to him. They understood perfectly well that the whole thing was done upon the authority of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, and that he alone was responsible to the House. What they wanted to know was—Did he delegate his warrant and power to any subordinate officials? Did he, in fact, open and read all the letters himself; or did he instruct his subordinate officials to do so and report to him about them? It did not seem to him that the safety of the State would be in any way imperilled if the right hon. and learned Gentleman were to give a plain answer to that question. The Home Secretary said something about what would be the duty of a statesman and a man of honour in such a matter. The right hon. and learned Gentleman was a statesman, and he (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) was sure he was a man of honour; but in such transactions as these they were now discussing one was led to remember the advice of Lady Teazle to Mr. Joseph Surface, when he, in a memorable conversation, made some allusion to his honour. She said—"Don't you think, Mr. Surface, we had better leave honour out of this business?" He (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman would do well to consider that advice and leave honour out of these discussions.

Mr. GORST said, he really must protest against the statement made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman that the Postmaster General was not responsible at all; that he alone was responsible in the matter. He begged leave to refer the House to the section of the Act of Parliament which made it a misdemeanour

> "For any person employed in the Post Office, contrary to his duty, to open, or to procure to be opened, a post letter, or wilfully to delay or detain, or procure or suffer to be delayed or detained, any post letter."

To do this was a misdemeanour:

> "Provided always that this did not extend to the opening, or detaining, or delaying of a post letter in obedience to the expressed warrant, in writing, under the hand of the Secretary of State."

Therefore, the Postmaster General and the *employés* of the Post Office were guilty of misdemeanour, unless they opened or detained a letter in pursuance of an expressed warrant under the hand of the Secretary of State. If the Secretary of State's warrant was not given, and, if given, it did not relate to the particular letter opened, he (Mr. Gorst), with great deference to the right hon. and learned Gentleman's extraordinary learning and knowledge of law, submitted that his conception of the matter was altogether erroneous.

Mr. LEAMY said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary had not given any answers at all to the questions put to him; he had not answered the question put to him by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere), and he had not told them whether it was necessary to issue a specific warrant for the detention of a particular letter. Upon those points they were entitled to some information; and as the right hon. and learned Gentleman might not be able to speak again on the subject, perhaps the Attorney General for Ireland would tell them what was done by the Lord Lieutenant or the Chief Secretary for Ireland, or whoever it was who issued the warrants, to authorize the opening of letters in Ireland? His hon. Friends had stated that circulars and letters were torn in the Post Office in Dublin, and that some even were destroyed without being opened at all. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said that he knew nothing of such things, and that he did not believe them. He could well understand that the Home Secretary did not believe them; but they had a right to ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman and the Postmaster General if they would take any steps to ascertain whether there was any truth whatever in the statements? A very grave charge had been brought against the Post Office officials, and it was due to them that some inquiry should be made. Before the debate closed, he hoped they would have some real information upon the different points now raised. The Home Secretary said that the opening and reading of letters was carried on solely under the authority of the Secretary of State; but they had a right to ask to what class of officials was the work intrusted? Was it intrusted, for instance, in the Post Office in Dublin, to the Postmaster or to some high official; or was any ordinary clerk, into whose hands a letter to or from a prominent Land Leaguer might fall, entitled to open it? It was proper, too, that they should hear something in reply to the suggestion thrown out by the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond)—namely, that if the Government would insist upon opening letters, they ought to put an official stamp upon them, showing that they had been opened. Surely if the Government had the power to open letters, and if they exercised the power, as it was well known they did, why should they be ashamed to admit they had done so in any particular case? It was no uncommon thing for hon. Gentlemen sitting around him to receive letters which had been opened; but they were in complete doubt as to whether they had been opened by the authority of the Secretary of State, or by some curious person in the Post Office who had no authority whatever to open them. Inasmuch as answers had not been vouchsafed to the questions put by different hon. Members, he should move that the Vote be postponed until such time as the Government would condescend to afford them the information required.

Dr. COMMINS said, there was another point requiring elucidation. The Act provided that the opening of a letter, when done in Ireland, should be done under the warrant of the Lord Lieutenant, and he saw no person present who was capable of answering the questions which had been put, especially those concerning the secreting or destruction of letters in Ireland. The section of the Post Office Act which had not been referred to, and which section was the 26th, made it a felony for any person employed in the Post Office to embezzle, secrete, or destroy any post letter. One of the principal complaints made was that letters passing through the Post Office in Ireland were embezzled, secreted, or destroyed, and there was scarcely a person who received a large amount of correspondence in Ireland who did not constantly miss inclosures. He had had to complain that inclosures sent to him were taken out of letters; why or wherefore he could not understand. It was now said that circulars had been posted to different parts of Ireland, and that they had been destroyed in the Post Office by hundreds. Now, there was nothing in the Post Office Act, and there was no authority vested in the Lord Lieutenant, or anybody else, that could justify the destruction of any post letter or the contents of any post letter. To destroy a letter or its contents would be clearly illegal, and any warrant given to that effect would, in a Court of Law, be declared null and void. It was only proper that inquiries should be made as to whether the complaints were or were not justified, and they ought to be told whether warrants were issued—as the Act clearly required—for each particular letter that was opened; or whether general warrants—which 100 years ago had been declared illegal—were issued, authorizing all letters to So-and-So, or all letters in the handwriting of such-and-such persons, to be opened. He thought, too, some information ought to be given as to the dissatisfaction which prevailed very largely in Ireland as to the management of the Post Office in that country. No one was present who could give the answers required. He and his hon. Friends had every reason to complain that the Person to whom they looked for answers and explanations—the Person upon whom the legal responsibility rested—was not in his place to give such answers as might satisfy the justifiable curiosity of hon. Members on that side of the House, and might allay, if it were possible, the feeling in Ireland that the tampering with private correspondence was carried on most dishonourably.

Mr. SPEAKER: Do I understand the hon. Member to move the postponement of this Resolution?

Mr. LEAMY: Certainly, if I am in Order in doing so.

Mr. SPEAKER: Does any hon. Member second that Motion?

Mr. CALLAN begged to second it.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Resolution be postponed."—(*Mr. Leamy.*)

Mr. GILL said, that he also would have been prepared to second the Motion, because he felt that one or two important questions had been raised, which, for the satisfaction of the Irish public, ought to be explained by Her Majesty's Government. One of them was, whether, in the letters which had been opened, any cash remittances had been found, and what was done with cheques or notes in the event of any being discovered? Of course, if the letters were not delivered to the persons to whom they were addressed, it was impossible to deliver any cash which they might have contained. It was therefore as well to know whether any money remittances of that kind were kept by the Government towards paying the expenses of the Post Office establishment, or whether they were returned to the persons by whom they were sent? That was one point which he was of opinion ought to be answered. Another was this—Were the persons who were employed to open these letters sworn to secrecy. If not, it might very often happen that they might talk in a jocular manner of the contents of some of these letters, informing their friends of what they had seen in them. Of course, there was nothing to prevent them from doing that unless the precaution was taken to swear them to secrecy, in the same manner as the telegraph clerks and other officials were. He trusted that he might receive an answer to these questions—What was done with the money remittances found in letters which were opened at the Post Office; and were the persons employed in opening them sworn to secrecy, or were they not?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he did not know whether he would be in Order in speaking again; but with the permission of the House he desired to say a few words. The hon. Member who had just spoken must see that he could not possibly answer the sort of questions which had been put to him, because they involved, first of all, a statement or admission that any letter had been opened at all. It was exactly because he could make no statement on that subject that he was unable to answer the questions of the hon. Member. It was utterly impossible to answer questions of the character of those which had been put to him. He had no wish to deal unfairly with the House in the matter; but he must say that if this power was to be given at all and exercised for the purposes for which it was given, it was of the very essence of the power that no statement whatever should be made on the subject, even to the extent of saying whether any letter had been opened or had not been opened. It was quite plain that if he were to answer the questions of the hon. Member in any degree at all, he might next be examined as to the extent to which the power had been used, and the object for which the power was given would become utterly useless. He therefore respectfully submitted to the House that it was perfectly impossible to answer the questions which had been put, and he declined to answer the inquiry, even to the extent of admitting that any letter had been opened at all.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS remarked, that certain powers to be exercised for a particular purpose had been vested in the Secretary of State in England, and, he presumed, in the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. These powers were of a most exceptional character. He must say that they were powers which he himself exercised with very great care and caution when they were intrusted to him, and he was satisfied that they were powers which neither the Secretary of State nor the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland would ever wish to exercise unless they were compelled to do so in the interests of the public. At any rate, he could answer for himself at the time he filled the Office of Home Secretary. Of course, it was quite possible for any person intrusted with the power of opening letters to disclose to the public what the action taken under this power was; but it was quite another matter when it came to be a question how the responsibility had been exercised, and how the Secretary of State had acted. It was possible for things to have been missed which were of great value, and, of course, if any well-founded and specific charge of that kind were made, the Secretary of State would be bound to give an answer on the responsibility cast upon him, and in order to justify the use of that responsibility; but, at the present moment, no such specific charge was made, and it appeared to him that the Secretary of State had taken the only course open to him—namely, that of refusing to answer the questions which had been put to him.

MR. CALLAN rose to continue the debate, when——

MR. SPEAKER interposed, and said, the hon. Member having seconded the Motion, was not entitled to speak again.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR (who rose amid loud calls for a division) said, that, however impatient hon. Members might be to go home, they must all admit that the answer they had received to the inquiries which had been addressed to the Government were most unsatisfactory. An hon. Friend behind him (Mr. Sexton) had made an important and specific charge to the effect that in Dublin a large number of letters were not only opened and detained, but were absolutely destroyed. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary had declared that he accepted the whole of the responsibility, and, of course, the right hon. and learned Gentleman must do so in regard to the detention of any letter in England; but he understood that the right hon. and learned Gentleman entirely repudiated any responsibility for the action of the Post Office authorities in Ireland. At present, there was nobody in the House who directly represented the Lord Lieutenant, and nobody representing Ireland was prepared to say for that country what the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary had already said in regard to England. On a previous occasion the noble Lord the Financial Secretary postponed the Report, owing to the absence of the Chief Secretary for Ireland; and it appeared to him (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) that, with regard to this Vote, there was very much stronger reason for postponing the consideration of the Report than there was on the Land Commission Vote. He therefore trusted that the noble Lord the Financial Secretary would accede to the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Waterford (Mr. Leamy), and agree to postpone the Vote until the return of the Chief Secretary.

MR. O'DONNELL said, it was admitted that the Home Secretary had certain responsibilities in the matter; but if no information was given of any kind whatever, where was the responsibility? The Irish Members did not ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman for any particular details with regard to particular letters; but they asked this much. For instance, if it was not the right hon. and learned Gentleman himself who opened the letters or ordered them to be opened, to whom did he delegate his authority, and to how many? The persons to whom the authority was delegated certainly were not responsible. The only responsibility in the matter was the responsibility to Parliament, and these unnamed subordinates, if they were delegated by the Home Secretary, certainly were not the Home Secretary himself. If the right hon. and learned Gentleman admitted that he did delegate his authority and power to certain persons, then the House would know that he was responsible for the acts of such persons; but the right hon. and learned Gentleman refused all information whatsoever, and, in fact, evaded the responsibility placed on him by the Act of Parliament. That was what the Irish Members objected to. By using the word "responsibility," the words "by his authority," and so forth, in reality he evaded all responsibility, and then he refused to allow his authority to be brought to any test. That was what the Irish Members considered to be unfair, and they were of opinion that the right hon. and learned Gentleman was not discharging the duty he owed, not only to the Members of that House, but to the public at large. They had no wish to delay the House unduly over this Vote; but it was the only course they were able to take in view of the unsatisfactory position in which the unsatisfactory answers of the Home Secretary had placed the matter. All that it was in their power to do was to raise the whole question on this Resolution of the Report of the Committee of Supply. He hoped the right hon. and learned Gentleman would seriously look into the matter, and especially into the way in which he was himself affected by the exercise of the power conferred upon him by Statute. For a moment he would assume that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had not in any way overstepped his power, and surely it was his duty to tell the House on what general principle he acted, and who were his representatives. Were they the postmasters of the country? Were they the police officers; or were they some of the Castle officials? The right hon. and learned Gentleman ought to have some information to give to the House upon the matter. He ought to be able to give some guarantee in regard to the manner in which the power was exercised. They had already before them the fact that letters were continually received, not only in a dilapidated and broken condition, but sometimes with their contents abstracted. Did that come under the head of "detaining letters," which the right hon. and learned Gentleman declared to be part of his powers? The Irish Members wanted to know how they were to draw a line between the official detention of their letters and the felonious purloining of the letters themselves? Unless some official information was given, it was impossible to know whether their letters were delayed and properly taken care of, or whether the contents had been filched by some subordinate of the Post Office without the authority of Her Majesty's Government. The Home Secretary was bound to tell the House, in the interests of common honesty, what precautions he had taken to prevent the opening of letters being utilized by some persons or other, for whose acts he was not responsible, in order to purloin or efface certain correspondence. That was a very plain matter, and certainly could not affect any State secret. He was asking no question about any specific letter, or whether any particular letter had been detained for such-and-such reasons; but he wished to have some general knowledge of the conditions under which the letters of the Irish Members were opened and detained. The Home Secretary would not even admit that any letter had been detained. That was a deliberate attempt to escape entirely from the responsibility cast upon him by the Act of Parliament. What was to be said of a Home Secretary who was authorized by Act of Parliament to detain letters, and yet refused to say whether he detained them or not? Surely there was no object of State policy to be gained by a complete denial of that kind. The refusal to admit even that the power was exercised was an evasion of a very undignified kind. If all information was refused, he should certainly take another occasion for bringing the matter under the notice of the House by a means of distinct Resolution. The Liberal Party professed to be the denouncers of despotism in foreign parts; but, nevertheless, they sat in admiring silence while the Home Secretary tacitly admitted the exercise of tyrannical and arbitrary power, far beyond anything a foreign despot ever contemplated.

Mr. WARTON said, he was bound to protest against the course taken by hon. Members below the Gangway in persistently delaying the passing of this Vote. What object did they expect to gain? Did they think that any questions they could put would move the Home Secretary from the position he had taken, and a position which he (Mr. Warton) begged to say was one which the right hon. and learned Gentleman ought to take? The conduct of the right hon. and learned Gentleman was exceedingly right and proper; and if the right hon. and learned Gentleman had not thought fit to get up and decline to answer the questions put to him, he (Mr. Warton), in his humble way, should have requested him not to answer them. As it was, he was pleased with the reply of the right hon. and learned Gentleman and his firmness. There was a kind of insinuation contained in the speech of the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy) against the Postmaster General. The hon. Member expressed regret that a man of the high character which the right hon. Gentleman formerly enjoyed should have been concerned in a matter of this kind. That appeared to be a sort of insinuation against the Postmaster General; but, although he neither believed in the Home Secretary nor in the Postmaster

General as politicians, he should be sorry to think they were not entitled to the highest honour for the way in which they discharged the duties of their Offices.

Mr. SEXTON said, he thought they had made out an unanswerable case for the postponement of the Resolution. No attempt whatever had been made by any occupant of the Treasury Bench to defend the action which had taken place, nor had any information been given with respect to the practice at the Irish Post Office. Irish Members were much more concerned with that than with the English Post Office, and it was with regard to the Irish Department that the present accusation had been made—namely, that on the mere suspicion of handwriting, certain envelopes containing information had been destroyed without being opened. The right hon. Gentleman, whose responsibility for the English Office appeared to be of a most shadowy character, declined any responsibility at all for the Irish Department. The question was—Had they or had they not a right to ask questions of this kind upon a matter of public administration, and were they not entitled to receive explanations with reference to it? It was obvious that the theory of Ministerial responsibility vanished entirely, if a fact of this nature was to be passed over when explanations with regard to it were asked by the Representatives of the people and refused by one Minister because another Minister was absent. The Chief Secretary for Ireland, it would appear, had abandoned his position in that House for duties of a peripatetic character in Ireland, and the position taken up by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary in consequence was simply intolerable, when looked at from the point of view of the meaning of Ministerial responsibility. Parliament had conferred, it seemed, certain powers, and they had to be exercised by the right hon. and learned Gentleman to the best of his judgment for the public safety. It was not for him to say that the right hon. and learned Gentleman had in any way violated his duty in this respect; but he challenged him to say how the answers given to the questions which had been put to him could in any way divest him of his responsibility in the matter. They wanted to know by what class of officials in the Post Office the opening and destruction of letters was effected, and on what conditions they were allowed to act? Were they upon their word of honour, or upon their oath, or what other safeguard was there to protect the public against the improper exercise of these powers? He denied that the position of any criminal, real or intended, could be affected by the questions that had been asked; and while he agreed that the rules of debate were elastic, there were still limits to ingenuity in that respect, and he could not but regard the statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, that he was not prepared to admit that any letter had been opened at all, as most peculiar and unsatisfactory.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN said, that the rule that questions should not be put to an accused person because he might, in his answer, criminate himself, might be a very good one in criminal practice; but he never thought that a high official of the Government—a statesman—would shelter himself under a plea that was accorded to a prisoner at the Old Bailey. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had, however, said he could not admit, by any reply of his, that any letters had been opened at all. But supposing that letters had been opened under the warrant which they knew to exist, he asked what would become of the cheques or postage stamps that were inclosed in them? He did not think it would be below the dignity of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary to say, if it was his duty to cause letters to be opened and detained, whether the remittances inclosed in them were detained or destroyed. It would be much better if the Government, or rather the right hon. and learned Gentleman responsible for these acts, had the courage to stamp upon letters the fact that they had been opened, and not shelter himself behind a miserable subterfuge.

Mr. WARTON wished to know whether it was in Order for the hon. Member to charge a Member of that House with sheltering himself behind a miserable subterfuge?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is attributing an unworthy motive to a Member of the House. The expression used by him should be withdrawn.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN said, he would withdraw any remark he had made that was out of Order. He had not attributed to the right hon. and learned Gentleman any unworthy motive. He had only stigmatized his conduct.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not withdrawing his expression. He is repeating it.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN said, he withdrew any expression to which Mr. Speaker objected. Passing from that point, he wished to say that he had seen letters with the words "not to be Harcourted" stamped upon them; and he thought the right hon. and learned Gentleman might save the credit of the Department if he had the courage to adopt an india-rubber stamp, with the word "Harcourted" upon it, to be used when a letter was opened.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 12; Noes 135: Majority 123.—(Div. List. No. 38.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

Mr. BIGGAR said, it was very much to be regretted that the Chief Secretary for Ireland was absent while a question of the violation of the law was being discussed. The Attorney General for Ireland, however, might be able to give some information with regard to what had taken place in the Irish Post Office and in order to give him an opportunity of supplying this, he would move the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY seconded the Motion, for the purpose of affording the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite an opportunity for explanation. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary really knew little or nothing at all of the proceedings which so much interested Irish Members. They wished to know whether the opening of letters was done under a general warrant—that was to say, was there a warrant given to open all letters, or did it only apply to certain persons whose correspondence was to be examined? He thought some light ought to be thrown upon this important subject, and, with the permission of the House, he would quote the opinion of the late Mr. Carlisle with reference to the practice of opening letters in the Post Office. Mr. Carlyle, in a letter to *The Times*, said—

"It is a question vital to us that sealed letters in an English Post Office be—as we all fancied they were—respected as things sacred; that opening of men's letters, a practice near of kin to picking men's pockets, and to other still viler and far fataler forms of scoundrelism, be not resorted to in England except in cases of the very last extremity. When some new 'Gunpowder Plot' may be in the wind, some double-dyed high treason, or imminent national wreck not avoidable otherwise, then let us open letters; not till then."

Mr. SPEAKER: I wish to point out to the hon. Member, that, having spoken to the Motion before the House, he is not at liberty to speak again. I must call on some other hon. Member to second the Motion.

Mr. W. J. CORBET said, he would second the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Biggar.*)

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, hon. Members must see that he could give no other answer to the question put to him than that he had already tendered. It was obvious, therefore, that the Motion for Adjournment, on account of the absence of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, was out of place. If his right hon. Friend (Mr. W. E. Forster) were now in his place, he could give no other answer than that hon. Members had received. He (Sir William Harcourt), in regard to England, had given the only answer it was possible for him to give; and in regard to Ireland, the Chief Secretary could say no more. It could, therefore, be of no avail to persist in this Motion.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman must see that if the Chief Secretary were here, hon. Members would be able to ask a question—and probably elicit an answer—as to whether any representation had been made to the Irish Government with regard to the numerous letters which it was distinctly alleged had been destroyed in the Dublin Post Office? That was a matter upon which it was extremely likely that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to afford them some information. That point alone was sufficient, he thought, to justify them in asking the Government to consent to the postponement of this Vote, just as on similar grounds they had consented to the postponement of other Votes.

Mr. REDMOND said, the Irish Members had a right to ask and to be informed by the Attorney General for Ireland whether it was legal for the Home Secretary in England, or the Chief Secretary in Ireland, to destroy private letters sent through the Post Office? No information had been given on that point; and he wanted to know before this money was voted for a Public Department, whether that Department, in certain things it was doing, was acting legally? If the Chief Secretary had power to seize and open and destroy, that power would, no doubt, extend to property. Would the Chief Secretary be equally entitled to burn a cheque or bank note as he was to burn a letter? He really thought it was due to the Irish Members and the House that the Attorney General for Ireland should accept the responsibility which devolved upon him as Representative of the Chief Secretary, in the absence of the right hon. Gentleman, and get up in his place and make some statement to the House. The Home Secretary had taken that responsibility on himself in regard to England.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, he had been called upon so frequently, that he might be supposed to be wanting in ordinary courtesy to the House if he did not rise. What he had to say was, in the first place, that he was not the Representative of the Chief Secretary nor of the Lord Lieutenant. He represented solely the Office he had the honour to fill—namely, that of Attorney General for Ireland. He had no power to open or destroy letters in the Post Office, nor had he ever attempted to do anything of the kind, nor did he believe it ever had been done. He was not aware that there was, in point of law, any power vested in anyone to destroy another person's letters. It was his duty to direct all criminal prosecutions in Ireland, and it sometimes happened in that country, as he supposed it sometimes happened in England, that letters were—to use a strong, though very proper expression—stolen. Only the day before yesterday he had directed a prosecution against a letter-carrier for having appropriated letters which did not belong to him. The premises occupied by this letter-carrier had been searched, and a very large number of letters, belonging to various people, had been found there. That was the only instance, so far as he could at the moment recollect, which had come under his notice, since he was Attorney General for Ireland of letters having been stolen.

MR. GRAY said, he did not think the Irish Members were to blame for the course things were now taking. This question had been raised in Committee; and it was to be expected when it was known that it would be further discussed on Report, that the Chief Secretary for Ireland would have been in his place to answer for what had taken place in Ireland, as the Home Secretary was present to answer for England. If it was not convenient for the Chief Secretary for Ireland to be here, at least it was to have been expected that he would have instructed either the Attorney General or Solicitor General for Ireland, not to tell the House what they were not aware of, but to tell the House what they were aware of, and what had been done. They had had a legal opinion from the Attorney General for Ireland that there was no justification for the destruction of letters; but the House had it from Irish Members present that they were informed, on what they believed to be good authority, that letters had been destroyed in the Dublin Post Office. He did not think negative statements from the Irish Law Officers of the Crown, that they did not know anything about letters having been destroyed, were sufficient. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, if he were a little better informed on this subject, might have to prosecute some person else beside the letter-carrier. It would be a painful duty; but, no doubt, the right hon. and learned Gentleman would discharge it with that impartiality and zeal which characterized all his actions. He (Mr. Gray) wished to know whether the Chief Secretary or the Lord Lieutenant considered themselves justified, under Act of Parliament, in intercepting and destroying newspapers; and whether large numbers of American newspapers and newspapers published elsewhere had been, and were being, intercepted and destroyed? There would surely be no breach of State secrecy in giving an answer to these questions. While the Government might have power to deal with a specific publication of a newspaper deemed to be seditious, they had no right whatever to adopt any process for the wholesale suppression of a newspaper; and the interception of all the copies of a newspaper going through the post might, in Ireland, amount to the suppression of the newspaper. He believed the Government were suppressing newspapers in that way, and he should like to be informed under what Statute they were operating? No Member of the Government could plead his official position for an evasion of the Statute Law.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN said, that, in the statement they had just heard from the Attorney General for Ireland, they had heard a little of the truth come out at last. They learnt that some letters—and probably amongst them were many of those about which the Irish Members had been pushing a fruitless inquiry that night—had been found in the possession of a letter-carrier. It would not be well to prejudge the case of this letter-carrier—who in all probability had not yet been brought to trial—but they had it on the authority of the Irish Attorney General that a large number of missing letters had been found at the house of a letter-carrier. He (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) was not surprised at that, and he merely looked upon it as a proof of the demoralization which was prevailing in the Department from one end to the other. There was a saying in Ireland, "Like master like man;" and the Attorney General for Ireland had only given them another glimpse of the state of the Post Office in Ireland.

Mr. LEAMY wished to know whether the section of the Act of Parliament, which had been quoted that night, empowered the Chief Secretary for Ireland to seize newspapers and detain them? That was a very simple question, to answer which there surely could be no objection.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, there was a section of the Act putting newspapers in the same category with letters.

Mr. SEXTON said, the Government had no other plea than "their responsibility." The Irish Members asked about arrests and detention of letters, and about telegrams and about newspapers, and the reply was always the same—that there was no security in the exercise of the powers conferred by the Statute except the "responsibility of the Minister." He was glad to hear the right hon. and learned Gentleman say that he had nothing to do with the searching and reading of letters, and he congratulated him that there were some Departments of the State still free from this defilement. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had spoken for the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Well, they all knew what sweet unanimity pervaded the present Cabinet; but they had not known that that unanimity was so complete that a Minister of the Treasury Bench could tell what was taking place in the mind of a Colleague in Ireland. He (Mr. Sexton) still hoped, however, that the Chief Secretary for Ireland would be able to tell them something useful as to the seizure and destruction of letters in Ireland. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary had told them he was authorized to seize, open, and detain letters, and had added that "detain" meant to keep them altogether. He (Mr. Sexton) ventured to think that "to detain" merely meant "to delay"—though, no doubt, the right hon. and learned Gentleman was more of a lawyer than he was. He should like to hear what the Chief Secretary for Ireland had to say about this—what his view of the law was. No doubt, the Attorney General for Ireland was innocent of tampering with letters; but he was entitled to think that the Chief Secretary for Ireland was not innocent of it. The Irish Members said they believed private letters had been seized, opened, and destroyed; and they were entitled to ask that this Vote should be delayed until the Minister responsible for the affairs of Ireland gave them an answer, one way or the other, as to the series of acts committed by the Irish Executive, which, by the legal aspect they bore, the Irish Members believed to be felonies.

Dr. COMMINS wished to know what interpretation the Government put upon the provisions of the Post Office Act? According to his interpretation, there was no general power given to open letters—to open letters in batches. This should be declared by the Government, in order to restore confidence to the people of Ireland who, at present, did not feel at ease, believing, as they did, that their innocent correspondence might be opened by officials. The construction he put upon the Statute was that there must be a warrant for each and every letter opened, and that was not the practice in Ireland; they had not only their own experience, but the knowledge of nearly everyone in the country, to prove that, 12 months ago, it was a matter of notoriety that hundreds of letters were opened by the Government. About this time of the year it was customary for Irish people having friends in England to send over pieces of shamrock to them. Letters sent to him, containing shamrock, had been opened, and the shamrock taken away. He gave this fact to the House on his own word, and that of many other Irish Members, who had told him that in their case the same thing had been done. He had it from general report that thousands of letters had been opened in this way and their contents abstracted. The law called that a felony. If letters could only be tampered with by the Chief Secretary in Ireland and the Home Secretary in England, surely the wholesale opening of letters and the abstraction of their contents by other officials constituted a felony, punishable with penal servitude.

MR. GILL said, he was glad to hear from the Attorney General for Ireland and the Home Secretary, that they admitted that the destruction of newspapers in the Post Office was illegal. The Attorney General for Ireland said there was no Statute whatever permitting the destruction of letters; and then the Home Secretary stated that there was a Statute which put newspapers in exactly the same position and category as letters. That, of course, proved, that if it was illegal to destroy letters, it was also illegal to destroy newspapers.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 12; Noes 117: Majority 105.—(Div. List, No. 39.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution *agreed to.*

Resolution 8.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

MR. GRAY asked, in reference to the Post Office Telegraph Clerks, whether they were sworn to secrecy in regard to telegrams, and the disclosure of their contents? He only asked this as a general question.

MR. SEXTON said, the Postmaster General had stated the other night that he had no responsibility in this matter; but that the responsibility respecting telegrams rested with the Home Secretary. Now, he would like to know whether there was any warrant with respect to the Telegraph Department, and, if so, how it was exercised? Whether officials, on behalf of the right hon. Gentleman, periodically inspected the files of the telegrams to discover whether they contained anything that might be useful; or whether the clerks had instructions to draw attention to anything that they thought might be useful? This authority might be exercised in more than one way, and he would like to know whether the clerks were sworn to secrecy, and which of the methods he had mentioned was adopted?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The Telegraphs Act of 1869 declares that for the purposes referred to in this debate telegrams are placed on the same footing as post letters. Therefore, everything I have said in reference to letters applies to telegrams, and telegrams are only to be dealt with under warrant from the Secretary of State, or by a Court of Law, which can order telegrams to be produced. Those are the only powers for dealing with telegrams of which I am aware.

MR. GRAY said, his question was a general question, and one not dealing with the subject of warrants. He hoped the Postmaster General would inform him what security there was for the secrecy of telegrams?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): There is a Statute providing that any clerk or other person officially in possession of a telegram is liable to imprisonment for disclosing its contents.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution *agreed to.*

Postponed Resolution to be *considered* upon *Wednesday.*

MOTIONS.

ARKLOW HARBOUR BILL.

On Motion of Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE, Bill for the improvement of Arklow Harbour, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE and Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 96.]

PLACES OF WORSHIP SITES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. SUMMERS, Bill to amend "The Places of Worship Sites Act, 1873," *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. SUMMERS, Mr. RICHARD, Mr. WILLIAM M'ARTHUR, and Mr. Alderman COTTON.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 97.]

LONDON PAROCHIAL CHARITIES AND PAROCHIAL CHARITIES (LONDON).

Ordered, That the Select Committee on the London Parochial Charities and Parochial Charities (London) Bills do consist of Eighteen Members, Twelve to be nominated by the House, and Six to be nominated by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions presented against the Bills be referred to the Select Committee on the Bills, provided such Petitions are presented three clear days before the meeting of the Committee, and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, or Agents, be heard upon their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bills against the said Petitions.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records; Five to be the quorum.

Ordered, That Mr. BRYCE, Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE, Mr. WALTER JAMES, Mr. FIRTH, Mr. HORACE DAVEY, Mr. WILLIAM LAWRENCE, Mr. CUBITT, Lord PERCY, Mr. BARING, Sir MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY, Mr. MACFARLANE, and Mr. GORST, be Members of the Committee.—(*Mr. Bryce.*)

House adjourned at Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 7*th March*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 1) *; Parliamentary Declaration (32).

Second Reading—Settled Land * (19); Conveyancing * (20); Married Women's Property (13).

Committee—Report—Post Cards (Reply) * (23).

THAMES AND SEVERN CANAL (RAILWAYS) BILL.

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Earl of Redesdale.*)

THE EARL OF DALHOUSIE said, the Government did not oppose the second reading. On the reference of the Bill to a Select Committee, the Board of Trade would make a Report to the Select Committee.

Motion *agreed to*; Bill read 2^a accordingly.

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY BILL.

(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

(NO. 13.) SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it was the result, with merely trifling alterations, of the deliberations of a Select Committee of the House of Commons, which sat last Session, when the Bill was referred to that Committee. It would consolidate two Acts passed in the years 1870 and 1874, and introduce some innovations and new provisions into the law. The principal new provisions were these:—The 1st clause proposed that without the intervention of any trustee a married woman should be capable of acquiring, holding, and disposing of any real or personal property as her separate property, and that she should, in respect of her separate property, be capable of entering into and rendering herself liable on any contract, and of suing and being sued, either in contract or in tort, or otherwise, in all respects as if she were a *feme sole*, without her husband being joined with her as plaintiff or defendant, or being made a party to any action or other legal proceeding. If a married woman carried on a separate trade, she would be subject to the Bankruptcy Laws as if she were a *feme sole*. The next material provision was the 2nd clause, which enlarged the provisions of the Act of 1870, but applied only to women married after the commencement of the Act. By the Act of 1870, it was provided that a woman married after that Act should be entitled for her separate use to personal property without any limitation of the amount to which she might succeed in case of intestacy, but with a somewhat arbitrary limitation to £200 in the case of succession to personalty under a will; but by the present Bill she would be entitled to hold as her separate property all real and personal property which belonged to her at the time of marriage, or should be acquired by or devolve on her after marriage. The 3rd clause of the Bill was similar in principle—though more absolute and unconditional—to the provision of the Scotch Act, which passed last year—namely, that property acquired after the Act by a woman married before the Act should be held by her as a *feme sole.* The clauses which followed related to investments in stocks and shares, and were similar to, but abridgments of, the provisions of the existing law. There were in the existing law some qualifications of these provisions which the present Bill did not repeat, but as to which he would undertake carefully to consider before the Bill went into Committee whether they ought not to be retained. The remaining clauses were, in substance, consolidation clauses and a repetition of the existing law, with this difference—that in any question between husband and wife, civil or criminal, either he or she might be a witness; but no criminal proceeding could be taken by a wife against her husband under this Bill in respect to property claimed by her while they were living together. When they got into Committee he would be glad to explain the clauses more fully, and to receive suggestions for the amendment of any of them.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

EARL CAIRNS said, he thought that the Bill was a most useful consolidation of the present law; but he pointed out that the Bill repealed the existing Statute, under which a woman was entitled to certain rights with regard to property acquired by her, whereby questions might be raised hereafter. The 3rd clause was open to considerable objection.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY said, that this Bill went beyond the Act of 1870, in encouraging criminal proceedings between husbands and wives, and that, in order to complete Clause 11, it should provide that a conviction under it should be taken by the Divorce Court as evidence of cruelty and desertion, without that Court having to go into the whole matter again.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2ª accordingly, and *committed* to a Committee of the Whole House on *Tuesday* the 21*st instant.*

PARLIAMENTARY DECLARATION BILL.

BILL PRESENTED. FIRST READING.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES): I propose to introduce into your Lordships' House a Bill which, I think, is one of very great importance. The question has been discussed in the other House. It is that of the admission of Atheists into Parliament. Now, I hold, and most distinctly hold, that it would not be expedient in this country to sanction the admission of Atheists into Parliament for the purpose of legislating for the people of this country; and the alteration I propose to make is for the purpose of getting rid of the difficulty which has arisen in regard to this matter; for I maintain that it is no part of the duty of Parliament to sanction the admission of Atheists for legislation or any other purpose. The Bill I propose is a very short one, and its purport is in the Preamble. The Preamble says—

> "Whereas it is expedient that provision should be made against Atheists taking part in legislation for this country: Be it enacted as follows:—That, from and after the passing of this Act, every Peer and every Member of the House of Commons on taking his seat in Parliament shall, before making the oath of allegiance or affirming the same in accordance with the provisions of the Parliamentary Oaths Act, 1866, make and subscribe the following declaration: 'I, *A.B.*, do solemnly, sincerely, and truly declare and affirm that I believe in an Almighty God.'"

I do not believe that there is anyone in this House who objects to making any such declaration; and I believe it is very necessary that such a declaration should be made. We all know—we know it from Scripture—that, as time goes on, in all probability infidelity to a large extent will prevail, and we ought, therefore, to be very careful that nothing shall be done in this country in any manner tending to do away with the religious feelings and character of the Parliament of this country. The declaration in the existing Parliamentary Oath is for the purpose of sustaining allegiance to the Queen, as Sovereign of this country, and it has been thought necessary that every Member should take such an Oath. What I propose is, that we should make some allegiance with regard to our reverence to our God, and that no person should be admitted to take part in the legislation of this country who does not believe and accept the doctrine of an Almighty God. The proposal I now make would relieve Parliament from the whole of the present difficulty, and not offend any man. In conclusion, I wish to say that I desire that the question should be approached in no Party spirit, and that I have brought the Bill in from a deep sense of what is due to Almighty God.

Bill to make provision to exclude Atheists from taking part in legislation for this country—*Presented* (The Earl of REDESDALE).

EARL GRANVILLE asked the noble Earl whether he proposed to fix a day for the second reading of the Bill?

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) replied, that he would not at present fix a day for the next stage, though he should like the Bill to pass through Parliament as speedily as possible. He would not name a day now, as he might have to make a postponement; but when he did fix a day, he should like to proceed with the measure without delay.

Bill read 1ª; and to be *printed.* (No. 32.)

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, he desired to add one word, and it was that he had not consulted any noble Lord on the one side of the House or on the other in regard to the introduction of the Bill, as he wished to keep the matter entirely free from anything of a Party character; and he believed that, on a question of this kind, every Member of their Lordships' House would take that course which he thought expedient, independently of any Party considerations. He had brought in the Bill from a deep sense of what he believed to be due to Almighty God, and he trusted it would be discussed and adopted by Parliament in the same spirit.

House adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock, to Thursday next, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 7th March, 1882.

MINUTES.] — PRIVATE BILLS (*by Order*)— *Second Reading*—Accrington Extension and Improvement; Blackburn Improvement*; Bolton Improvement*; Central Northumberland Railway; Chadderton Improvement*; Dundee Police*; East and West Yorkshire Union Railways*; Macclesfield Corporation*; Manchester Corporation*; North Eastern Railway (Additional Powers); Padiham and Hapton Local Board*; Regent's Canal, City, and Docks Railway.

PUBLIC BILL — *Report* — Pilotage Provisional Order (Tees)* [1].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

ACCRINGTON EXTENSION AND IMPROVEMENT BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. HOPWOOD said, he feared that it might be thought, in the eyes of those whom he opposed, that he had taken upon himself a somewhat unpleasant task in rising to move the rejection of the second reading of this Bill. It was a duty unpleasant to himself to come forward as the *quasi*-champion of what he conceived to be the public rights in the matter, when there were many other hon. Members who would have been much more justified in assuming that position. He had, however, arranged with some hon. Friends, who agreed with him upon the subject, that he should endeavour to put a stop, for a time, to the further progress of certain Private Bills which had been introduced this year, and the first on the list was the one now before the House—the Accrington Extension and Improvement Bill. As there were a number of other Bills in the same category, he trusted that the general remarks he might be permitted to make would be looked upon as dealing with the whole number, and thus obviate the necessity of going into a minute examination of each of the other Bills in succession. He trusted, therefore, that the House would give him its indulgence, to some extent, in regard to the width of the remarks he was about to make, as his only object was to save the public time. In opposing the Accrington Extension and Improvement Bill, he did so entirely upon public grounds, and he should have been very pleased if some other hon. Member had assumed the duty he had undertaken. His right hon. Friend, whose absence at that moment and the cause of it they all deeply lamented—the right hon. Member for Halifax (Mr. Stansfeld)—would, if he could have been in the House, have had much more authority and weight in discharging this duty than he (Mr. Hopwood) could pretend to have. He knew, however, that the course he was now taking had the thorough concurrence of his right hon. Friend, and his right hon. Friend was no mean authority in the matter, because, when the right hon. Gentleman presided over the Local Government Board, he was in the habit of exercising a strong and strict supervision over the kind of legislation to which objection was now taken in the present Bills. The right hon. Gentleman invariably declined to allow any alteration in the general law of the land to slip through in the shape of a Private Bill. He (Mr. Hopwood) had already said that he opposed these Bills upon public grounds. He did so because he was anxious that the principle he desired to assert, and which he contended was infringed upon in the present Bills, should not be infringed upon in future. It was right to say that a former Member of that House—then Member for Cambridge, and more recently the Member for Wigan (Mr. F. S. Powell)—took a very similar view from the other side of the House to that which he (Mr. Hopwood) now took. It was evident, therefore, that all parties in the House were equally interested in asserting the principle he was labouring to have settled. He might say at once that he admired the principle of Local Government as much as any Englishman could do; but he was not disposed to say that, wherever it was practicable, all Local Government should be centralized in a Corporation, or in a set of Improvement Commissioners. In all Local Government he thought that, *per se*, when a case was made out for the jurisdiction of the local authorities, that jurisdiction should be the same in all the localities, and that in one locality a different principle should not be acted upon from that which prevailed in the rest of the country. He entertained the highest respect for the corporate bodies that were established all over the Kingdom, and he had no desire either to thwart or to mortify them in any legitimate object they might have at heart. At the same time, he was of opinion that all matters connected with Local Government should receive full discussion and be fully threshed out. If the questions involved in the present Bills had been completely and fully discussed, first before the Corporations themselves, and then before the central authorities, there would have been less occasion for him to raise any objection; but the House would see that, in the form in which legislation of this kind acted—namely, in the shape of a Private Bill, it acquired the status of a Statute, and the matters prescribed in it went down from the Legislature, not to be debated in the Town Council, and ordered as it thought fit, but to become at once the future rule of right in the locality. If anyone said—"Why is this the law? Is the law so severe as this? I certainly was not aware of it;" he was answered at once by the assertion—"It is the law, and therefore you must obey it." If any question arose which was a matter of doubt, and it could be made a question of discussion and discretion upon which the full collective representative capacity of the borough could be called into play, he should have very little to say; but that was not the case. These Bills proposed to alter the law in various ways. They placed very arbitrary powers in the hands of certain local officers, and they empowered such officers, from the time the Bills left that House, to exercise the powers conferred upon them in a most arbitrary manner, without providing any power of supervision over them. No doubt a Corporation was a fit body to form a judgment upon many matters that arose within its precincts, and such matters would probably be well threshed out before they were determined upon. Parliament had already conferred upon the local authorities very large powers in respect of the arrangement of buildings, the question of police, the employment of hackney carriages, and a number of other matters. But they were matters that had been well ascertained years ago, and were regulated by such Public Acts as the Towns Improvements Acts, the Towns Police Acts, and the like, which formed the best authority at this moment for the general legislation of the country. Parliament had laid down a rule that upon certain questions the legislation of the country should be general. The varying way in which these powers were inserted in Local Acts was an evidence that they were liable to adoption in a capricious manner. If there happened to be a particularly active Chairman of Committee, who thought that a certain view might be permitted, although it might be capable of a most arbitrary application, his whim was generally gratified. The propriety of allowing the local law to be altered in this manner came before the House, upon such Bills as these, with very great force. They were now about to discuss a proposal, in regard to which they had been talking among themselves for some years, and which at length was about to assume a more practical form—namely, whether or not the House should refer all such matters to a Grand Committee. And yet it seemed to have been their practice of late to refer matters of great and vital interest connected with Local Government to some five Gentlemen sitting upstairs, who settled such questions as a Select Committee in a manner in which probably they never would have been settled if they had been brought before a Grand Committee, or discussed in open debate in the House. He had very little doubt in his own mind that the House, as a collective body, would never have consented to some of the decisions which had been arrived at by these small select tribunals. He came now to another point. Having treated the subject, to some extent, from a general point of view, he came to the particular class of complaints he had to make against the provisions of the Bills now before the House. The House would, of course, remember that there were Acts of a wide and general application applying to the whole of the country. For instance, there was the Public Health Act. But these Bills gave a particular form of administration to that Act, apart from that which the Statute itself gave, notwithstanding that the Act was passed after the deliberative wisdom of the House had been brought to bear upon it. Parliament not only laid down the general law, but deliberately defined the extent to which sanitary precautions and regulations in regard to infectious diseases should be carried; and yet of late a number of Private Bills had been introduced, some of which were successful last Session, in which other and different regulations had been authorized. This was a fact very greatly to be deplored. He did not know who was responsible for it; but he hoped to hear some good reason assigned for allowing these extraordinary provisions to appear in a Private Bill. He was informed that one or two of the provisions sanctioned last year were of so arbitrary a character that the local authorities intrusted with them had not dared to carry them into effect. It was a most serious matter to allow the inhabitants of any locality to be oppressed by enactments so arbitrary that there was great fear, if they were attempted to be carried out to the full extent, a riot would be provoked. He should not feel at all surprised if, in some of the large towns, an attempt to enforce some of the sections of Private Acts to which his attention had been called should provoke a display of anger which it would be difficult to conciliate. He therefore asked the House to pause before it allowed further legislation of this description. The questions dealt with by the Public Health Act were treated of, and amplified, in this manner. For instance, the notification of diseases was one of the subjects in regard to which these Private Bills proposed to add new clauses to the Public Health Act, notwithstanding the fact that there were at this moment three public measures before the House awaiting deliberation upon the self-same subject. Whenever an opportunity was afforded for discussing them, a very considerable contest would be provoked; and he wanted to know by what authority a mere Select Committee on a Private Bill should be allowed to dispose of such questions, seeing that the House itself was anxiously awaiting an opportunity of dealing with them. Surely it was a most objectionable practice, in such important matters, to permit a serious alteration or addition to the general law of the land to pass through a Select Committee of the House, probably unchallenged, and without opposition or discussion. He thought the House ought to be protected by its own officials against Parliamentary sanction being given, without the knowledge of the body of the House, to the eccentricities of local bodies in derogation of the law of the land, animated by a desire to make the people happy through the aid of the policeman and local medical officer. One clause in the Bill now under discussion enabled the Corporation to supplement the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act of 1878 by making bye-laws for the regulation of dairies, cowsheds, and milkshops. Parliament had already given to the Privy Council such powers as were deemed safe to intrust to a great public body responsible for its actions under special legislation; and yet in the present Bills the local authorities assumed to themselves the right to govern in accordance with their own individual notions as to such matters in different parts of the country. The proposal was that Parliament should confer upon these local bodies the power of inspecting the situation and arrangements of cowsheds and milkshops, and regulating various matters appertaining to the supply of milk. All these powers were to be taken out of the hands of the central authority and placed in those of local bodies; and not only so, but the existing powers were to be greatly enlarged. He wanted to know by what authority a mere Select Committee upstairs was empowered to sanction such important alterations of the general law? He thought it would be preferable for the House to refuse the proposed legislation, and to strengthen the hands of the Privy Council, so that it might act as an intermediate strainer, as it were, between the Legislature and the fancies and vagaries of Town Councils in derogation of the law of the land. No such extensive powers should be intrusted to any circumscribed locality. His contention was that in carrying out such legislation they were allowing local bodies to steal a march upon Parliament, and that it ought not to be allowed. He would contrast London with these Provincial towns. London had large powers; but he would undertake to prove that they were more moderate than most of those which these Town Councils had asked for, and obtained. How was it, then, that London had been more moderate in its demands? It was because the Acts which applied to London were public, and were obliged to be debated. They had been debated, and had been adopted by Parliament with full knowledge. Hence it arose that any extraordinary power speedily reached the eye of somebody, and was rejected if it were considered of an arbitrary character. Some of these Bills entered into the question of police, and created entirely new offences. Some of the clauses would, he thought, make the hair of some hon. Members stand on end if they read them. There were not only clauses affecting public health and contagious diseases in animals, but dealing with places of public entertainment, the regulation of pawnbroking, and electric lighting. In regard to most of these purposes there were Acts of Parliament of a public nature and of a stringent character already in force; and all he ventured to submit was that the House should refuse, with its eyes open, to intrust fresh powers to these Corporations. The best way of dealing with such extraordinary proposals would be to adopt the precedent already set in connection with the Private Bills which had been introduced in regard to electric lighting. Everybody knew that electric lighting was a matter of great public concern, and that it was only fit and proper that some Act of a general character should be passed. Accordingly, his right hon. Friend who represented the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) had come forward, as it was his duty to do, and said at once—"These are matters of public importance, and should receive the attention of the Government and the responsible authorities, in order to prevent hasty and improper legislation. Therefore, we propose that the progress of these Bills should be stayed, in order that time may be afforded for deciding upon some general principle to apply to them." He ventured to think that the Department had taken a proper course, and that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade deserved credit for his prompt action in the matter. If any other course had been taken, the public would have been left quite unprotected. Some of the provisions contained in the Bills now under discussion specially affected the artizan classes. The House would be aware that when all the means of warning the inhabitants of a district were gone through, the means at present provided for making public all the changes proposed by a Private Bill, they did little to inform the artizan classes what the Legislature was providing for them in the shape of arbitrary restrictions. Of course, the plea put forward for the restrictions was that of securing the public health—

e.g., the prevention of the spread of infectious diseases. But it struck him that Parliament had already well considered that question, and there had been a general manifestation of opinion that much must be left to the individual action of the members of the community. It was felt that they must be trusted to take precautions for their own safety, because otherwise it would be urged that the result would be to place the whole population under the eye of the police and the medical officers. No one would object to that if it had not a tendency to create a feeling of apathy and indifference. When infection broke out and disease became prevalent, the public, instead of having been taught to take precautions for their own safety and preservation, would look round for the medical officer or the policeman to go to their aid. The way in which the artizan classes were informed under the present Bill of the manner in which their liberty was about to be affected was this. An advertisement was inserted in the local paper to the effect that a meeting was about to be held under the Borough Funds Act, to take into consideration a Bill for lighting the streets with gas, or for improving the sewage, and "for other purposes." In that way the watchfulness of everybody in the place was lulled, for the most part, to sleep; and if no inquiry was made as to what was proposed to be the nature of the legislation, the artizan might ultimately find himself interfered with in his personal liberty, and in his home comforts, in a hundred different ways. He was liable to find himself, all of a sudden, placed entirely at the beck and call of the policeman, who would simply tell him that he had incurred a fine of 40*s*. One great objection to all this kind of legislation was this. A man who had been labouring in London went down to live, for instance, in one of the great manufacturing centres. In London he was practically free from vexatious interference or restraint, and he was all the happier for it; but because he sought to change his residence for the privilege of living in one of these large towns, he found himself incurring a penalty of £5 on the right, and £10 on the left, for the infraction of laws he had never heard of. As the House must itself be responsible for the enactment of these arbitrary powers, he was anxious to show how much importance Parliament had attached to protective and precautionary measures before sanctioning any legislation of the kind. In the case of Ireland there was a distinct Standing Order of the House that, before provisions such as these were introduced into any Bill, a certificate must be obtained by the promoters from the Local Government Board, stating that they were introduced with their approval, and upon their advice. There, again, they had a public body made responsible for the nature of the Bill that was introduced, and some precautions, at any rate, were taken against improper procedure. Nothing of the kind was done in regard to the present Bills. He would take the Accrington Bill as a test. The House would remember that he had referred to the Public Health Act. He contended that that Act went as far in the direction of interfering with the life of a family, with home existence, and with the arrangement of the dwellings of the people as Parliament could desire, or, at any rate, was disposed to intrust, to any local authority. In the first place, he would direct attention to Part 13 of the Accrington Bill, which related to sanitary arrangements. It stated that—

> "For the purposes of this Act, the expression 'infectious diseases,' means and includes all or any of the following diseases (that is to say, small-pox, cholera, scarlet fever, scarlatina, diphtheria, typhus fever, enteric or typhoid fever, and puerperal fever)."
>
> "The Corporation may, from time to time, order public or private schools situated in neighbourhoods affected by any infectious diseases to be temporarily closed or suspended."

What did "Corporation" mean? It probably meant the Corporation as a body, or the active Chairman of a Committee, to which the question of public health was referred. The Bill went on to say—

> "The Corporation may order any shop, dairy, or other place, for the sale of beverages by retail, or for the sale or storage of provisions, or of clothing or other articles liable to communicate or retain infection, or any common lodging house, to be temporarily closed whenever, from the appearance of infectious disease therein, or in rooms connected therewith, such action appears to the Corporation to be necessary; and may take all such means as seem to them desirable for preventing the entrance of the public therein, or the issue therefrom of food, clothing, or any of the articles or matters aforesaid."

The next provision was—

"In case of the existence of infectious disease in any house within the borough, the Corporation may issue an order declaring such house, or any rooms therein, or part thereof, an infected place, and forthwith, until such order has been determined by another certifying it free from infection."

Then followed certain regulations to be observed in respect of such house or part of a house. Further on it was provided that—

"When the room or rooms occupied by the person or persons suffering from infectious disease can, in the opinion of the medical officer of health, be effectually separated, and are so separated from the other parts of the same house or building, the rooms so occupied only shall be deemed to be affected by such order and regulations."

There, again, the medical officer had complete control. But there were medical officers and medical officers. Some of them were wise; some of them were not. He objected to be handed over to somebody, in whose judgment there was nothing like leather, to say what precaution should be taken according to his will and pleasure. The full extent of his arbitrary jurisdiction really rested on himself and his assistants. Another provision was that—

"No person dwelling in any such house or part of a house shall work at any other place in the same room with healthy persons, except with the written permission of the medical officer of health, and after disinfection of the person and clothing."

It would appear from this that the medical officer of health was to be the sole arbiter of the rules under which the working classes were to carry on their daily labour. The House would observe that this legislation applied equally to the house and family of the wealthy man as to that of the artizan. But did anyone suppose that the medical officer of health, or the most fussy member of the Corporation, would venture to challenge conclusions with anybody who was able to protect himself? At the foot of the proposed sections appeared the following Proviso:—

"Provided always, that the Corporation shall make compensation to any person who shall have complied with the provisions of this section, and who has thereby sustained loss by reason of the exercise of any of the foregoing powers; but such compensation shall be in regard only of direct material and pecuniary loss, and not in respect of any consequential loss or damage. And any person wilfully, or without reasonable excuse, offending against any of the foregoing provisions, or against any order or regulation made under any of such provisions, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding five pounds, and, in case of a continuing offence, to a further daily penalty not exceeding forty shillings for every day on which such offence continues."

There were other clauses with which he would not trouble the House, with one exception. He was sure the House would realize that he had undergone considerable labour, in order that he might fully understand the bearing of these Bills; and the fact that he was only discharging a duty must be his apology for the length at which he was compelled to detain the House. The next clause—Clause 191—related to the notice that was to be given of all cases of infectious disease, and it laid down that—

"If any such inmate be suffering from any infectious disease, the occupier, or person having the management or control of such building or of such occupier or person, be prevented by reason of such disease, then the person in charge of such inmate shall, so soon as he or she shall become aware of the existence in any such inmate of any such disease, forthwith give notice in writing to the sanitary officer of the Corporation, at their sanitary offices or at the chief police station, of the existence in such inmate of such disease."

Did anybody suppose that such a regulation would ever be carried out? And if it were capable of being carried out, let the House take into consideration the nature of the cases of disorder which would come within the question of fever or infection, and which might affect a man, or his wife, or his children, and then suppose that they would immediately be made known at the headquarters of the police or the medical officer of health. Why, under this clause, the Town Clerk and the Corporation, and the medical officer of health would really have power to interfere in almost every case of sickness, and virtually to overrule the authority of the medical man employed by the family. How long would such a system of arbitrary interference with a man's freedom of action be tolerated? It might be said by the local authorities—"We do not propose to carry such powers into effect generally." His answer was—"If you do not intend to carry them out, you do not want them;" and, therefore, he protested against Parliament being asked to sanction them. So much for the notification of infectious disease, under which—

"Any person who shall wilfully offend against this enactment shall for every such offence be liable to a penalty not exceeding ten pounds."

He observed, further, that—

"The Corporation shall pay to every registered medical practitioner who shall, in pursuance of this section, duly make and give any such certificate or declaration, a fee of one shilling for each such certificate, but only one such certificate need be given, and only one such fee shall be payable within an interval of thirty days to the same medical practitioner in respect of the same disease occurring in the same building."

Certainly the amount fixed in the Accrington Bill was not large; but in most of these Bills the medical officer was not satisfied with a fee of 1*s.*, but was to receive as much as 2*s.* 6*d.* The matter might be looked upon as a very small one; but he objected to the substitution of any such provisions for that which the wisdom and experience of Parliament had laid down as the general law of the land. The Bill went on to provide that other diseases might be declared to come within the supervision of the medical officer of health. Clause 192 said—

"The Corporation may from time to time by resolution, on the report of the medical officer of health, order that measles, German measles, erysipelas, whooping cough, or splenic fever, and (with the sanction of the Local Government Board) any infectious or contagious disease other than those specifically mentioned in this Act, shall be deemed to be an infectious disease within, and subject to the provisions of, this Act."

There could be no doubt that the Medical Profession possessed a fascinating power in being able to use scientific terms and phrases which were suggestive of death; and by that means they not unfrequently arrested and overpowered a man's judgment, and compelled him to accept their intervention. He did not think that Parliament should —at any rate without special deliberation and discussion—consent to grant to any medical officer such arbitrary powers. Then, by the 195th section, it was directed that—

"The provisions contained in Sections 116 to 119, inclusive, of the Public Health Act, 1875, shall extend and apply to all articles sold or exposed for sale, or deposited in any place for the purpose of sale or of preparation for sale within the borough, and intended for the food of man."

The Public Health Act stopped short at certain well-known articles of food. It stopped short at animal meat, poultry, game, fish, vegetables, fruit, bread, flour, and corn meal. But this section proposed to take the whole range of our food supply, and to include the whole number of articles sold, or exposed for sale as food. He did not propose to argue the question at length. He would simply point out that the Public Health Act was drawn up with great care, and in the provisions which it contained precise limits were laid down; and if Parliament in a general Act refrained from giving power to the local authorities which would enable them to interfere with a man's liberty and freedom of action, surely Parliament ought not now to be called upon to extend the provisions of the Public Health Act, and to confer these extraordinary powers by a mere clause in a Private Bill. He came next to the 197th section of the Bill. That section gave further powers for the removal to the hospital of infected persons. It said—

"On the certificate of the medical officer of health of the borough or other legally qualified medical practitioner that any person within the borough is suffering from any dangerous infectious disease, and is without proper lodging or accommodation enabling the case to be properly isolated, so as to prevent the spread of the disease, or to be properly treated, the Corporation may give notice to the head of the family (resident in the same building) to which the person is suffering belongs requiring the removal forthwith of such person to any hospital belonging to them or under their control: Provided, that if there is no such head of the family, or if such head of the family is absent from the borough, or cannot be found, such notice may be given to the person so suffering."

Now, that section placed a man living amongst his family entirely under the arbitrary control, not only of the medical officer of health, but of any legally qualified medical practitioner who might give a certificate; and in the event of a certificate being given, then the Corporation was empowered to give notice to the head of the family, requiring him to remove the sufferer forthwith to any hospital belonging to them or under their control. He knew it was pleaded that the local authorities were animated by the best intentions in desiring to have these powers; that they were to apply to everybody for their own good, and for the good of the community generally, and that the authorities were only asking for the power conferred by the clause without intending, in every instance, to avail themselves of it. But surely there was something in the nature of responsibility attaching to the parents. Some consideration ought to be paid to the rights of the family; and no Corporation or medical practitioner should be intrusted with the arbitrary power of doing what the passing of this Bill would enable them to do. The limitation of the Public Health Act in this respect was convincing proof that, in the opinion of the Legislature, it was not desirable to enact such arbitrary provisions. The powers of the local authorities and medical officers were circumscribed within proper limits; but, if the Accrington Bill were passed in its present shape, any Member of that House, every person belonging to the wealthiest and highest class of society, if he happened to live in one of these boroughs, and, in the opinion of the medical officer, was suffering from a dangerous or infectious disease, and not properly isolated, might be taken away from the midst of his family, who were nursing him, and removed to a hospital belonging to the Corporation, or under their control. By the exercise of a violent act, the Corporation or medical officer were empowered to do exactly as they pleased with him. Here, again, he might have the assurance that such things never would be done. His answer was that the Bill rendered them possible to be done, and he altogether objected to the possibility. In no case would he have any objection to the use of persuasion in convincing poor people that they were not properly attended, and that it would be better to remove them to a place where they would be properly cared for. That would be infinitely preferable to the violence and cruelty done to their feelings, and to those of their relatives, by putting in force an arbitrary power of removal. He believed that in many cases the idea of the danger of infection was much exaggerated. He was corroborated in that assertion by the testimony of the Medical Profession itself. The medical statement was that three or four persons might be shut up in a house with one who was infected, and yet not one of them would take the infection. No doubt, it was equally, and, perhaps, more probable that they would; but he protested in such a matter against an appeal being made to the House, to extract from its fears in regard to the dangers of infection such exceptional and extraordinary powers. He came now to the end of the provisions of the Bill, and the only clause he wished to refer to was the 199th, which said—

> "The Corporation, for the better prevention of the spread of infectious diseases, may from time to time make bye-laws with respect to dairies, cowsheds, and milkshops, for all or any of the following purposes (that is to say): For regulating the situation and arrangements thereof; the inspection thereof by an officer of the Corporation at all reasonable times; for insuring the purity of the water supply thereof."

The words "for regulating the situation and arrangements thereof" conferred entirely new powers of a very wide character; and, if they were inserted in the Bill, the Corporation of Accrington would in future have a right to say with regard to dairies, cowsheds, and milkshops, even where a man had an established business—"You must remain here no longer. You must give up your business and remove to some other part of the town." The section was entirely in conflict with 41 & 42 *Vict.*, under which the Privy Council might authorize the local authority to make regulations. He could understand such a provision as that, because it insured that the regulations were carried into effect under the authority of a responsible body entitled to the confidence of the public. There were other matters contained in the Bill which he would not weary the House by specifying, except Clause 216, which related to the keeping of disorderly houses, and provided that—

> "If any person keeps or acts or assists in the management of a brothel or other disorderly house, room, or other place, he shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding ten pounds, or, in the discretion of the justice before whom he is convicted, to be imprisoned, with or without hard labour, for any term not exceeding six months."

There were many more clauses of the same kind, against which he protested that they were monstrously arbitrary; and he did trust that they would be excised from the Bill. He might add that one of the Bills—that for Manchester—proposed to deal with children styled "street Arabs"—a matter which, no doubt, demanded the inquiry of the House, but ought not to be regulated by the insertion of a stray clause in a Private and

Local Bill. The subject was not dealt with in the Accrington Bill now under the consideration of the House; and he only mentioned the circumstance by way of illustrating his argument in reference to the curious category of promiscuous subjects that were now-a-days sought to be brought within the scope of Private Bill legislation. The proposal he referred to was one that would alter the Factory Acts. It was a proposal to deal with the case of vagrant children; and, in the first place, he was told that similar powers were already conferred upon the local authorities in Scotland. That, however, was no justification, because, to his mind, some of the Scotch proceedings were of an exceedingly arbitrary character; and the fact that certain powers were given to the local authorities in Scotland by no means modified or did away altogether with his disinclination to adopt similar provisions in England. But the clause to which he referred in one of the present Bills very much exceeded even the Scotch law. It gave power to take up any children who might be found in the streets selling newspapers and endeavouring to earn a few pence in order to supply themselves with food. The Bill gave power to the local authorities to take up such children and put them in some place where, it was imagined, they would be better cared for and looked after. But he was satisfied that the House would look upon the question in a very different spirit. He had no doubt that every benevolent person would, if it were possible, consent to a proposal to this extent—that if, for instance, the children of Manchester were found in the streets after dark, at a later hour than was considered to be consistent with their tender years, hungry and unwashed, they should be taken care of by the police, fed, washed, and put to bed. But the proposal now made was to take from the parent his right to derive any assistance from the labour of his child, or if a child did as he was told, as many children in London were in the habit of doing, invest a few pence in the purchase of newspapers and sell them at a profit, then Parliament was to put a stop to such a proceeding by an arbitrary Act of legislation. At this very moment the Legislature was discussing how the condition of vagrant children could be best ameliorated. At this moment they found the Industrial Schools broken down; at this moment they were referring all these matters for discussion before a Royal Commission; and yet at such a moment it was seriously proposed by some persons—the Liverpool Bill raised the same question; but the authorities had, on his opposition, withdrawn the clause—that the local authorities should be entrusted with extraordinary powers to enable them to decide the whole matter. Upon such an important subject he contended that it was of national and general importance that there should be direct Parliamentary legislation, and that no Private Bill, dealing with such matters, should be passed in the way now suggested. Having borne with patience, more than he deserved, the lengthened statement he had considered it his duty to make, he trusted the House would feel that he had made out a strong case for the proposition he submitted, that in future greater care should be exercised in the supervision of Private Bills promoted by corporate bodies and municipal authorities than was now manifested. Of course, he was not aware that these Bills had yet passed through the amending hands of any of the authorities of the House, and he had made no reference to the action of those authorities. All he had attempted was to make out a case for the supervision and control of the House itself; and he believed he had shown that the Bills now standing on the Paper required very material alteration and amendment. All that it was necessary to add was that he had no personal hostility to these Bills, and he had no desire to interfere with their progress, except so far as they proposed to carry out legislative enactments that might interfere with the comforts and convenience of the people. In other respects they were, no doubt, useful Bills, and he had no wish to oppose them or contribute towards their rejection. He proposed to await the discussion that would probably take place on the Amendment he was about to submit, and then to deal with it in the manner that would be most satisfactory to the House. If it should be necessary to persist with his opposition to the second reading of these Bills he should not shrink from doing so; but he was willing, in conjunction with those who were acting with him in the matter, to content himself with a reasonable assurance from the Government that the question would receive due attention, because he and they knew that at a later stage, either upon the Report or the third reading, they would be able to move the excision of any provision which might have been incautiously admitted, either by the authorities of the House or by the Select Committee, and which, in the judgment of the House, had been improperly admitted. If it should appear that these objectionable provisions had been retained, he would certainly be prepared to resort to every legitimate and Parliamentary means in order to defeat them and prevent them from becoming law. He begged, in conclusion, to move that the Bill be read a second time on that day six months.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Hopwood.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS: I think the House is very much indebted to the hon. and learned Gentleman for having brought this matter forward. I have no doubt that no one wishes, in any shape or form, to interfere with the desire of the great Corporations of the country to prosecute any Bills they think fit for the purpose of providing for the wants of the inhabitants of the towns they represent. But in this Bill, and in certain other Bills that are before us at the present moment, there are undoubtedly very great pains and penalties inserted in various clauses, both in reference to children and also in regard to infectious diseases and other matters which ought not altogether to be left to the judgment of a Committee upstairs, but which, in reality, form matters of public and general interest, and require to be settled by this House. Anyone who has had, as I have had, anything to do with the clauses of Local Acts and General Acts also will have found that there are provisions in some Acts of Parliament under which pressure and oppression have been permitted to be carried out. It is important to know what the House of Commons is to do with these Bills. I do not want to take up the time of the House, but rather to save it if I can, and I would make a suggestion to the hon. and learned Member who has brought the subject before us. There are a great number of these Bills, I believe, and some of them contain provisions which are different from those contained in others. I would therefore suggest that they might all go to a Committee upstairs, whose duty it would be to deal with those portions which belong to the Private Business of the House. But I think that there ought to be a special Instruction from this House to the Committee to report to this House on all the particular clauses to which objection is taken upon general grounds. Further, there ought to be a distinct understanding that the third reading of these Bills should not be taken until the House has had an opportunity of discussing the Report of the Committee, so that the House itself may be able to pass an opinion upon the general principles involved in these different measures. I venture to throw this out as a suggestion to the House generally. I think we shall save time by taking such a course, and I also think that the object of the hon. and learned Member who has brought the question forward would be obtained as much by that means as he could expect by any other. I deeply sympathize with all that the hon. and learned Member has stated. I listened to his speech with great attention, and I think he deserves the thanks of the House for the course he has taken.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I quite concur with what the right hon. Gentleman has said in regard to the great utility of the discussion which my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood) has raised. But the questions which he has entered into give rise to very different considerations; and we must all feel how difficult it is, seeing the multitude of Private Bills that come before us, to give that attention to every point which is absolutely necessary. In point of fact, the machinery of this House is not calculated for any such purpose, nor can I go quite the entire length of my hon. and learned Friend in saying that there should be no local Board in any great community, which should possess powers differing in any respect from those conferred by the general law; because it seems to me that it might be very necessary for great communities like those of Manchester and Liverpool, for instance, to have special provisions which would be appropriate to such communities, but would not necessarily apply to any other parts of the country. I think that is a reason why, under proper safeguards, you may have a system of local law which should be applicable to different communities. I am, however, quite certain that almost the only alleviation of the difficulty in which the House is now placed in the transaction of Public Business is to be found in an extension of the principles of Local Government, and in intrusting the various communities with the power of making provision for meeting the wants of the people. But I entirely agree that this matter ought to be very carefully watched, and that we ought not to grant powers to local bodies which may become oppressive. It seems to me, therefore, that the suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross) is a very excellent and satisfactory one, because it will enable us to remit to the Committee upstairs for careful examination and consideration questions which we cannot here undertake ourselves when the House meets at 4 o'clock. When these various matters have been sifted upstairs, and all matters extracted from them which involve general principles, we should be in a better position to consider and discuss their bearing. I therefore hope that my hon. and learned Friend will consent to accept the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman opposite. It is one in which, for my part, I entirely concur; and I think there should be an Instruction to the Committee which may sit upon those Bills in which exceptional powers are contained that they should make a special Report to the House. I think that such a proposal will meet the views of my hon. and learned Friend, and will relieve this House from attempting the difficult task of pronouncing an opinion upon the merits of these various schemes.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I propose, further, that these Bills should not be read a third time until this House has had an opportunity of considering the Report of the Committee.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Certainly.

Mr. THOMAS COLLINS said, he thought the House ought to be grateful to the hon. and learned Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood) for having brought these Bills under the notice of the House. He did not think that the local authorities in different localities should have power, by inserting a few clauses in a Private Bill, to alter the law which applied to the general population of the country. If such a system of legislation were sanctioned they might have in one town—Leeds for instance—one particular set of rules and regulations, and in another town, such as Manchester, where the conditions were similar, a totally different set of rules. He was sorry that the hon. and learned Member had gone so far as to move the rejection of the Bill. He thought the wiser course would have been to consult with the promoters of the Bill, and then to have taken steps to secure that some uniform course should be laid down by Parliament as to the shape which legislation should take in regard to these matters. He entirely objected to the principle of allowing important changes in the general legislation of the country to be introduced through the medium of Private Bills, and then referred to a Select Committee upstairs composed of a few Gentlemen necessarily holding different views in regard to the public policy of the regulations recommended. The hon. and learned Member had not touched upon the question of the borrowing powers contained in some of these Bills; and, therefore, he (Mr. Collins) was desirous of saying a few words on that subject. He had always held strong opinions in reference to the borrowing powers asked for by different localities. He had always held that this generation ought to pay for its own fancies, and that the money which any Corporation sought to raise for the purpose of improving its own town ought to be paid off in 30, 40, or 50 years, or any other term which the wisdom of Parliament might fix. Personally, he was of opinion that 30 years were quite long enough; but a Committee upstairs might feel disposed to fix a longer period. The Accrington Bill proposed 70 years; but why should four hon. Gentlemen sitting upstairs have the right to say that Accrington should have the power of borrowing money for 70 years, while another Committee sitting, say, upon a Bolton Bill should limit the power to 30 years? In every case of the kind there ought to be a specific Report from the Committee; and it ought not to be left to any

Committee, no matter how distinguished the Members of it might be, to lay down what ought to be the borrowing powers. There could be little doubt that a principle that affected Bolton would equally affect Oldham; and it ought not to be left to four Gentlemen sitting upstairs to say what should be the powers given in the one case, and what in the other, to borrow money on the rates. What were the ratepayers likely to do when a long term for repayment was allowed? There was every likelihood that they would indulge in a profligate expenditure of money, because they knew that as ratepayers they only had a temporary existence, and whatever the extravagance of the expenditure, the only question with them was—"How little shall we have to pay year by year?" It was not "What will this new Town Hall cost us?" or "How much shall we be required to expend on these tramways?" But "How can we so arrange matters as to pay as little as we can?" Knowing that the period of payment was far distant, the local authorities were always in favour of borrowing; and it must be borne in mind that the owner had no voice in the matter, and even if he had, the occupiers being ten to one, any objections he might urge would not receive the slightest attention. The interests of the owners and of the occupiers were entirely opposed. He had not read through the whole of the 64 Bills which had been deposited, and which introduced exceptional powers; but he had gone through the Accrington Bill. He had no doubt, however, that all of these Private Bills contained different proposals, and that many of them were of a contrary character. The Accrington Bill provided that the annual instalments of the principal and interest of the money borrowed should be paid off in 70 years; and it then went on to state what the money was to be spent in. But in many of these Bills it was to be expended upon objects which in 30 or 40 years would be good for nothing. The Blackburn Bill—a very long Bill of 220 pages, and containing about 1,400 clauses—as far as he could see, made no provision whatever for the payment of its debts. It proposed to take power to borrow money in perpetuity. He might be wrong in his reading of the Bill; but that was the only conclusion he could arrive at. According to page 119 of the Bill, the Corporation of Blackburn proposed to take power to raise money for objects of a purely temporary character—£20,000, for instance, to be expended in street improvements, and no provision whatever was made for the repayment of the principal. Surely that was a power which ought never to be conceded. It amounted to the imposition of a fixed charge upon the inhabitants which was never to be paid off; and among the works to which the expenditure was to be applied were the erection of police buildings, which, like all other buildings, must in the end decay. He confessed that he had never before heard of such a proposition as that contained in the Blackburn Bill—namely, that the Corporation should have the power of borrowing without being subject to any provision in regard to repayment. He sincerely trusted, if this Bill was sent to a Select Committee, that the special attention of the Committee would be drawn to these borrowing powers, and that the House would lay down definite and clear instructions to the Committee without attempting to shirk its responsibility. The House might lay down the principle, within certain limits, that no borrowing powers should be sanctioned which should extend over a period of 30 or 50 years; and they ought not to pass Bills year by year in which these very important powers were made to vary in some cases from 30 to 40 years, in others to 100 years, and in others, like Blackburn, to perpetuity. The principle involved a great question of public policy, which ought to be decided by the House itself, and not by a Committee upstairs. He hoped that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood) would withdraw his Amendment for the rejection of the Bill, and move instead that the consideration of the measure be postponed for two or three weeks, so that in the meantime an arrangement might be come to with the promoters, which would give a certain degree of uniformity to the legislation proposed; and the House be enabled, before reading the Bill a second time, to lay down certain bases of principle which should guide the Committee upstairs as to the mode in which the question was to be dealt with. He did not think that in vital questions of this kind the Select Committee of the House should be left entirely to their own discretion. It was for the House to lay down the principles that ought to guide their decisions.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Sir William Harcourt) had adopted the suggestion of the right hon. Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) that this Bill should be allowed to go to a Committee upstairs, with certain instructions as to what was to be done with it, and with directions to report to the House. But he (Mr. Sclater-Booth) thought that such an Instruction would be of very little use unless the House took care that the whole of these Bills went to the same Committee, or, at all events, be grouped together so that they might be considered on some common plan of supervision. He thought that his hon. and learned Friend below the Gangway (Mr. T. Collins) made a proper suggestion when he asked that the consideration of the whole of these Bills should be delayed for a fortnight, and that in the meantime the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, or the Chairman of Ways and Means, who would, perhaps, be the most proper person, should take some step with a view to secure that the Bills should be grouped together, and the Committee directed to present special Reports upon them, and the extent to which they ought to be allowed to interfere with the existing public law. He gathered from the debate which had taken place that it was proposed very materially to alter and amend—first, the Public Health Act; secondly, the Industrial Schools Act; and, thirdly, greatly to extend the powers of borrowing. It seemed to him quite impossible to allow the confusion to go on which would be introduced into the general law of the land by sanctioning many of the provisions contained in these Private Bills.

Mr. LYON PLAYFAIR said, the House was indebted to the hon. and learned Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood) for having drawn attention to the extravagant provisions in some of the Local Bills of this Session. There were already 24 Local Acts containing provisions of the kind which the hon. and learned Gentleman had brought under their notice; and though many of those provisions were useful, some had been extravagantly extended in the Bills promoted this year. He thought the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross) was a good one, and especially when coupled with the suggestion of the late President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Sclater-Booth), that the Bills should be grouped together and go before one Committee. If that were done an Instruction might be prepared, and the Committee would be able to report generally as to how far the Acts were going in the direction already sanctioned by precedent, and how far they had the extravagances pointed out by the hon. and learned Member for Stockport, especially with regard to police matters and sanitary arrangements. Much good might be done in showing to what extent the House approved, or disapproved, of proposals for local government which had been made in the Bills of this year.

Mr. DICK-PEDDIE said, there was an important clause in some of the Bills to which reference had not been made; it, nevertheless, required very close attention. He had carefully read one of the Bills, and he found power given to the Corporation, which, if exercised, would amount, in many cases, to the confiscation of one half of the property in a borough. For instance, in the Dundee Bill power was given to the Corporation to prevent any person erecting tenements or houses in flats more than four storeys high. Now, proprietors had bought property entirely unrestricted, and with the intention of building upon it to its greatest extent. What would be thought if it were suggested that such a restriction should be enforced in London, where there were so many noble mansions of six and seven storeys? He need not say anything more to show hon. Members what a grievous interference with the rights of property was now proposed. No compensation was provided in case of such restrictions being enforced; and he hoped the House would take the matter he had referred to into careful consideration before assenting to the passing of the Bills.

Mr. BRIGGS said, he only wanted to interpose between the House and its decision for one moment. Inasmuch as his name appeared on the back of the Blackburn Improvement Bill, he might be allowed to correct a misapprehension into which the hon. and learned Member for Knaresborough (Mr. T. Collins) had, no doubt, unwittingly fallen. The hon. and learned Gentleman said he had not had time to read the Bills through. He (Mr. Briggs) was afraid some Members did make speeches without having, first of all, properly studied the subject. He said the Blackburn people wanted to borrow money, and did not intend to pay it back; at least, there was no provision in their Bill concerning the repayment. He (Mr. Briggs) simply wished to say that the term they were allowed for repayment was 80 years. Of course, that would seem a long time to hon. Members; but it must be remembered that in the North of England there were a great many new communities springing up who had to spend enormous sums of money, and it would be distinctly unfair to make the present, or even the next, generation pay the whole cost of the public improvements. He would add that the hon. and learned Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood) had taken, for those who were interested in the Bills under consideration, a somewhat inconvenient course. He had lumped the good and the evil together, and had taken as his type, perhaps, the Bill to which he entertained the greatest objection, and had founded his sermon upon that text. He did not rise for the purpose of objecting to the very useful suggestions which had been thrown out by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen, but simply to correct a misstatement made by the hon. and learned Member for Knaresborough.

MR. GRAY approved of the proposal to refer all the Bills to one Committee. It was clearly not the intention of the House to read the Bills a second time now, because if the Bills were sent to different Committees with instructions to report upon the questions upon which such difference of opinion existed, such as borrowing powers, management of police, and so forth, they would have as many different Reports, based upon different principles, as they would have Committees. He could not understand the violent objection that some Members of the House had taken to some of the sanitary provisions of the Bills. The Sanitary Acts had imposed upon sanitary authorities very serious and onerous duties; and when the authorities discovered they were not able effectually to perform their duties they naturally attempted, by the only method open to them, to relieve themselves of the duties they found impracticable. He had had his attention directed to the question of the notification of diseases, and he found there were some 25 or 30 towns which had obtained Private Acts to deal with such matters. He made an attempt to introduce a reform on the subject for Ireland; but the Bill was blocked, as was the fate of many other measures intended for the good of his country. As to the borrowing powers, it was very easy to find the great difficulty which existed. Parliament must remember that it had imposed certain duties upon local authorities, and those authorities must find some method of carrying out their duties, hence the borrowing powers that were sought. The Government promised to facilitate the borrowing powers of the sanitary authorities, but they never did it; on the contrary, they took away certain facilities and did not replace them with others. They must not press too hardly upon the local authorities, who, it must be remembered, were only endeavouring to discharge the duties which Parliament had imposed on them.

MR. HASTINGS said, that it was his opinion that sanitary provisions should be embodied in a general Act, especially the provisions with regard to the notification of diseases. Last year he introduced a Bill with that object, and he had again introduced it this Session. He had taken very great pains to ascertain what was the effect of the provisions for notification in upwards of 20 cities and boroughs in which they had been in force for some time; and he had been unable to discover one in which they were not regarded with approbation. For some period a large portion of the Medical Profession of Edinburgh resisted the enforcement of notification; but he found that now in that city every one, from the Lord Provost downwards, was in favour of these provisions; everyone declared that they had been productive of great benefit to the population in the way of stopping the spread of disease. He had received similar reports from Bolton and Leicester. He had just got a long letter from the Town Clerk of Leicester, stating the enormous good to the population by the operation of the provision regarding the notification of diseases; and when the hon. and learned Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood) said there were some towns or some Corporations which had not ventured to put a measure of this kind into operation, he could inform him he only knew of one, and he could give him the history of that one. It was the Corporation of Nottingham. He was there the other day, and he found it was true that having obtained a measure of this kind some three years ago, they had not put it into operation until a very short time ago; and the consequence was that, three days before he was there, a violent outbreak of small-pox took place, owing to the fact that the first case had not been notified to the officer of health. The local authorities immediately met, and resolved to put the Act into operation. He thought experience ought to count for something in these matters. Wherever the Act had been carried out good had been done; and he should rejoice if the House should think fit to refer the Bills under consideration to a Committee, to thoroughly examine them, and report upon the way in which similar provisions had been carried out in different towns. He was convinced the result of that inquiry would be that the House would see the necessity of extending some general measure of notification of disease to the whole population.

Mr. HOPWOOD said, he would explain what he proposed to do, and that was, of course, to accede to what had been suggested on both sides of the House. His conception of the suggestion was this—that the Bills be allowed to be read a second time to-day, upon the understanding, in the face of the House, that they be referred to a Committee, collectively or individually, at the discretion of the Chairman of Ways and Means, with an Instruction from him embodying what was now clearly the sense of the House in the matter—namely, that the Committee should report specially upon the different clauses indicated, and that finally the House should have an opportunity, before the third reading, of considering the Report, and of expressing its approval or otherwise. He would, of course, withdraw his Amendment.

Mr. THOMAS COLLINS said, that, before the Amendment was withdrawn, he would like to say it was desirable that the Chairman of Ways and Means should frame the Instruction to the Committee. In his opinion it would be wise to postpone the second reading of the Bills for a fortnight, or even a week, and that in the meantime the Chairman of Ways and Means should lay on the Table of the House the Instruction he proposed to frame for the benefit of the Committee. Unless he got some satisfactory answer from the Chairman of Ways and Means on this point, he should propose the postponement of the second reading for a fortnight.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Mr. RITCHIE said, that under the circumstances he would move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Ritchie.*)

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that if the Bills were read a second time they could not go to the Committee, except by the sanction of the Chairman of Ways and Means; and the House might rely that his right hon. Friend would not allow the Bills to go to Committee until the Committee was properly instructed. Under such circumstances he thought the Bills might be read a second time.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he was under the impression that the matter of Instruction rested with the Committee of Selection.

Mr. LYON PLAYFAIR said, if any expression of opinion was required the Chairman of Ways and Means placed himself in communication with the Committee of Selection. The Chairman of Ways and Means and the Committee of Selection were always willing to work together; and the Committee of Selection, knowing the wishes of the House, would take care that the Bills were referred to one Committee. With regard to the Instructions to the Committee, he ought to point out that it was not his duty to prepare the Instructions, for, as an Executive Officer of the House, he had to obey them. They would, no doubt, emanate from the Government after consultation with himself and the hon. and learned Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood), and the Instructions would then be moved in the House.

Viscount FOLKESTONE said, he understood that what his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. T. Collins) wished was that the Instructions should be laid upon the Table of the House, so that hon. Members who were interested in the question might have an opportunity of considering them, and, if necessary, of making some Motion or some remarks upon them. He did not know whether there was any objection to such a course.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, it was clearly the understanding that the Government should prepare the Instructions and lay them on the Table of the House.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he understood the Instructions would form the subject of a Motion in the House, by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board or the Chairman of Ways and Means. It was clear that the Committee could not act upon Instructions simply laid on the Table. The Instructions must be passed by the House before they could reach the Committee.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT undertook, on the part of the Government, to consult the Chairman of Ways and Means and the hon. and learned Member for Stockport in framing the Instructions, and to formally move them in the House.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

CENTRAL NORTHUMBERLAND RAILWAY BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. BRYCE said, he had placed a Notice on the Paper of his intention to move the rejection of this Bill, on the ground that it interfered with a very valuable and important common—namely, the town moor of Newcastle-on-Tyne, a large portion of which it proposed to take. The promoters of the Bill, he was glad to say, had recognized the objections raised to the Bill, and had agreed to run through the moor in a tunnel, and to restore to the moor as much common land as they proposed to take from it. Under those circumstances, the objections which many hon. Members felt to this Bill had been fairly met, and he had no further opposition to make to it.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL MILNE HOME said, that after so protracted a debate as that which they had just had, he would not weary the House by trespassing long upon its time. But after what had transpired on Thursday, when the Bill was last before the House, he thought it his duty not to let the second reading pass without saying a very few words. On that occasion neither of his hon. Friends whose names were on the back of the Bill were present to explain its provisions, and the second reading was moved by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds), who subsequently stated that something had been done with the provisions of the Bill, and that he believed all opposition was withdrawn. He (Lieutenant-Colonel Milne Home), therefore, took the opportunity of stating that his constituents were opposed to the passing of this Bill; and he felt it his duty to come and support the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Bryce) in his opposition. The hon. Member himself was not in his place on Thursday; and he thought it was due to him, as well as due to his hon. Friends the promoters of the Bill, to allow the discussion to be postponed until this day. He now found that the opposition of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) was withdrawn, and the House had heard from him that his objections had been met by the promoters of the Bill. He only trusted that the objections he (Lieutenant-Colonel Milne Home) had to take would be equally met. Without going into the nature of the objections raised by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, it was enough to observe that they arose at the Southern end of the proposed railway; whereas his (Lieutenant-Colonel Milne Home's) objections were entirely with regard to the Northern portion of the line, and they might be very shortly stated. They were, it was true, only of a local nature; but he contended that they involved a principle which it was fair to bring before the House of Commons. The principle was simply this—that if the Bill were passed in its entirety, he believed it would unwarrantably interfere with the existing commercial interests of the borough of Berwick-upon-Tweed, which was at the Northern section of the line. He need not go into any detail upon that subject, because he had presented two Petitions to the House from the Town Council of Berwick and the Harbour Commissioners; and he might say that on two points it appeared that the commercial interests of Berwick would be interfered with. First, as to the direction of the line—the Northern portion of it. If it were carried out as proposed, it would divert the traffic from the existing route, and the traffic would have to go by a circuitous route and would be taken away from the present channel at Berwick, which was the outport of that part of Northumberland and the principal market towns connected with that district. He could not help contending that it was wrong in principle to interfere, without some sort of compensation, with those existing interests. More than that, a Bill had already passed a second reading in the House, which was promoted by the North Eastern Railway Company, which already possessed the Northern part of Northumberland. The line laid down in that Bill went through almost identically the same district of country, although he was free to admit that it did not confer such special advantages on two or three landed proprietors as the Central Northumberland Line did. But they ought to preserve the rights of the community rather than improve the personal interests of two or three landed proprietors. He did not mean to take upon himself at this stage the sole responsibility of so strong an action as moving that the Bill be read a second time six months hence; but he did hope that his hon. Friends who had charge of the Bill would give effect to the views which he had ventured to express. All that he had further to say was this—that if the Bill came downstairs unaltered in the direction he had ventured to point out, he should reserve to himself the right of moving the rejection of the Bill when it reached the House again.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

NORTH EASTERN RAILWAY (ADDITIONAL POWERS) BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Lieutenant-Colonel Milne Home

Mr. J. LOWTHER said, he had an Amendment down upon the Paper against this Bill, which raised, to some extent, the identical principle which had been under the consideration of the House for the last hour and a-half; but the House would be glad to learn that it was not his intention to detain them more than a few moments, as he only desired to point out what he thought were the very objectionable provisions of the Bill. There was only one clause to which he took exception—namely, the 25th clause, which provided for the extension of time beyond that allowed by the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act for the disposal of surplus lands by the North Eastern Railway Company. He should not detain the House by reading the clause in detail; but in the Lands Clauses Act, which he need not remind the House was a general Statute, the limit of 10 years was prescribed during which surplus lands should be disposed of in the manner provided by that Act. This Bill, however, gave another 10 years during which these lands should be disposed of. The ground of his objection was that if it was necessary to amend the Lands Clauses Act, which was a Public General Act, that amendment should take the shape of a Public Bill. The promoters of the Bill had issued a statement of the reasons for it. It was not his intention to controvert those reasons. The proposal in the Bill might be an improvement—and he would concede, for the sake of argument, that the proposal in the Bill might be an improvement—in the existing law; but still he said that even an improvement of the Lands Clauses Act should be introduced into this House as a Public Bill. It was no answer to his objection to say that the Lands Clauses Act was faulty in any respect. He would assume that it was faulty. The same principle which was discussed at some length just now applied far more forcibly to the present Bill—namely, that it was sought by means of a Private Bill to modify, or, if they liked to say so, to amend and improve a public Statute. Now, among the reasons given by the North Eastern Railway Company why Parliament should adopt their proposal was one which he thought was a very good argument against the Bill—namely, that certain other Bills which they mentioned had had similar provisions inserted. The North Eastern Railway Company said that in 1849 and in 1851 they succeeded in obtaining the introduction into Private Bills of provisions of this kind. Now, he thought that a reason why the House should, upon that occasion, mark its disapproval of that practice. If Railway Companies, or any other persons, desired to amend the Public Statutes, they should bring their proposals before Parliament in the shape of a Public Bill. It was a great hardship to owners of property. Owners of property relied upon the provisions of the Public Statutes, and they were not, in the first instance, disposed to put themselves to the expense of opposing a Private Bill. He was not himself personally affected by that Bill, although many of his neighbours were; but in some cases those who were in the possession of ample means had availed themselves of the opportunity of petitioning against the Bill. He knew one Petition which had been lodged; but those who were not so well able to deal with cases of that kind would not incur the expense, and were now without any protection for the defence of their interests. He ventured to say that it was a hardship upon private persons to be driven to the expensive machinery of petitioning against Private Bills when they held their property in reliance upon the provisions of the General Statute. He should not detain the House, especially as he had the disadvantage of following a lengthy and exhaustive discussion upon a Bill which raised, to some extent, a somewhat similar principle. The House must, however, be very careful how they deliberately allowed themselves to be drawn into a precedent in the matter. What had occurred before was only a *quasi*-precedent, which had escaped the notice of Parliament. The House had now before it an attempt to override a General Statute. But he was not without hope that the attention of the promoters of the Bill would be called to it, and that they would modify the Bill and strike out this clause. But there was another provision to which he would draw the attention of the House. In the Lands Clauses Act provision was made for the right of pre-emption, and the rights of certain parties within the 10 years prescribed by the Statute. The person from whom the land was originally severed, and other persons, had a right of pre-emption; but this Clause 25 did away with that. He was told that the clause as drawn very distinctly overrode the right of pre-emption, which was distinctly preserved in the Lands Clauses Act. Apart from that the clause was most objectionable, and he hoped the House would firmly put its foot down upon the principle involved—namely, that a Public Statute could be amended by, as he thought, an insane clause in a Private Bill. He protested against such a thing, and he would venture to hope that the Representative of Her Majesty's Government, whoever he might be, who had this matter in charge, would support the proposition that he laid down; and even conceding, for the sake of argument, that the proposal was an improvement upon the Lands Clauses Act, he held that the improvement ought to be brought in as a Public Bill.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words, "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. James Lowther.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. J. W. PEASE said, that as one of the Members who had charge of the Bill, perhaps the House would allow him to reply to the remarks of his right hon. Friend. The Bill was a most important Bill for the North of England. It was a Bill which contained a great many provisions for works which were calculated to promote specially the public safety. This Bill went into several matters which had been delayed for several years owing to the depression of the times. It was a Bill which was looked upon with great interest in the districts served by the North Eastern Railway Company; and, therefore, he begged that the House would not jeopardize a Bill, on the allegations of his right hon. Friend, especially when it contained so many provisions that were of interest to the community. His right hon. Friend said that that was a matter of principle, and that the Railway Companies ought not to come to the House and ask for an extension of time. He would ask his right hon. Friend when he first discovered this great principle, because ever since his right hon. Friend and he (Mr. Pease) came into that House—for he thought they came into it at about the same time—year after year Railway Bills had been passed containing that very clause, or something to a similar effect. Only the previous evening the House passed the second reading of a Bill containing a clause drawn on these very lines; and during this Session of Parliament four Railway Bills had been passed, and he asked why the North Eastern Railway was to be singled out to be made a martyr of for the sake of a principle which had already been admitted? What he wished to draw the attention of the House to was that he was quite prepared to abandon that clause, and substitute another clause, one which had already been inserted in the North Western and Midland Railway Bills, and which limited the power of the Railway Company to hold surplus lands not adjoining Railway Stations or Railways to two years. That clause had been most carefully settled by the Earl of Redesdale, and had been approved by his counsel; and he (Mr. Pease) suggested that that clause would be an improvement upon the clause in the North Eastern Railway Bill. But in reference to his right hon. Friend's remark, he would say that the North Eastern Railway Company had had that same clause in several Railway Bills. It was brought forward from the old Bill. The North Eastern Railway Company had never offered land to anyone but to the adjoining owners, and they had always concluded that they were bound so to do by the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, in dealing with the clauses alluded to by his right hon. Friend. But if there was a railway in the world to which the period for holding surplus land should be continued, he thought it was the North Eastern Railway. During the last 10 years that Company had laid down, in promoting public safety, 325 miles of siding; they had considerably increased their rolling-stock; and in order to place their servants near their work, and in order to avoid accidents, they had built nearly 1,000 cottages for their platelayers and signalmen. It was impossible to say to what good purpose the surplus lands might be applied. They who were on the North Eastern Board knew no one who was aggrieved by that action of the North Eastern. His hon. Friend the Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds) had some private interest which he supposed was affected. There were other persons whose private interests were also affected; but he thought that those private interests must come before a Committee of the House, but not before the House of Commons, because that House was not a proper tribunal to look after those interests. All he asked the House was to pass the second reading of the Bill, and he would undertake to put in a clause on the lines of the clause inserted in the North Western Bill. And as to the difficulty which his hon. Friend had regarding selling lands to adjoining owners, he would give him his word that there was no intention to override the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act. He trusted, under those circumstances, the House would deem it right to pass the second reading of that most important Bill.

Mr. DODDS said, he could not agree with the reasoning of his hon. Friend the Member for South Durham with reference to the Bill; but he entirely agreed with his right hon. Friend opposite. ["Hear!"] It was gratifying to him, and it was a gratification that was evidently shared by the great majority of the Members of the House, that he—on this occasion, at least—agreed with his right hon. Friend opposite (Mr. J. Lowther). He agreed also, with pleasure, with some of the remarks which had fallen from the hon. Member for South Durham. He (Mr. Dodds) thought that the Bill was of considerable importance, and he was in favour of many of the propositions which it sought to authorize. But the clause to which objection was taken had no reference whatever to any of these propositions. The hon. Member proposed to abandon the form of the clause to which objection had been raised. He had admitted the force of the argument of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and admitted that the clause ought not to be sanctioned as it stood; but he (Mr. Dodds) trusted that the House would insist on his either withdrawing the clause absolutely and unconditionally, or refuse to read the Bill a second time. His hon. Friend the Member for South Durham said that private interests only were affected; but the House would remember that when private interests were affected by Private Bills, the requirements of the law should be adhered to as to notice to the owners and occupiers of all lands taken, and if the North Eastern Company desired to extend the time required by them under the provisions of the various Acts, they had only to give notice to the several occupiers and owners. Instead of this, they were seeking to take lands in six or seven different counties, and in 120 different townships, which had been acquired by 26 different Railway Companies now incorporated with the North Eastern system, and they sought to affect every one of those owners and occupiers without giving them any notice. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman opposite would insist upon the entire omission of the clause from the Bill, or would divide the House upon the question of the second reading.

MR. WARTON said, he thought that the House ought to thank the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire for his opposition, which was based upon the clearest principle, that that was an attempt of a Railway Company to evade the provisions of the Lands Clauses Act. He did not rise for the purpose of adding anything to the argument of the right hon. Gentleman. He only wished to remind the House that last year it set its foot down when an attempt was made by the Metropolitan Railway to deal with another clause of the Land Clauses Act, and it enjoined that if a part of a house were taken the whole ought to be taken. They tried to evade that and failed, and he begged to remind the House of the fact, and hoped the House would be consistent, and set its foot down firmly against the demand of the Railway Companies to evade the principles of the Land Clauses Act.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN pointed out that the right hon. Gentleman opposite said he hoped the Member of the Government specially charged to look after that Bill would express the opinion which had been formed upon it. As that Representative, he should endeavour to do so in a few words. The position which the House had taken up in reference to these matters was, that they would not interfere with the functions which they had voluntarily committed to the Committees upstairs, unless there was some great principle of public policy, or other great principle, at stake. He had carefully considered the Bill, and did not think that it was a case of the kind. The only point was whether the Company should be allowed to vary the provisions of the Lands Clauses Act so as to obtain an extension of time for the re-sale and redemption of surplus land. Surely that was a matter of detail, and a matter of evidence, which could not be properly decided by the House; but which could be decided, after full inquiry, upstairs. The right hon. Gentleman said that the promoters were seeking by a Private Bill to alter a Public Act; but that statement was a little misleading. It was a Public Act which it was usual to incorporate in all Private Bills, power being given to modify its provisions when special circumstances required their modification. The modification of the provisions of the Lands Clauses Act was a matter of frequent occurrence. Only within the last few days a Bill of the North Western Railway contained exactly the same provision as was in the Bill now before the House; and it certainly would be inconvenient if the House were to take the matter into its own hands and interfere with the work of the Committees upstairs.

MR. GREGORY ventured to think that that was a matter for the House to take into consideration. The principle of the Lands Clauses Act was that a Railway Company should have the power, for 10 years, to say whether they required the land they had purchased for the purpose of their works or not. During these 10 years they had to give the adjoining owner the right of pre-emption; and if they did not sell within the 10 years, then the land reverted to the persons originally entitled to it. Now, the Bill entirely set aside that. He ventured to think that there was a very important principle and policy in the Lands Clauses Act, because, if it were not for these provisions, the Railway Companies might acquire the right to get lands into their hands, and they might set up to be not only Railway, but Land Jobbing Companies. It was said that there were several Acts containing similar provisions to those in this Bill; but he doubted if any one was of so wholesale a character as that Bill. The Bill sought to take lands which were in 126 different parishes, and acquired under no less than 26 Acts of Parliament, and no particulars were given of what these lands were, or how long they had been held; and he could not help thinking that much of the land comprised in the Bill had been in possession of Railway Companies for years and years beyond the period. That was a matter with which the House ought to deal, and that was a point to which he wished to call the attention of the House.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, that the hon. Member for South Durham (Mr. J. W. Pease) had stated that he would withdraw the clause, and would substitute for it another clause which was found in the Bill of another Railway Company. He had not had the opportunity of studying the clause, and he could not be expected to commit himself to a clause he had not read, and still less to commit the House in the matter; but he had no doubt the hon. Member would allow the second reading to stand over until, say, Friday. He would withdraw his Amendment if the hon. Member would thus give him time to examine the clause and see if he could agree to it. He should like to hear the hon. Member say something on that point.

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY said, he hoped his hon. Friend opposite would not accept the offer of his right hon. Friend, who would only move the rejection of the Bill when the second reading again came on.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he distinctly stated that he would withdraw his Motion for the rejection of the Bill, because he wished to have an opportunity of examining the clause it was proposed to substitute for the one now contained in the Bill.

SIR MATTHEW WHITE RIDLEY said, that meant that if he thought proper he would again move the rejection of the Bill. It was not reasonable that exception should be taken to one particular clause and the Bill rejected on that account. His hon. Friend opposite had done as much as he could in having said he was willing to substitute a clause which had been already approved by the Speaker's Counsel, and which had also met with the approval of the Chairman of Ways and Means; and he thought his right hon. Friend (Mr. Lowther) ought to agree to the second reading, and allow the clauses to be submitted to the proper tribunal upstairs. He must correct his right hon. Friend in another point. He had said that this was an attempt to override the Lands Clauses Act. Why, the Lands Clauses Act specially provided that any further period beyond 10 years might be prescribed; and surely it was obviously impossible for a Railway Company always to say exactly what use they would be able to make of their land. It appeared to him the promoters of the Bill asked nothing unreasonable, and he hoped the House would agree to the second reading of the Bill.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

REGENT'S CANAL, CITY, AND DOCKS RAILWAY BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. ARTHUR PEEL said, that he ought to apologize to the House, after such a long discussion on a Private Bill already; but he must say that the Bill which he was about to oppose also involved a principle of great public importance. This was a Bill proposing to transfer the Regent's Canal to a Railway Company. Now, he could quite understand a great number of objections being taken from different quarters against this Bill. He could quite understand the objection being taken that it interfered, if he might use the expression, with the privacy of a public park. He could understand the objection that it displaced houses, and otherwise interfered with the poor inhabitants of the Metropolis; and he could also understand a strong objection coming from the School Board, in consequence of the great number of children who would be ousted from their homes, and obliged to be taken far from the schools they had been in the habit of attending. He could also understand the objection that it interfered with private rights. He did not propose to trouble the House with any of those heads of objection. The objection he took was entirely on a different ground. He had no private interest to serve. He was not connected with either Canals or Railways; but he took his stand solely upon the public principle involved, and on the great fact that if this Bill passed a crushing blow would be dealt to the competition between Railways and Canals. Now, observe that there was a very important point of view to look at in this Bill, and that was the engineering point of view. He had been told, upon good authority, that over the area of the Canal which was proposed to be restricted in its width—over the area of, perhaps, 30 acres in all—no less than one-fourth was permanently taken away from the navigable area of the Canal. And he need not remind the House that to restrict the navigable waterway of any Canal was seriously to interfere with the traffic through its whole length. Now, this principle of the competition of Railways and Canals had been insisted upon over and over again by this House; and he respectfully submitted to the House that if this principle was infringed now, they would be transgressing the recommendations of Committee after Committee and Commission after Commission of this House, and flying in the face of the Joint Committee of Lords and Commons in 1872. The Act of 1845, in its Preamble, recognized expressly the importance of maintaining the competition between Railways and Canals. Then there came the Act called Mr. Cardwell's Act of 1854, expressly providing that through communication should be established on the Railway and Canal systems. In 1858, at the instigation of the Canal Companies themselves, there was an Act passed for the protection of Canals and against their absorption by the powerful Railway Companies of the Kingdom. The combination of Railway Companies which was then in existence was so powerful that it was necessary for the State to interfere. He need not say that from the period of 1858 to the present time the threatened monopoly of the Railway Companies was becoming more and more severe, until at last they would be face to face with a dominant and domineering power, against which no remedy would be available unless the State stepped in to undertake the sole control and management of the Railways. He would state very briefly what were the recommendations of the Joint Committee of Lords and Commons of 1872. They expressly recommended that it was most important to maintain the competition between Railways and Canals. They recommended that inland navigation in the hands of a public trust should not be transferred to, or placed under, the control of a Railway Company. They recommended that no Canal should be transferred to, or placed directly or indirectly under, the control of a Railway Company, nor should any temporary lease to a Railway Company be renewed until it had been conclusively ascertained that the Canal could not be amalgamated with an adjacent Canal or with a trust owning an adjoining inland navigation. Now, he was perfectly aware that the promoters of this Bill offered all sorts of compensations, and were ready to submit to all kinds of conditions. He might say that, without offence to them, they were profuse in the conditions which they offered, and in the limitations of their own powers, and he did not question the good faith of the promoters of the Bill. But this he did say—that when they once placed a Railway Company in the commanding position in which this Railway sought to be placed by absorbing within its system a great Canal, he said that it was against human nature that that great Company, after a time, should not consider rather its own interest than the separate interests of the Canal; that they would come afterwards and apply to Parliament, saying—" Our traffic is enlarged; we are unable to carry the goods submitted to us; let us have a little more —a slice of this Canal;" and so gradually the process of deglutition would go on, and they would absorb the whole existing waterway of this Canal. What was this Canal? There was a vast system of inland navigation extending from the Severn and Staffordshire on the West to the Docks at London on the East. The Warwickshire Canal Companies poured their traffic into this Regent's Canal, and a short time ago the Warwickshire Canal—in which he begged to repeat that he had no personal interest—sought to obtain before the Railway Commissioners through rates upon the line of the Regent's Canal. He had heard the objection since stated that the traffic of the Canal Company was diminishing, and that, therefore, in the interests of the public, the Canal ought to be transferred to the Railway Company. But this was not true. On the contrary, the fact was that the traffic on the Canal was in an increasingly flourishing condition. He was not there for a single moment to contend that if the Canal really were in an impecunious condition, it would be wise and politic on the part of the State to say that it should not be transferred to some solvent body—it might be to some Railway Company. He thought, however, that a case might be made out in which the State might be called on to interfere and declare that, in any event, such a Canal, having been once established, ought to be maintained as a waterway. But he did not wish to insist on this point. What he did insist on was this—that the Canal was not only a solvent, but was a really profitable concern. He had already alluded to the conditions which the promoters were willing to impose on themselves, so that the public might disabuse themselves of the idea that there was danger of the Canal being allowed to become useless. He would refer the House to what had been said by the Joint Committee of the Houses of Lords and Commons in 1872; and, for his own part, he thought that any conditions that might be sought to be imposed on the promoters would, in the lapse of time, be found perfectly fruitless. The Report of the Joint Committee, which he had just mentioned, set forth—

> "That the tolls were fixed by Act of Parliament at a remunerative rate. It is stated in some cases that the Railway Companies holding the Canals not only do not make improvements, but that, by neglecting repairs, by closing the Canal locks, and by failing in the supply of water, they suppress the traffic on the Canals. The amalgamation of the Canals above mentioned with the Railways has been strongly opposed, and Parliament has in many cases desired to annex conditions to those amalgamations compelling the Companies to maintain the Canals in an efficient working state; providing for other Canal Companies making through rates. These provisions, however, have almost uniformly failed; and the present state of things appears to be that obligations of this description are much more easily evaded by the owners of the Canals than they can be enforced by the traders."

The Committee added this remark—

> "It is difficult to make a Company maintain an effectual competition with itself."

Before sitting down he should like to make a remark as to what had been the process of absorption of Canals by Railway Companies, either by temporary lease or in perpetuity. Of 4,000 miles of canal and river communication in England and Wales, there had been 1,500 miles and upwards amalgamated, in some shape or other, with Railway Companies—or, at least, transferred more or less under their control—up to the year 1865. No amalgamations appeared to have taken place between 1865 and 1872; but in 1872 the process of amalgamation began again. At that time the Midland Railway Company sought to acquire the Worcester and Birmingham Canal. Since then various attempts had been made to acquire Canals, and the result uniformly had been that the Canals had been practically rendered useless, tolls to such a high rate having been charged as to divert the traffic of the waterways to the Railways. If it had ever been necessary for the House to step in and prevent the continuation of that process, it was necessary now. The fact was that amalgamations had been going on to an extent that had been highly detrimental to the public interests. The legitimate and honest competition between Canals and Railways had thereby been undermined; and what he now asked the House to do, by rejecting the second reading of this Bill, was to assert a great public principle, founded on public policy, that it should not be permitted that a Railway Company should make arrangements with a Canal Company for the absorption of a Canal into its Railway system in such a way that the great system of inland navigation could be materially injured or disturbed. He begged to move that the Bill be read a second time upon that day six months.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Arthur Peel.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. E. W. HARCOURT desired to support the arguments advanced by his hon. Friend the Member for Warwick, and to endorse what he had stated to the House. He considered that the Regent's Canal was placed in rather a peculiar position, and one differing from that of most other Canals in the Kingdom, as it was the means of gathering up the threads of all the existing Canals in the country, so that those Canals which passed through Oxfordshire and other counties could carry their goods by means of it to the Docks and other points with which it was connected. He was aware that the promoters said they were not going to fill up the Canal. It was very possible that they did not mean to do that; but there were other ways of shutting up a Canal besides filling it with earth. He held that one of the greatest protections they had against Railway monopoly was to be found in the Canal system of England, a system which certainly was of the greatest importance to the agriculturists of the country, whose interests would be materially affected if the Canals were allowed to be absorbed into the Railway system. He had been told by some gentlemen in London that one thing which they wished particularly to avoid was the agriculturists bringing their manure along the Canal, and dropping it into the water in the neighbourhood of London. All he could say in answer to that was that the agriculturists would be very glad to receive that manure back again, if they could get it. But, of course, he only referred to this matter by way of joke. He thought that if the Bill were allowed to pass without question, they would soon see, as had been pointed out by the hon. Member for Warwick, the goods that were now brought by Canal from different parts of the Kingdom transferred to the Railways, to the entire destruction of the Canal system. He, for one, therefore, could not allow this measure to pass without uttering his strong protest against it; and if the hon. Member for Warwick should press his opposition to a division he should certainly give him his support.

SIR THOMAS CHAMBERS, as one who had put his name on the back of the Bill, desired to make some answer to what had been said by the hon. Member for Warwick. From what the House had just heard from that hon. Gentleman, it might be supposed that the Regent's Canal was about to be absorbed by the Railway, and that, in point of fact, an end was to be put to the Canal. This, however, was not at all the case. The Resolutions of the Joint Committee of Lords and Commons of 1872 pointed to the contingency of powerful Railway Companies absorbing and putting an end to the Canals; but this was not the proposal made by the Bill. The proposal was merely that Parliament should give power, by passing the Regent's Canal, City, and Docks Railway Bill, to the incorporation of the Canal with the Railway, for the double purposes of Railway and Canal. Every word that had been uttered by the hon. Member for Warwick as to the disadvantages that would arise if the great system of internal navigation which communicated with the Docks in London and the Grand Junction Canal were put in peril was totally without foundation. The provisions contained in the Bill sought to impose upon the Railway Company the most stringent obligations to maintain the Canal as a navigable waterway—provisions just as stringent as were those requiring them to maintain the proposed Railway as a Railway. By the provisions of the Bill—which the Railway Company would modify in any way that the Committee to whom it might be referred might think fit, in order to meet the objections taken on the part of the Canal system of Great Britain—the Railway Company had an overwhelming interest in maintaining the Canal. It was said by the hon. Member for Warwick, and it was quite true, that this Canal was not a declining property. On the contrary, it was a very valuable property. As much, he believed, as £60,000 a-year was earned by the Canal; and he asked—was it to be supposed that a new Company, constituted for the purpose of taking up this Canal and making a Railway alongside it, would be willing to sacrifice such an enormous income as that? The Railway was to start from Paddington, communicate with the Great Northern and Midland lines, and run down to the Docks—not only to the Limehouse and Victoria Docks, but also to the immense new Docks further down the Thames, known as the Royal Albert Docks—mainly for the purpose of taking up the goods traffic, which now had to be conveyed through the streets of London, and which helped to render the streets almost impassable. He thought there would be a double communication for a certain district; but for three miles of the Canal the Railway would not interfere with it at all, and where it was close to the Canal it was only because there the surplus land might be had at a price that would make the speculation remunerative. Would a Committee sitting upstairs be inadequate for the comprehension of the arguments advanced by the hon. Member for Warwick? Certainly not. All the Canal proprietors, whose *locus standi* might have been disputed by the promoters of the Bill, were to be admitted, and would have the opportunity of offering their evidence upstairs. Would they, he asked, be unable to impose upon the Railway and Canal Company the necessary obligations to maintain the Canal and prevent its being destroyed? If the arguments that had been used against the Bill had any foundation in fact, they would constitute reasons for its rejection, but they were nothing of the kind; on the contrary, every objection raised by the hon. Member for Warwick was not supported by the facts.

MR. ROBERTSON rose to support the second reading of the Bill, and he did so on the ground of public policy, the same ground as that which had been alleged by the hon. Member who had moved the rejection of the Bill. He did not think that anyone who was conversant with the terminal accommodation of London and its requirements, and also the terminal accommodation of the vast system of Railways throughout the country, could look at this measure without seeing that it was not a scheme to diminish, but rather to increase public accommodation. It had been stated that the proposed Railway would interfere with the Canal navigation of the country. Having seen the vast number of Petitions presented against the Bill he had, as a mere matter of professional interest, been to the Private Bill Office to examine the details of the scheme, and he was of opinion that it provided amply for the continuation of the navigation afforded by the inland system of waterways. He said this as the result of his own observation. But surely it was, after all, a question of fact, and the question of fact was a matter for inquiry; but if the House accepted the Amendment of the hon. Member for Warwick they would be refusing inquiry. It was a matter of evidence as to whether the Canal traffic was to be interfered with, or as to what amount of additional competition would be afforded to the public by means of the Railway. There was a great deal of public traffic that the Canal could not carry. He was connected with a mining property in North Wales, which sent a large quantity of coal to London, and if they were sent by the Great Western Railway to Paddington they could then be carried by the proposed line, should it be made, down to the Docks, thus giving the owners of the mine the benefit of the terminal accommodation that would thus be created, and which the Canal did not give. Again, if, as an engineer, he was sending a locomotive for shipment to India, of what use was the Canal to him? None at all; but if there were a Railway added to the Canal, and running alongside it to the Docks, a beneficial competition would be set up with other Railways. Every one who knew what need there was for it would appreciate the advantage of having another Railway running from Paddington into the City—a Railway which, it should be remembered, would present the advantage of being made without any large interference with property in London. He had said he supported this Bill on the ground of public policy; and he would put it to the House—supposing the Canal Company were a large and powerful body, and came to Parliament to ask for additional capital to enable them to make a Railway alongside the banks of the Canal, where then, he asked, would have been the question of public policy that had now been raised, and would they then have heard of the Report of the Joint Committee on Railway and Canal Amalgamation? The House would have made no objection to the Company's request that they should have the power to help themselves by making a Railway. But in the present case they would have two forms of competition on one property. The object was not to destroy the Canal, or to divert traffic from it; but to create two distributing sources of traffic by adding a Railway to the Canal, with the intention that each should be made to do the best it could in furnishing the means for this distribution. For these reasons he begged to support the second reading of the Bill.

MR. WIGGIN said, if he thought for one moment that the interests of the public could be endangered by the passage of this Bill, he should have given his cordial support to the Amendment of the hon. Member for Warwick (Mr. A. Peel); but having been engaged in transactions similar to that before the

House, he knew that, so far from the interests of the public being injured, they would be very largely benefited if the measure were allowed to pass. He remembered their narrowing the Worcester and Birmingham Canal, which had been already referred to, and the effect of that had been that instead of damaging the navigation, the navigation had been improved. He conceived that the Regent's Canal was made in a similar manner to that of which he had spoken, with shelving sides, so that there was a difficulty in getting close to the towing path; and what was done in the case of the Worcester and Birmingham Canal was to wall up the sides, by which means, while leaving sufficient space for the navigation, enough land was obtained to make a railway by the side of the Canal, a Railway which came into the centre of the town of Birmingham, and brought in goods and merchandize that could not be so conveyed before, thereby proving a decided benefit to the town, while, at the same time, the canal traffic was still kept open between the Trent and the Severn. With regard to the present measure, as there was no intention to close the Regent's Canal, the Railway would be the means of conferring great additional benefit on the inhabitants. There was plenty of spare land alongside the Canal for the purposes of the Railway; and as he held that the proposed line would be very useful instead of detrimental to the public interests, he should give his support to the Motion for the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. TORRENS said, he had put an Amendment on the Paper with a view of enlarging the scope and composition of the Committee to which the Bill, if it passed a second reading, would be referred; and he should be glad if the Government could see their way to the adoption of his proposal. Although he could not move his Amendment at the present moment, he would suggest to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade whether it would not meet the exigencies of the case to appoint a Committee composed, as he had indicated in his proposal, of 15 Members, 10 of whom should be nominated by the House and five by the Committee of Selection. He certainly could not think it sufficient to leave to the discretion of an ordinary Committee on a Private Bill the question of compensation for the damage that might be done to hundreds of houses in the Metropolis if this Bill were passed. He also thought that the occupants of these houses, who could not possibly obtain a hearing under the ordinary Rules of the House, ought to be able to go before the Committee.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: The question before the House is one of great importance and also of considerable difficulty. This Bill has been under the consideration of the Board of Trade for some time, and I have seen both the promoters of the measure and some of those who are its opponents. I hope my hon. Friend the Member for Warwick (Mr. A. Peel) will rest satisfied with having raised the points he has submitted to the House at this stage, and will not press his Amendment to a division. There is no doubt that the Bill does raise a question of public policy of the highest kind; and the hon. Member for Warwick has stated with accuracy the conclusions that were arrived at by the Joint Committee of the Houses of Lords and Commons in 1872. In my opinion, those conclusions are still in entire accord with the views entertained by the House of Commons and by the commercial class generally, which are to the effect that the amalgamation of Canals with Railway Companies, or the giving to Railway Companies the control over the Canals of this country, ought as far as possible to be discouraged, and, whenever permitted, all necessary precautions should be taken to secure the maintenance of our inland water navigation. I must say that the present case is a strong one, and is in flagrant opposition to the policy so laid down. This is not one of the cases in which Canal navigation has been conducted under great difficulties, and in which, if amalgamation be not permitted, it will probably be impossible for the navigation to be carried on; it is, on the contrary, the case of a really profitable and going undertaking which has been maintained for a long time, and might, apparently, be maintained for any length of time in profitable existence. Under these circumstances, if this were the first time such a Bill had come before the House, I should be inclined to object to it; but I cannot leave out of view the fact that many similar amalgamations have been considered by the House, allowed to go before a Select Committee, and then passed into law. The Joint Committee of 1872 contemplated a set of exceptional circumstances—namely, where it is conclusively proved that the Canal in question cannot be amalgamated with any other system of water navigation; and it does not appear to me that the House is in a position to decide without hearing the evidence whether this is one of the cases in which such an amalgamation as suggested by the Joint Committee could or could not be brought about. It is a question of evidence as to what are the facts, which I think ought to be referred to a Select Committee. For my own part, though I do not venture to offer any advice to the House on the matter, I have come to the conclusion that I ought to vote for the second reading of the Bill. With regard to the suggestion of the hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Torrens), I think that, considering the importance of the matter, it would be desirable that the Bill should go before a Hybrid Committee; but I regard the number stated in his Amendment as too large, and am of opinion that seven, or at any rate nine, Members would be quite sufficient. If it is the pleasure of the House that the Bill should go to a Committee, it will be the duty of the Board of Trade to make a full and particular Report to that Committee, setting forth the facts which I have already stated, quoting the remarks made by the Joint Committee of the two Houses of Parliament, calling special attention to the particular circumstances of the case, stating what are the exceptional conditions, if any, to justify the proposals of the Bill, and what in their opinion will be necessary in order, if the proposed amalgamation be allowed, to preserve an independent and navigable waterway.

Sir SYDNEY WATERLOW said, that one reason why this Bill should be allowed to pass was this—that in order to develop the trade and commerce of the City, and to secure public improvements, something must be done. People were migrating out of the City year by year, going further and further away, and there was not only the labour and difficulty of bringing them to their work in the morning, not only in tens of thousands, but hundreds of thousands; but there was the further

difficulty of taking them back again, and that was constantly and weekly increasing. They all recollected that a sad accident lately occurred near Canonbury, which was caused by the pressure in trying to bring the people in with sufficient speed by means of trains running behind one another every two minutes. Beyond all doubt that was a dangerous proceeding; but still it was almost necessary. What was proposed by this Bill? The Company proposed to construct 13 miles of Metropolitan Railway, running through the North Eastern suburbs of London, and they would bring the people up to the very edge of the City—namely, to the borders of the Barbican. If any Company *bonâ fide* proposed to do that work, the House ought not, in the interest of the public, and in the interest of the people who had to go in and out of the City, to stop a Bill by which this could be accomplished, but ought, in the interests of the public necessity, to allow it to have a fair hearing before a Committee upstairs, in order to see whether such a line could be constructed. In some way or other, means must be taken for getting the people into the suburbs. He ventured, therefore, to think that the House should allow the Bill to go through a second reading.

Mr. BRYCE said, he did not wish to address the House at any length. He only desired, as a Metropolitan Member, to call attention to one point of considerable importance, which was closely related to that which had been mentioned by the hon. Member who had just spoken (Sir Sydney Waterlow). This Bill proposed to displace a very large part of the population of London, he believed no less than 11,000. He was not certain of the exact figure, but that was the number which had been given to him; and, considering the line that the Railway took, it was not at all improbable. Now, there was a Standing Order which required that every Bill which proposed to take labourers' dwellings should have a clause providing for the accommodation of the same number that would be displaced under the provisions of the Bill. It was important, then, to consider whether the Clause required by that Standing Order was one that was sufficient for the occasion. Now, the clause was

Clause 70. It was a clause sufficiently familiar to those who studied Private Bill legislation; but he contended that it was altogether illusory, and that it did not give sufficient protection. It was a clause which the Companies, when formed, were able to wriggle out of and evade, and something more strict and precise was required. He took this opportunity of saying that unless the promoters of the Bill, when they got upstairs, brought up a better clause, and made more adequate provision for the labouring classes, it would be the duty of himself, or some other Metropolitan Member, to move that the Bill be recommitted, for the purpose of introducing a satisfactory clause.

Colonel MAKINS said, he thought that the hon. Member (Mr. Bryce) had been about to raise another objection to the Bill, as he had on former occasions, on the ground that the line proposed to run through open spaces. The hon. Member had taken Epping Forest and Wimbledon Common in hand, and only that afternoon he had said a good word for the Newcastle Town Moor. But the hon. Member had forgotten Regent's Park. There were people living near Regent's Park, to whom it was quite as necessary to have an open space to go to, as it was to those who lived in the East End of London. He (Colonel Makins) hoped, therefore, that the hon. Member would do something to preserve the quietude of Regent's Park, by the usual provision which he sought for other open spaces—namely, requiring the Railway to be carried through a tunnel. He (Colonel Makins) thought that this proposed Railway was objected to by the poorer portions of the community, who were not able to appear before the Committee.

Mr. BRYCE asked the permission of the House to make one remark in answer to what had fallen from the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just sat down. He had satisfied himself that in the whole of this Bill there was no such interference with Regent's Park or Victoria Park, or any other open space, as called for the intervention of those who were concerned to preserve commons and open spaces.

Mr. SALT said, he had some knowledge of the requirements of the inland navigation of the country, and he believed that the necessities of that kind of business would be sufficiently met if, as proposed by the hon. Member for Finsbury (Mr. Torrens) and the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, this Bill were read a second time and sent to a Hybrid Committee. The great object with regard to the inland navigation of the country was that the communication with London should be maintained absolutely free and unchecked. Therefore, he was in favour of this going to a strong Hybrid Committee, which would take a wider view than an ordinary Select Committee of the matter. If he received such a guarantee, he should not object to the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. ARTHUR PEEL said, his Amendment had elicited from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade the admission that this was a flagrant violation of the policy of the Committee of 1872. The question he had to ask the House was, whether a division should be taken? He should be inclined himself to accept the offer which had been made to refer the Bill to a Committee of the nature indicated by the right hon. Gentleman; and he (Mr. A. Peel) must rely upon a Report being made by the Board of Trade, which he trusted would point out, in unmistakeable terms, that this was a departure from the avowed policy of Parliament. If the Bill passed, another blow would be dealt at Canal competition. He did not propose to put the House to the trouble of a division.

Mr. O'DONNELL (who was received with cries of "Oh!") said, that he did not come there to speak on behalf of any body of capitalists; but he came there to call attention to the strange fact that, it having been admitted that this Bill was, generally speaking, in flagrant violation of public policy, there was to be no division taken to express the sense of the House upon the question. He confessed that he saw many objections to leaving a question of public policy to the consideration of a jury of experts—for a jury of experts a Committee of the kind proposed undoubtedly was. There were many advantages in having the opinion of experts on various occasions; but he was not in favour of taking the opinion of experts on a question which ought to be one of broad common sense and broad public policy. He was sorry to see that so little attention was apparently given to the very important question raised by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce)—namely, the point as to the provision for the housing of the very large number of persons likely to be rendered houseless and homeless by this Bill. The Artizans' Dwellings Act had, by the operation of Bills of this kind, been rendered practically, in many cases, a mere dead letter. Railway Bills offering tempting opportunities and promises to the capitalists were, year by year, brought to that House. They met the applause of the capitalist class; tens and scores of thousands of poor people were rendered homeless and placed in a most disadvantageous position in consequence. As a matter of general policy they had their Irish experience, which showed them that they had allowed the Irish Canals to be sacrificed to Railway enterprize. He thought that the agricultural constituencies would have just cause to complain if the agricultural Representatives did not make a vigorous protest, expressed in a proper form—namely, by taking a division against the Bill. He objected to this growing tendency to hand matters of public policy over either to private Committees or mongrel Committees. It was not the way to test questions of public policy. Not only theoretically, but practically, one man was quite as good as another in matters of this kind. When they appointed a Committee of experts these experts must be biassed, more or less, in the direction of the enterprize in the prosecution of which they had gained their special experience. It was precisely a class of authorities of that description which at all times had been, with the best of intentions, the most dangerous to the public interests. Capital had too much weight in that House; and he objected just as much to delegate the powers of the House to a jury of capitalists as he would object to delegate the interests of justice to a special jury of lawyers. He was additionally inclined to press the proposal that a jury of experts or a Hybrid Committee should not be employed, in view of the threat impending over the House, that a large portion of the House would be practically deprived of its powers if certain proposals of the Government were carried out, and that a permanent jury of experts should be appointed for dealing with a large class of Public Bills instead of the House of Commons. This was not a Private Bill. It was a Public Bill, which went to the root of public interests of the very gravest importance. The very fact that it had been admitted by the President of the Board of Trade, who had at heart, to such a large extent, the capitalist enterprize in that House—the very fact that the Board of Trade had admitted that the Bill was, in its general character, a flagrant violation of public policy, was quite enough to justify the throwing of it out, for this year at any rate. There had been no sufficient public preliminary discussion; the question had not been before the London public; it had not been before the agricultural constituencies, who were vitally interested in the matter; and there was no sufficient reason why a Bill of this magnitude, involving a fundamental violation of public policy, should be hurried through the House, even on the *ipse dixit* of the President of the Board of Trade. He had listened with admiration to the speech of the hon. Member who opposed the Bill, and he would not by any means decry the valuable character of that speech; but if the hon. Member who opposed this Bill was aiming at no other object than to get the opinion of highly respectable Members of the House, he could have got that opinion just as well somewhere else, in the Committee Rooms of the House, or in the Library, or in any other room of the House. Here they had been occupied for an hour in getting the opinions of half-a-dozen highly respectable Members of this House, and, after all, there was to be no division. He should oppose the withdrawal of the opposition to the Bill; and, as far as he could do so, he would see that the House should have an opportunity of expressing its opinion upon these questions.

Mr. HICKS said, he wished very shortly to draw the attention of hon. Members who represented agricultural constituencies to the remarks which had fallen from the hon. Member below him (Mr. O'Donnell). There had been great complaints, and complaints well founded, of the way in which agricultural produce had been treated by the great Railway Companies. This Canal, with which they were now called upon to deal, was by itself a very short Canal extending over a short distance; but it was the last and most important link of the great Midland waterway of the country. It was the last link of the series of Canals which extended from Hull in the East to Liverpool in the West; and if this Canal was handed over to the Railway Companies, and if it was no longer to be useful to the great Canal traffic, it would be not a loss simply of four or five miles of Canal, but it would have the effect of shutting up the whole Canal communication of this country between the Port of London and the Ports of Liverpool and Hull on the East and West. He certainly hoped the House would go to a division.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 244; Noes 50: Majority 194.—(Div. List, No. 40.)

Main Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed*.

QUESTIONS.

JUDICATURE ACT — VACATIONS OF THE SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE.

MR. H. H. FOWLER asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the Statutory Rules which regulate the length of the vacations of the Supreme Court of Judicature are still in force; and, if so, whether the Judges of the Chancery Division have power to extend the vacations beyond the periods prescribed by the rules or to create additional vacations not authorized by the rules; and, whether the Lord Chancellor has jurisdiction to prevent the expense and delay occasioned to the suitors by the closing of the Superior Courts of Justice during the time when by Law they ought to be sitting?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): It is quite correct to say that the Judges have no power to lengthen the statutory vacation, and, therefore, no power to shorten the Sittings; but, at the same time, there is no legal obligation upon them to sit every day during the periods in which the Sittings are held. For many years, both before and since the passing of the Judicature Act, the Judges in Equity have suspended their Sittings for a short time between the beginning of the Hilary and the Easter Sittings. This was in consequence of the great strain upon the Judges of Sitting continuously, and also in consequence of their having to perform various duties in Chambers. I think that if my hon. Friend will inquire he will find that the Judges have done only what is usual, and, I have no doubt, necessary.

CUSTOMS—THE NEW WAREHOUSING SCHEME.

MR. CORRY asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether Customs clerks transferred to the warehouses under the assimilation scheme will be continued as clerks, and have a separate classification, or if it is intended to amalgamate them with the surveyors, examining officers, and gaugers; and, whether such amalgamation will not grievously injure the promotion and prospects of said surveyors, examining officers, and gaugers?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: The transfer to the Outdoor Department of the clerical duties connected with the warehousing of bonded goods will cause a considerable addition to the outdoor establishment. The new situations will be offered to as many of the displaced clerks as are judged eligible for them. They will not be placed upon a separate classification, but will be amalgamated with the existing surveyors, examiners, and gaugers, although some may be employed on clerical duties only. If the whole of the new offices be not thus filled up, members of the outdoor service will be selected to fill the remainder in accordance with the usual rules. It is not expected that the promotion and prospects of the existing outdoor staff will be injured; but every care will be taken to prevent their being so.

STATE OF IRELAND—ALLEGED CONSPIRACY TO MURDER (MARYBOROUGH).

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been directed to the following statement, which appeared in the "Freeman" newspaper of the 28th ultimo:—

> "A long special investigation was held in the Courthouse at Maryborough here to-day, before Mr. M. Sheffield Capan, into a charge of alleged conspiracy to shoot Colonel H. D. Carden. . . . After a full and searching investigation the two farmers accused, Larkin and Williams, were discharged, and Scully, the informer, placed in the dock on a charge of wilful and corrupt perjury. Larkin and Williams were then sworn, and proved that everything that Scully had testified against them was wrong and utterly false, and Head Constable Walsh, of Mountmellick Station, and Mrs. Margaret Smith, of Acragar, gave further important evidence, quite sufficient to fix the charge of perjury on the informer. The prisoner was then committed to take his trial. . . . His worship expressed an opinion that the two men, Larkin and Williams, should be indemnified for the expenses they were put to;"

whether the facts of the case are as therein stated; whether the informer Scully was led by the police to believe that he would receive a pecuniary reward for lodging the information he swore to; and, whether he is prepared to recommend that Mr. Larkin and Mr. Williams be indemnified?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): What occurred was this. Scully came to the Constabulary and informed them of an alleged conspiracy to murder; he was not led by the police or anyone else to believe that he would rceeive any reward; his information was voluntary, and he made a deposition before a magistrate against Larkin and Williams. During the investigation of this charge the Sessional Crown Solicitor (who was conducting the prosecution) considered it proper to make a special Report of the case to me, on which I directed him to withdraw the charge against Larkin and Williams, and prefer a charge of perjury against Scully. This was done, the Sessional Crown Solicitor informing the magistrate in open Court that this course was taken by my direction as Attorney General. Scully was committed for trial, and I have since directed his prosecution at the Assizes. Meantime, I suspend my judgment on Scully's guilt or innocence. I merely have decided that there is a case proper to be submitted to a jury. In answer to the last paragraph of the Question, I can only say that there is no indemnity fund at my disposal; and, therefore, I am not, nor, I believe, is the Chief Secretary, prepared to recommend an indemnity.

MR. SEXTON wished to know whether this man Scully, before his committal, made any application for a reward in pursuance of the Circular issued by the Executive?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) repeated that no application to such an effect had been made to the Constabulary or other authorities.

ARMY ORGANIZATION — MILITIA OFFICERS (UNIFORMS).

MR. GRANTHAM asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he has considered the question of expense to which Militia Artillery Officers will be put by the changing the silver lace at present worn by them to gold lace; and, if so, whether he will allow them such sum as will recoup them for the expense to which they will be put?

VISCOUNT EMLYN also asked, Whether the Secretary of State for War will lay on the Table or state to the House the estimated expense to officers of each rank in each branch of the Militia in consequence of the new Regulations as to change of uniform, lace facings, or accoutrements; and, if he will state to the House the reasons for restricting any allowance to certain regiments, and not making a proportionate allowance to all?

MR. CHILDERS: I believe that I have already, in this and last Session, answered these Questions four or five times; but out of respect for the noble Lord and the hon. and learned Member I will ask the House to allow me to repeat that as the change, which was strongly urged on us by Militia officers, from silver to gold lace need not be carried out until the present uniforms require replacing, I could not with propriety burden the public with any allowances to these officers. Where the change has been compulsory an allowance has been made which I am satisfied is a fair one, and provision for this will appear in due course in the Estimates. There are no Papers which it would be of any practical use to lay on the Table.

EARL PERCY asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that some colonels of Militia had given orders to their officers to change their uniforms at once?

MR. CHILDERS: If that is the case it has not been reported to me, and it has been done without authority.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARRESTS.

Mr. LEAMY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If he will state to the House the number of arrests which have been made under the Coercion Act of last year, from the beginning of its operation up to the first day of the present month?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Seven hundred and ninety-four persons have been arrested since the passing of the Protection of Person and Property Act up to the end of February, of whom 587 were in custody on the 1st of this month, 15 of them having been re-arrested.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — DUNDALK GAOL.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If it is a fact that the portion of Dundalk Gaol in which the suspects are confined consists of a long corridor with cells on each side; whether there is a warder on duty in this corridor from 5.45 p.m. till 8 a.m.; whether a suspect prisoner is prevented from passing from his cell into the adjuncts of the corridor, and is refused even a drink of water between the hours named, though an ample supply of drinking water is within reach of the warder; and, whether such regulations are reasonably necessary for the security of the prisoners?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): The description given in the Question of the construction of this portion of Dundalk Prison is correct, and warders are on duty in this corridor the entire day and night. Prisoners detained under the Protection of Person and Property Act are let out of their cells at any time when necessary on their ringing for the warder on duty. They have a sufficient supply of drinking water placed in the cells, and on no occasion has any prisoner been refused a drink of water. These regulations of the prison are reasonably necessary for the security of the prisoners.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked whether, if he substantiated his statement, the grievances complained of would be removed?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson:) If the hon. Member will communicate with the Chief Secretary I am perfectly sure that any regulation which is unnecessarily stringent will be at once relaxed.

FRIENDLY SOCIETIES ACT, 1875.

Mr. CROPPER (for Mr. Roundell) asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he will be prepared to give a direction for the embodiment in the forthcoming Report of the Registrar of Friendly Societies of information showing which of the Societies in Great Britain and Ireland have or have not made returns of their valuations, under "The Friendly Societies Act, 1875," together with the results of such valuations?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: The suggestion of my hon. Friend is a good one. Directions will be given for carrying it out in Part II. of the Report for 1880 so far as relates to Societies, and in that for 1881 so far as relates to branches.

FRANCE AND ENGLAND—THE TREATY OF FEBRUARY 28—ADVANTAGES TO FRENCH VESSELS.

Mr. GOURLEY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If, under the favoured nation clause, French shipowners, in addition to their own Government bounties, will possess trading advantages in the coasting and Colonial trades over Foreign vessels; and, if he can inform the House of what these advantages will consist?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: There has been no change whatever made in this respect by the Treaty of the 28th of February, and the situation remains the same as under the Treaties which have now expired.

Mr. GOURLEY asked what the differences were?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, it would take him half an hour to state what the differences were.

POST OFFICE—MAIL SERVICE IN THE LEVANT.

Mr. GOURLEY asked the Postmaster General, If the contract for the conveyance of mails between Cyprus and Alexandria has been finally ratified; whether the subsidy is the result of public or private tender; and, if the existing postal charge for letters, &c. exceeds the total expenditure or otherwise?

Mr. FAWCETT, in reply, said, that a new contract for the Cyprus mails had been entered into, but would not be acted upon until it had been approved by Resolution of the House. It was offered to public tender. He was sorry to be obliged to state that the service had been attended by a heavy and serious loss up to the present time.

POST OFFICE—CONTRACTS FOR CLOTHING (IRELAND).

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Postmaster General, Whether his attention has been given to Clause 6 of the "Conditions of Contract" for the clothing of the Irish Postal Service, from which it appears that contractors residing in Ireland are bound to deliver the made-up clothing for inspection and approval at the Royal Army Clothing Depôt, Grosvenor Road, Pimlico, the cloth from which the articles are made having been previously approved at the same place; and, whether it would be deemed sufficient to send samples of the made-up clothing for inspection and approval, the clothing to be strictly according to such samples, and subject to the approval of the authorities at the General Post Office, Dublin?

Mr. FAWCETT: The regulation to which the hon. Member refers applies not only to Irish, but to all contractors in the United Kingdom. After making inquiry, I am glad to be able to state that the suggestion contained in the Question of the hon. Member can be adopted.

CITY OF LONDON—THE LIVERY COMPANIES AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

Mr. B. SAMUELSON asked the honourable Member for Gravesend, If he can state whether the City and Guilds of London Technical Institute, of which he is the treasurer, or the Livery Companies, have made any communications to the Royal Commission on Livery Companies, of which he is a member, showing the extent to which the large funds at the disposal of those Companies are at present and may be hereafter applied to the promotion of technical instruction in London and the provinces; and, whether he is able to state when the Commission is likely to make its report?

Sir SYDNEY WATERLOW, in reply, said, the Livery Companies had, in the Returns forwarded by them to the Royal Commissioners, clearly set out the amounts which they had already contributed and promised in support of the City and Guilds of London Technical Institute, and of technical education in the Provinces. Remembering that those large grants had been voluntarily contributed, it might, he thought, be assumed that the Livery Companies would not only keep them up, but increase their grants and subscriptions in furtherance of technical education from time to time as they might find increased funds available for the purpose. The Royal Commission would doubtless feel it part of their duty to inquire and report as to the desirability and practicability of strengthening by Parliamentary sanction the existing connection between the Livery Companies of London and the various industries of the country by some scheme for developing a system of technical education, such as the Companies had themselves initiated and brought into partial operation. The Commissioners were continuing their inquiries, and it was impossible to say when their Report would be ready.

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Sir JOHN HAY asked the Prime Minister when the Supplementary Navy Estimates would be taken?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he hoped to be able to state that on Friday.

Mr. GORST asked if the right hon. Gentleman could tell the House on Friday whether he could make the annual Financial Statement before Easter; and, if so, on what day?

Mr. GLADSTONE: No, Sir; I am not at all sure that I should be able to state that on Friday. At the same time, my present impression is, that, viewing the fact that Easter comes upon the 9th of April, I am extremely doubtful whether I will be able to make the Financial Statement before then.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS asked after what hour that evening the debate on the "House of Lords and the Land Act" would not be resumed?

Mr. GLADSTONE: It is most important for Public Business that the

Irish debate should be brought to a close. Her Majesty's Government have not contributed, I hope, unreasonably in their own persons to its prolongation, and we are still inclined to act upon the principle of sparing the infliction of our own orations upon the House as far as we possibly can. We had hoped to save a fraction of time to-night for the purpose of that debate; but, in view of the fact that important questions have arisen, which have delayed till 8 o'clock the commencement of Public Business, and though, on the whole, most anxious to get forward with that debate, which I earnestly hope will close on Thursday night, I do not think it would be fair to hon. Gentlemen to keep them to-night upon so slender an expectation of getting time as we now entertain. Consequently, I would propose that the debate should not come on to-night.

IRISH LAND ACT—OPERATION OF THE ACT—PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON: Mr. Speaker, with your permission and that of the House, I should like to make an explanation with regard to what occurred last night between the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government and myself during the debate on the Irish Question. I stated that the right hon. Gentleman had, during his tour in Mid Lothian characterized a statement in a letter addressed by Lord Grey to *The Times* as the "apprehensions of an old woman." The right hon. Gentleman denied the accuracy of my statement, and so I said I should feel bound to substantiate it. I have gone through the revised and published speeches of the right hon. Gentleman delivered in Mid Lothian, and I am bound to say I cannot find in them any trace of the statement in question. Fortunately, however, there are other sources of information open to me, and I find on referring to *The Times* newspaper a speech which has been carefully eliminated from the published speeches of the right hon. Gentleman, and I will, with your permission, in my own justification, read an extract from it to the House. The meeting was held at the Liberal Club in Edinburgh on the 31st of March, 1880, and was reported in *The Times* of the 1st of April of that year. In that speech the right hon. Gentleman dwelt entirely and solely on that letter of Lord Grey, and he is reported to have spoken thus—

> "He did not agree with Earl Grey as to the enormity of this danger. There was a great deal of difficulty still to contend with in the state of Ireland; but as to the apprehension that the people of Ireland wanted to tear Ireland away from its connection with this country, he told them frankly that he did not share it. He put it away as an old woman's apprehension. Not that he wanted to apply the term 'old woman' to any person! He employed it strictly to qualify the character of the apprehension."

MR. GLADSTONE: Mr. Speaker, I am not able to admit either the courtesy of the noble Lord's proceeding, or the correctness of his assertion that he was about to substantiate his allegation; and I am obliged to him, in particular, for his statement that I had taken pains literally to eliminate from a set of speeches this particular speech which the noble Lord thinks he has discovered. Sir, I took no such pains. I did not make the collection of speeches, and I did not eliminate any speech from them, or introduce any speech into them. Sir, the noble Lord stated last night that I had described the warnings of Lord Grey, in his letter to *The Times*, as the utterances of an old woman. I stated that I had not done anything of the kind.

LORD CLAUD HAMILTON: "Apprehensions," not "utterances."

MR. GLADSTONE: The noble Lord is reported to have said "utterances;" but that does not signify in the slightest degree. He quotes the reports to the letter against me; but he does not seem to like them as against himself. I said that I had stated nothing of the kind. When such a denial is given by a Member the usual course is for the hon. Member who has made the statement to express regret for having fallen into an error. Instead of that, the noble Lord, entirely rejecting my disclaimer, said he should proceed to substantiate his allegation. [MR. BIGGAR: Hear, hear!] He has not substantiated his allegation. He has omitted from the report in *The Times* a passage which would show that he had not substantiated it. In the first place, Sir, as regards this meeting. It was not a public meeting at all. It was not a meeting of the Liberal Club. It was a meeting of my committee in a private room, and I greatly doubt whether a reporter was present. My reason for that doubt is that I do not remember being cognizant of, or observing any such thing; and that the report, differing in this from, I think, every other report of a speech which I made in Mid Lothian—where, I must say, the reporting was most admirable—is a report in the third person. Well, Sir, what happened was this. I referred to Lord Grey's letter, and I ascribed to Lord Grey two allegations. I said—

> "Lord Grey added, in relation to the past Government, that two glaring instances showed what a dangerous man Mr. Gladstone would be."

They were these—the abolition of the Irish Church and the reform of the Irish Land Laws. These, he said—

> "Were carried by the Government of which he (Mr. Gladstone) had the honour of being a Member; and they had been the cause of the present great danger which the country had to undergo, which he found in the state of Ireland. He did not agree with Lord Grey about the enormity of this danger."

That was the mode in which I treated the allegation of Lord Grey. I then went on to deal with the apprehension, which I did not say Lord Grey had expressed, and I am not at all aware that he did express it. I hardly believe he did. That apprehension I described as "a most irrational apprehension," and as "an old woman's apprehension"—namely, the apprehension that the people of Ireland wanted to tear Ireland away from its connection with this country. That was the apprehension, Sir, to which I applied that expression, and I did not apply it to any statements that, as far as I know, were made by Lord Grey. And not only so; but when I had done this, fearful that there might appear to be a connection established between my use of that phrase and the name of Lord Grey—which is a name I hold in honour, and have always held in honour—I went on to say, or, at all events, am reported to have said—

> "Not that he meant to apply the phrase 'old woman' to any person, but to use it strictly as qualifying the character of the apprehensions."

Then again—

> "He had now done with Lord Grey, and he wished not to be tempted to say a word derogatory in any degree"—that was after an interval—"to a politician who was a most able man—a man of great talents and undoubted honesty."

Then I go on further—

> "He was so anxious about his personal respect for Lord Grey, that if he had said anything that would hurt or wound him in any degree he would wish it retracted."

It is in these circumstances that the noble Lord, overlooking the fact that I was speaking of a different allegation from any made by Lord Grey, charges me with having described the utterances of Lord Grey as the "apprehensions of an old woman."

PARLIAMENT—THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

MR. SCHREIBER: I rise, Mr. Speaker to a point of Order, and to invite your ruling upon the terms of a Notice of Motion, which appears to-day for the first time upon the Paper, and which I will now read to the House—

> "Mr. Labouchere—House of Lords: That the House of Lords is useless, dangerous, and ought to be abolished."

The questions I wish to submit to you, Sir, with all respect, are these—Is it competent for one Branch of the Legislature to discuss the abolition of the other? Is the Motion one which you, Sir, ought to be asked to put from that Chair; and is the Notice one which ought to be permitted to remain one day longer on the Paper? With respect to the good taste and propriety which dictated it——["Oh, oh!" *and* "Order!"]

MR. LABOUCHERE: Perhaps, Sir, I may be permitted to explain. The words are words which have already ——["Order!"]

EARL PERCY: I rise to Order. The Chair has been appealed to on the point of Order. I do not apprehend that the hon. Member has any right to explain.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I may be permitted to explain that the words of the Motion are precisely those which were submitted to a Parliament in England—the Long Parliament—and that they were passed by that Assembly. As, however, it has been pointed out to me by some hon. Friends of mine that the word "useless" may imply some sort of reflection upon the Members of the House of Lords, I have modified that word, and have put instead, "unnecessary, obstructive, and dangerous."

MR. SPEAKER: In answer to the questions of the hon. Member, I may say my attention was drawn to the terms of this Notice of Motion; and I was informed that the precedent of the words had come from the days of the Long Parliament. I am bound to say that I considered that certainly one expression in that Notice was inadmissable. The hon. Member for Northampton spoke of the House of Lords as "useless." Now, had any hon. Member spoken of the other House of Parliament in terms of that character, I should have felt it my duty to call him to Order; and I am glad to find that the hon. Member for Northampton, as I understand him, has withdrawn from his Notice of Motion that particular expression. The hon. Member also asks me whether it is competent for this House to raise the question of the abolition of the House of Lords? The hon. Member must be aware that that proposition has frequently been before the House.

MR. NEWDEGATE remarked, that, according to his memory, the decisions of the Long Parliament had not been regarded as binding by the Predecessors of the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair.

PARLIAMENTARY OATH—MR. BRADLAUGH.

MR. LABOUCHERE: With your permission, Sir, I wish to put a question which I have already submitted to you. Referring to the fact that Mr. Bradlaugh is ready, in compliance with No. 26 of the Rules and Orders of this House, to produce to the Clerk of this House the certificate of his return as the new Member for the borough of Northampton, and to the fact that the return has been certified by the Clerk of the Crown; and also referring to the fact that two Members—the Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt) and the senior Member for Northampton — are ready to introduce Mr. Bradlaugh to the Table, in accordance with the Resolution of the 23rd of February, 1688—I wish to ask you, Sir, whether the Resolution of the 6th of March forbids Mr. Bradlaugh and his introducers from coming to the Table for the purpose of claiming his seat for Northampton according to law; and to ask whether, as Mr. Bradlaugh is forbidden to take the Oath of Allegiance, you will inform me how he is to proceed to perform his duty to his and my constituents, by sitting and voting in this House?

MR. SPEAKER: In reply to the first question of the hon. Member, I have to state that I have no hesitation in saying that, in my judgment, in view of the Resolution agreed to by the House yesterday, that Mr. Bradlaugh be not permitted to go through the form of taking the Oath of Allegiance prescribed by law, it would be irregular and disorderly for the two hon. Members referred to to introduce him to the House and conduct him to the Table for the purpose of his taking the Oath. I may add that it is a well-known Rule of this House that no hon. Member is to come to the Table to be sworn until he has been called upon to do so by the Speaker; and, having regard to the Resolution of yesterday, I consider myself bound not to call upon the hon. Member for Northampton to come to the Table to be sworn. As regards the second question put to me by the hon. Member, I have only to point out that it forms no part of my duty to advise hon. Members as to the course which they should pursue in asserting their title to take their seats.

MOTION.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—FREE IMPORTS.—RESOLUTION.

MR. STORER, in rising to move the following Resolution:—

> "That, owing to the heavy duties imposed upon our manufactures by so many Foreign nations, whilst all Foreign manufactures are admitted into this Country duty-free, and to the depression of the rural Home trade caused by the free import of Foreign agricultural produce at prices with which our own farmers are unable to compete, the interests of all classes of producers in this Country are vitally assailed; and that the time has arrived when it is necessary to reconsider the policy of free imports, with a view to the relief of our Home industries, and the more equal distribution of the heavy burden of taxation now pressing upon them,"

said, that this question, though a very important one, had not yet risen to the dignity of a Party one; and, therefore, he trusted that it would be discussed in a calm and temperate manner, and not treated with invective or as a foregone conclusion. He would remind the House that the question of import duties stood in a very different position now from what it did in 1846. At that time there was a probability of famine among the greater part of the community, and manufactures were in a very depressed state; and a certain class of politicians seized upon the opportunity of persuading the working classes that the question of Free Trade was one between themselves and the landlords. He admitted that the theory of Free Trade was perfect; but it pre-supposed two things—first, that everybody agreed to it and adopted it; and, second, that all parties were in an equal or similar condition. These two conditions, however, did not exist. It had been supposed by those who introduced the system that the example of England would speedily be followed by the whole world; but that anticipation had not been realized, and other countries, instead of following our example, had gone in a diametrically opposite direction. The originators of the system had believed that cheap corn meant cheap labour, a consequent extension of the manufacturing interest, and, above all, cheap size for their calicoes. There might be some reason for the latter belief, as the manufacturers were accused of using 30 per cent of size. They, however, had soon discovered their mistake. Instead of getting cheap labour, they had had to deal with trade unions. The prosperity of the country was due, not to Free Trade, but to discoveries of gold and the introduction of railways and telegraphs. The proof of the truth of this assertion was found in the fact that other countries which adhered to protective duties had prospered even more than we had. He declined to argue this question as a matter of exports and imports. But he gathered from the Board of Trade Returns that our imports, which in 1866 were £295,000,000, were in 1880, £411,000,000; and the exports, which in 1866 were £188,000,000, in 1872, £256,000,000, were in 1880 only £223,000,000. Ever since 1873 there had been a gradual but certain declension in the value of our exports, and a corresponding increase in the value of the imports. He would ask the attention of hon. Members to a letter which had appeared in *The Morning Post*, signed "One of a City Firm," in favour of Fair Trade, and to a further letter respecting the advantages American iron manufacturers had derived from Protection. Men of all classes with whom he had come in contact had agreed that trade had never been so stagnant, particularly in those towns which depended on agricultural custom. As an illustration of this, he would mention the fact that a large shopkeeper in a town of this kind had informed him that for several years past he had been in the habit of taking £150 over the counter on market days, but that now he could only take £50. The effect of American competition was, and must always be, to decrease prices obtained by the farmer for his produce. He would then refer to the question of agricultural depression. Even those who were in favour of Free Trade would admit that bad harvests were not the only cause, though doubtless one of the causes, that led to that depression. Mr. Farrar said in his book, which had been issued with the sanction of the Board of Trade, that the present condition of things could not compare with that of 10 years ago, and that the farmers were worse off by a sum approaching £200,000,000 or £300,000,000. He went on to say—

> "Bad harvests are only one of the causes. The rise in rents, the increase in the cost of labour, and the heavy fall in the price of agricultural produce, owing to foreign competition, are also causes which have led to that result."

With regard to foreign competition, the following facts were worthy of observation:—From 1862 to 1877, corn was at 54*s*. a quarter, while in the three years, 1878-80, it averaged only 44*s*. per quarter. At the same time the imports were, from 1862 to 1877, 42,000,000 cwt., and from 1878 to 1880, 67,000,000 cwt. Those figures showed that the effect of foreign competition on the English producer was not only to increase immensely the importations, but to diminish the price in the home market. Another fact worthy of notice was that the cultivated area of corn had greatly declined during the last few years. With regard to the remedies for this state of things, he should himself be inclined to propose a small duty on foreign corn; but he supposed that if he did so he should be shouted down, though he was not by any means sure that that was not the direction in which they must seek relief. If a better way were put forward, he should be satisfied to adopt it; but he thought the position of the case required some remedy to be applied, and that speedily.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at half after Eight o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 8th March, 1882.

MINUTES.] — PRIVATE BILLS (*by Order*)— *Second Reading*—Greenock Corporation and Board of Police*.

Referred to Select Committee—Regent's Canal, City, and Docks Railway *.

PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered* — Interments (Felo de se) *.

Second Reading—Bills of Sale Act (1878) Amendment [8]; Criminal Law Amendment [15]; Criminal Procedure * [43].

Select Committee — Bills of Exchange* [70], *nominated.*

Third Reading — Pilotage Provisional Order (Tees) * [1], and *passed.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

REGENT'S CANAL, CITY, AND DOCKS RAILWAY BILL.

Ordered, That the Regent's Canal, City, and Docks Railway Bill be committed to a Select Committee, to consist of Nine Members, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection:—That all Petitions against the Bill, presented not later than three clear days before the meeting of the Committee, be referred to the Select Committee on the Bill; and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, or Agents, be heard upon their Petition, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against such Petitions.—(*Mr. Chamberlain.*)

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

BILLS OF SALE ACT (1878) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 8.]

(*Mr. Monk, Mr. Serjeant Simon.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. MONK, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that in 1878 the subject was discussed in that House, and Mr. Sampson Lloyd, then Member for Plymouth, brought in a Bill to amend and consolidate the Law relating to Bills of Sale. One of the objects of Mr. Lloyd's measure was to reduce the time allowed for registration from 21 days to three; but in Committee the time was altered from three to seven days. It also proposed to take bills of sale out of the Order and Disposition Clauses of the Bankruptcy Act, and to make registration necessary to their validity, and that was done. It was also thought right that there should be a better system of registration, and that no bill of sale should be valid if not registered; but subsequently a decision of the Courts of Law, placing a different construction on that part of the Act, had made the clause inoperative. The Bill was read a second time without discussion, and there was no discussion on going into Committee. The measure was considerably altered in "another place," but ultimately became law, and one of the immediate results of its passing was that the number of bills of sale had increased four-fold in two years, from between 13,000 and 14,000 previous to 1878 to 57,000; and it appeared from the evidence taken last year before a Select Committee that sat upon the subject, that there was an enormous number of bills of sale not registered at all. The effect of the Act, especially of the provision taking bills of sale out of the Order and Disposition Clauses of the Bankruptcy Law, was seen in the cases of hardship and oppression which came before the County Courts. So serious was the evil that in January of last year a Circular was issued by the Lord Chancellor calling the attention of the County Court Judges and Registrars to the subject, and asking for information respecting it. That Circular brought forth a large number of replies, which would be found in a Paper which had been laid on the Table of the House. In 1880, the subject arrested the attention of the Chambers of Commerce, and gave rise to more than one discussion. So general was the feeling of the Chambers of Commerce on the matter, that steps were taken by the Council of the Association to have a Bill prepared to amend the Act. That Bill he had the honour to introduce, and after some discussion, in which his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade took part, it was read a second time, and remitted to a Select Committee, presided over by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General. A considerable amount of evidence was taken before that Committee, and among others Mr. Motteram, Judge of the Birmingham County Court, the Registrar of the Leeds County Court, the late Lord Advocate, and the Editor of *The Law Times* were examined. The existing state of things stood condemned by the almost unanimous judgment of the Judges and Registrars of the County Courts. They agreed generally that after-acquired property should not pass under a bill of sale, and that the law, as laid down in "Holroyd and Marshall" by the House of Lords, should be altered. The Judge of the Birmingham County Court spoke of the disastrous operation of bills of sale, said that they were frequently the source of litigation, and that by far the greater proportion were not *bonâ fide;* he estimated that 80 or 90 per cent of bills of sale were fraudulent, and said that many persons were of opinion that it would be a benefit to the community if they were done away with. That was the almost unanimous opinion of the Select Committee; but they did not feel that at present they would be justified in recommending their entire abolition. Mr. Motteram further said that after-acquired property should not be assigned either in substitution for, or in addition to, the property assigned by bills of sale, and that he would abolish bills of sale for sums under £50. This last recommendation was made by many Judges and Registrars. Mr. Daniel, Judge of the Bradford County Court, said that the evils produced by the Act were ruinous to borrowers, and that bills of sale were unfairly used to defeat the claims of *bonâ fide* unsecured creditors, and to the prejudice of the ordinary Law of Bankruptcy. As a remedy, he would repeal the 20th section of the Act of 1878, and restore the protection to creditors which was given by the Order and Disposition Clauses of the Bankruptcy Act. The Select Committee took the evidence, amongst other witnesses, of four professional money-lenders, whose testimony was of the most graphic and sensational nature. He (Mr. Monk) thought he had never read anything more sensational in Dickens's novels; but, in saying that, he must do those professed money-lenders the justice to say that nothing could be more frank, straightforward, and impartial than the manner in which they gave their evidence. They concealed nothing from the Committee, and, at the same time, entirely condemned the present state of the law. One witness, a money-lender, said that for loans under £50 the rate of interest ranged between 70 and 90 per cent, and often exceeded the higher figure; and that 15 times out of 20, where the money was not paid promptly, the borrower's goods were seized and sold, often inflicting great hardships and misery. He said that it would be an advantage to smaller borrowers if they were prevented from borrowing on bills of sale; but the prohibition would materially interfere with his own business; and that 99 out of every 100 borrowers were insolvent, and many of them did not understand the effect of a bill of sale; while it was the practice of money-lenders not to register bills of sale at all. Another money-lender said that the abolition of bills of sale would interfere materially with his business, for he had as many as 5,000 in one year; but he favoured their abolition because of the misery that arose out of them. The Bill he (Mr. Monk) had brought in had been carefully considered by his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General, and he hoped it would receive the support of the Government. Generally, the effect of the Bill was as follows. Clause 3 required bills of sale to have a schedule of the property attached thereto, which should be only valid in respect of chattels named therein, and not to take effect if they were not at the time actually the property of the grantor. Clause 6 had reference to growing crops and produce and plant and machinery brought upon the premises, in substitution for the machinery enumerated in the schedule. These it had been thought very necessary to except, and they were the only exceptions as to after-acquired property passing under a bill of sale. Clause 7 provided that bills of sale should be void unless attested and registered. Clause 8 required all bills of sale to be executed in the presence of a Commissioner taking oaths in a Supreme Court, and also a solicitor, who must state that he had carefully explained to the grantor the object and effect of the bill, so that there might be some security that the people who gave them really understood what they were doing. There were other clauses of great importance. For instance, Clause 9 required bills of sale to be transmitted from the Central Office to the County Courts for local registration. Clause 10 was a most important clause; it invalidated all bills of sale under £50. Clause 11 repealed the 20th Section of the Act of 1878, and made bills of sale again subject to the Order and Dispositions Clauses of the Bankruptcy Act, where bankruptcy or liquidation followed within 12 months. This was a clause inserted to protect creditors. Clause 12 enacted that chattels should not be removed or sold for three clear days after seizure. Formerly, if the grantor was merely an hour in default in paying an instalment, the grantee was able to take possession and sell the goods. Clause 15 extended the right of search to those who wished to inspect bills of sale; and made it general and absolute, instead of being dependent on rules and orders. The application of the Bill was limited to England and Wales, the reason being that Scotland was very fortunate in having no bills of sale. With regard to Ireland, in 1879 an Act almost identical with that passed in 1878 for England was passed for that country; and if hon. Members from thence were desirous of doing so, he (Mr. Monk) would be most happy to co-operate with them in bringing in a similar amending Bill as the one under notice to apply to Ireland. He would conclude by moving the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Monk.*)

MR. WARTON said, it seemed to be the opinion of some of the witnesses before the Select Committee that bills of sale should be abolished altogether, and he thought that it would have been much more straightforward if the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) had brought in a Bill for that purpose, for that would be the practical result of the measure under notice. If the measure passed—and he appreciated the spirit which animated its promoter—either bills of sale would be abolished altogether, or they would only be possible at rates of interest far more usurious than those now in use. He did not say that that was not a desirable end; but if bills of sale were to be retained, it seemed to him that the Bill might advantageously be modified in certain of its details. The most important part of the Bill was Clause 11, which would prevent money-lenders who had any regard for their own interest from lending any money at all, because who would lend money to one who might become bankrupt within 12 months? He supposed the Bill would be carried; but with respect to this 11th clause, he thought the term should be four months instead of 12. Then, again, the interval during which goods should not be sold might be extended from three to five days, and bills of sale might be allowed to apply to goods substituted for those originally secured, though not to additional goods. The proposed Bill, he considered, proceeded far in the direction of abolishing bills of sale altogether, and would require to be carefully looked after in Committee.

MR. SERJEANT SIMON said, he thought the objections of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) were such as might be dealt with in Committee. With regard to the period of three days, he did not think that there would be any objection to the alteration. The object of making the time short, however, was on the ground of expense, as the longer the bailiff remained in possession the more he would have to be paid. With regard to that part of the Bill making bills of sale subject to the Order and Disposition Clauses of the Bankruptcy Act, the object was to place as much difficulty as possible in the way of fraudulent transactions, and to give protection to honest creditors. The question that the Select Committee last year had to consider was whether bills of sale ought to be abolished altogether, or whether they ought to put as many restrictions as they could in order to secure honesty in the transaction. It was felt that they could not properly deny a man the right to raise money on personal property while they allowed others to raise money on real property; and it seemed right that a man should have the power to pledge his property, whether personal or real, in order to relieve himself from temporary pressure. Whilst they felt bound to recognize that principle, the Committee felt it their duty also to put as many safeguards as they could against fraudulent transactions. The Bill was aimed, not against the principle of raising money, but against the men who traded solely as money-lenders, and whose trade was always more or less tinged with fraud, not always on the part of the money-lender, but frequently on the part of the borrower. But there was often a great deal of oppression on the part of the money-lender, as was proved before the Committee by professional money-lenders who came to give evidence. One of these persons stated that in one transaction he had charged interest at the rate of 400 per cent. No man paying interest at that rate could ever hope to recoup himself; and the object of the clause in question was to protect honest, *bonâ fide* creditors who were injured by these dishonest and oppressive transactions. It was also a protection to the borrower himself. He trusted that the present Bill would remedy much of the evil existing, and would give what was so much needed — protection to the creditor, and to the honest, but needy, trader.

Mr. CROPPER said, it was quite possible the Bill would do away altogether with bills of sale. He was not anxious to put restrictions upon commercial transactions, but he agreed thoroughly with the clause doing away with bills of sale under £50. It was in these small sums that the grievance with regard to such bills had arisen, as in many cases persons in embarrassment had gone on under bills of sale until they found themselves in great difficulty; their creditors were cheated, themselves ruined, and their trade and everything swept away. He agreed with the suggestion that five days should be substituted for three days. On behalf of a vast number of small traders, who under pressure were tempted to indulge in bills of sale in the hope that they might relieve themselves from some pressing difficulty, he gave his warm support to the Bill.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, on the part of the Government, he did not propose to offer any opposition to the Bill, and he thought the House, and the commercial part of it in particular, was indebted to the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) for the trouble he had taken in the matter, and for bringing it in, as no doubt an alteration in the law was necessary in order to remedy a great and growing abuse. There was no doubt whatever as to the existence of that abuse. It was a well ascertained fact that the practice of giving bills of sale had enormously increased since the Act of 1878, and was the means of leading thousands of honest and respectable people to their ruin. The hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) had pointed out that the Bill went very far in the direction of abolishing bills of sale altogether. In that respect, the Bill, he believed, embodied the recommendations of the Committee of last year, which were substantially unanimous; but it would be a matter for the House to consider, when it got into Committee upon it, whether they should agree to all the clauses of the Bill as it stood, and whether so very large an alteration in the present system as the measure proposed to effect, could be safely made at once. He thought that the clause which would prevent any bill of sale being given on stock might operate harshly, especially in cases where the borrower had paid for his stock. Again, the clause which prohibited bills of sale being given in respect of loans under £50, would practically prevent the working man from raising money on his goods. These two clauses, taken together, would doubtless affect five out of every six transactions of this nature that were legal under the existing law. The mere fact that such a large number of bills of sale were given in the course of the year seemed to imply some necessity, or at all events some demand, for the convenience of the different classes of the community, and, of course, it would be open for the consideration of the House in Committee whether the evils and abuses complained of might not be remedied without such an entire reverse of the existing system as the Bill proposed. It must be remembered, as a curious circumstance, that the great abuses and scandals which now attached to bills of sale were due to the Order and Disposition Clauses—clauses which were introduced into the Act of 1878, at the instigation and with the support of the Chambers of Commerce of the country. These Chambers of Commerce were now seeking to repair the mistake made in 1878; but he thought the House would also have to see that in repairing one mistake they did not fall into another. He thought that by extending the period within which bills of sale should become void, where the borrower became bankrupt, to 12 months after their making, and by reversing the legislation of 1878, with regard to the Order and Disposition Clauses, the chief abuses of the present system might be put an end to. Sooner, however, than that the present system should remain unaltered, he should prefer to see bills of sale abolished altogether.

MR. FINDLATER said, he quite agreed with the principle of the Bill, but thought, with the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken, that if bills of sale were to be retained as a security worth anything, some alteration should be made in Committee in the clauses of the Bill. As they stood at present, it would be impossible to give any reasonable security in *bonâ fide* mercantile dealings between wholesale dealers and retailers. He would appeal to the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland, to the effect that, if legislation on the subject took place for England, he would take care immediately to have a similar measure introduced to apply to Ireland.

MR. HENEAGE said, he was glad that such a Bill had been brought in. He concurred with the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade that it would be better to abolish bills of sale off the face of the earth altogether, rather than to allow the law to remain in its present position. The only remark he desired to make had reference to the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Dewsbury (Mr. Serjeant Simon), whose reason for not extending the period within which a borrower's goods should not be sold was the saving of expense to the person in difficulties; but he (Mr. Heneage) very much doubted whether there would be any real saving of expense, because if the sale took place within a short time after, the result would be that the goods would be sold at a great disadvantage, and by extending the period the sum of money obtained at the sale would outweigh the expense. In the case of agricultural stock, he thought a compromise of five days might be accepted.

MR. LEWIS FRY said, he was very glad to see that the House practically was unanimous in its assent to the second reading of the Bill of his hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk). He quite agreed that one of the most important clauses in the Bill was that which related to bills of sale under £50, and he would point out that the increase in bills of sale since the passing of the Act of 1878 had been chiefly in those under that sum. While in 1877 the number of bills of sale under £50 was 4,802, it had increased in 1880 to 38,177, showing an increase of 800 per cent. On the other hand, the number of bills of sale for over £50, which was 10,934 in 1877, had only increased to 17,336 in 1880, being an increase of only 60 per cent. He was unable entirely to agree with what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) as to securities upon the floating and changing stock in the trade of a retail dealer. He considered it unsound in principle that a trader should be able to give a preferential security to a particular creditor over goods which he might hereafter purchase, and which he might never pay for; and, considering the enormous rate of interest charged by the lenders—at the least as much as 50 or 60 per cent—he believed such loans did the greatest possible injury to the borrowers. He supported the Bill of his hon. Friend in the belief that it would effect an important and a most beneficial improvement in the law.

SIR BALDWYN LEIGHTON supported the Bill, and suggested that there should be no sale until after seven days' seizure of goods—certainly not until after five days.

MR. MONK said, he had to most gratefully thank the House for their general concurrence with the provisions of the measure. When the Bill got into Committee, he should be willing to adopt the extension of days as suggested.

Question put, and *agreed to*.

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT BILL.

(*Mr. Hopwood, Mr. Charles Russell, Mr. Meldon, Hon. Arthur Elliot, Mr. Arnold, Mr. Broadhurst.*)

[BILL 15.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. HOPWOOD, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that it embodied in great measure the result of the labours of the Commission which had sat to consider the subject of our Criminal Law several years ago, and it was very much to be deplored that the labours of that Commission had not yet been utilized for the Public Service, though, no doubt, there had been many practical difficulties in the way of their recommendations being brought about. The present Bill was an attempt to make use of a large portion of the Commission's labours. On the Commission were four eminent Judges—Lord Blackburn, the late Lord Justice Lush, Mr. Justice Barry, and Mr., now Sir James, Stephen. Some of the recommendations of these learned Judges were also embodied in another measure, which would be referred to in the discussion on the present Bill—that of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). In order to take out of the Code as settled the portion which related to procedure, which mainly constituted the present measure, it was necessary to introduce clauses of adaptation. Those would require consideration, and possibly there might not be entire unanimity as to them, though he had bestowed some care upon them. In the Speech from the Throne, at the commencement of the Session, allusion was made to this subject, and a Bill was promised; but he trusted his hon. and learned Friend (the Attorney General) would not attribute to him any want of respect in proceeding with a measure which, so to speak, had been "on the stocks" for some time before that announcement, and which he desired to launch before the House. Almost everything submitted as a matter of procedure by the Commission to the Government of the day was included, and as he had taken the course of adopting, wherever possible, the very words of the Commissioners, he trusted the Government would not feel it their duty to oppose the Bill. The first point was that the measure produced this useful effect—it defined the ground upon which arrest on a criminal charge might be made with or without warrant. Then it proceeded to enlarge the jurisdiction of the Courts of Quarter Sessions. It had long been thought that the work of the Assizes might be considerably and usefully relieved by certain cases being transferred to Courts of more limited or inferior jurisdiction, though there was the objection that those Courts were not always presided over by men trained for the purpose. The Bill proposed that Courts of Quarter Sessions should have power to try cases of robbery with violence, assault with intent to rob, and burglary. This would greatly relieve the work of the Judges of Assize. The Courts indicated already dealt with similar cases of crime for which as high punishments were inflicted. It became important, however, to see the effect of that transfer. It would give those Courts power to inflict penal servitude for life. That, he admitted, was a dangerous thing to do. In some Courts there was a desire to exceed the limit of ordinary punishment. Therefore, some limitations were proposed in the measure with the view of checking any arbitrary use of their new powers by Quarter Sessions. These Courts had usually kept their sentences within due limits; but there was a notable exception in the case of the Surrey Sessions, where three prisoners had, in one Session, been sentenced to 20 years' penal servitude. He had thought it his duty to bring before the notice of the House of Commons the severe sentences passed at those Sessions by way of questions to the Home Secretary, and he would appeal now to any hon. and learned Lawyer present whether he had ever known such sentences elsewhere? However, that showed the necessity of some limitation in the power of Quarter Sessions, because, without that limitation, a Court with a peculiar Chairman, guided by an idea that it knew better than all other Courts how to repress crime, might even inflict penal servitude for life. It was strange that the Surrey Court should persist in such relentless sentences, which had the effect of blotting a fellow-creature out of the world for so long a period—perhaps only on account of a series of pilferings. He was glad to say that other Courts were not so severe, and he had asked for a Return from the Middlesex Sessions, as well as from the Surrey Sessions, for three years past, which he hoped, by comparison, would show such severe sentences were not necessary for the repression of crime. If they were not necessary, it was culpable to proceed in such a severe, relentless, and vindictive manner. It would not, therefore, be safe to give every Court an unlimited power of punishment with the jurisdiction which the Bill proposed should be transferred to them. At present, Courts of Quarter Sessions had power to give extraordinary sentences for compound felonies—that was, where a man was convicted after a previous conviction. It would also pile up sentences one on the other in respect of separate offences. The Bill provided that no such Court should sentence for one, or, cumulatively, for several crimes, for a longer term than 10 years, or such other time as the House might think proper; and in case a person was convicted, but not charged with crime previously, for no longer term than five years, or such other time as might be agreed upon by hon. Members in Committee. He knew that at the Surrey Sessions seven years were frequently given for a first conviction, and he could hardly understand how men could be competent to preside who would deal in that way with their fellow-creatures, acting upon some preconceived notion of the enormity of vice, and inflicting punishments of the extraordinary character to which he had referred. The Bill also contained a clause that such Courts should have no power, for these or similar offences, to sentence to whipping or flogging any male above the age of 16 years. Next, as regarded the Coroner's jurisdiction, that also had been dealt with by the Commissioners. The Bill followed in the lines which those Commissioners had laid down. It proposed to abolish the extraordinary double jurisdiction in criminal proceedings by which men found guilty on Coroner's inquests were liable to be tried on that verdict, as well as on the bill found by the Grand Jury, and were not brought in the usual way before a Justice. His alteration was, that if the Coroner issued a warrant for the apprehension of a supposed offender, it should be to take him before a Justice, who might deal with him as though a warrant had been issued on information laid before him. That proposal had been recommended by several learned Judges. Then, as to the question of bail. The lines laid down by the Commissioners had also been followed in that respect. The Bill defined the cases in which there was a discretion to grant bail, and those in which bail was a matter of right, points of immense importance both to the administrators of the law and to those whom the law personally affected. With regard to the drafting of indictments, it was proposed, in the first place, to abolish the distinction between felony and misdemeanour. That would make the wrongful joinder of felonies and misdemeanours by an incompetent and careless draftsman no longer a ground for the escape on a technical excuse of a person who might be guilty of the accusation brought against him. The general provisions as to indictments also sought to bring them down to the region of intelligibility by clothing them in simple and precise language. Technicalities would be avoided and their place supplied with allegations, which it was essential to prove. The Bill also described the objections which should not invalidate the indictment. The 70th clause gave amplified powers, as compared with those given by the Commissioners, to the Court or a Judge to require the prosecutor to give further particulars, together with access to any document or thing under his control or in his custody, to aid the defence of the accused, of the nature and circumstances of the charge brought against the accused. The absence of this power at present often worked to the wrong of the person charged. With respect to treason, perjury, and false pretences, the present requirements for indictments were of the most absurd character, expressed in a long rigmarole of legal phraseology which nobody understood, and which often gave rise to technical objections to the detriment of the due administration of justice, the result being that the guilty had frequently escaped owing to the want of skill of the draftsman. This the Bill endeavoured to amend. He was glad, too, that the recommendations of the Commissioners that the Outlawry Act should be abolished would be practically attained. It was true that the Act was seldom put in force; but it might be enforced and the old theory be carried out—as the House was doubtless aware, that, according to the law as it at present stood, the criminal outlaw was an unhappy wretch, out of the pale of society, and that anybody might put an end to him. In regard to the question of special juries, he had ventured to differ with the Commission, which was of opinion that in all cases a special jury might be obtained either at the suit of the prosecutor or the accused. He thought that would be an extremely invidious power, and his proposal was that the prosecution should have the right of obtaining a special jury only in special cases, while the accused should have the right in all cases, subject to the sanction of the Court. He proposed this, because the accused might belong to a different class in life from the people ordinarily assembled to try him. If a man was tried by his peers it would be carrying into effect the old notion of the law. He also proposed, in accordance with the recommendation of the Commission, that the accused should, in every case, have the option of giving evidence. It was obvious that there was nothing which an innocent person accused of a crime would desire more than to give evidence on his own behalf. There was no doubt that, if this had been allowed in the cases which had lately disturbed the public mind—Clowes and Johnson—and in which two innocent men had been convicted, but who were subsequently pardoned and released, after having suffered a period of imprisonment for violence which the prosecutor confessed on his death-bed they had not committed, they would have been able to corroborate each other, and, although they might not have been able to prove their perfect innocence, they would have produced that "reasonable doubt" in the minds of the jury, on which juries were constantly told to act. He sought to abolish the Attorney General's right of reply in criminal cases. It was very hard that the accused, where he called no witnesses, should not have the last word. The privilege had been absurdly extended at Assizes and Quarter Sessions to the deputies of his hon. and learned Friend. At present, if the Attorney General or Solicitor General appeared to prosecute they had the right to reply, and the same privilege was also claimed and acted upon by their young friends whom they nominated in their stead. The Bill proposed to alter that practice. It was a matter which produced a sense of injustice in many persons' minds. He would next call attention to the provision to establish a Court of Criminal Appeal. The only appeal now was the varying and uncertain one to the Home Office. It was well known there were instances in which capital sentences had been carried out on innocent persons, who would have been saved by an Appeal Court; and he called attention to a Return just issued, which he had obtained, respecting the Prerogative of mercy, that there were five or six cases in which a free pardon had even been given in cases where men had been sentenced to death, while there were hundreds of cases in which the sentence of death had been commuted to penal servitude for terms varying from that of life to a very small number of years—in fact, more than one-half of the capital sentences were not carried into effect. In one case a person sentenced to death was discharged after one year's imprisonment. This was strong proof in favour of the right of appeal which the Bill proposed to give. There was no doubt that a Court of Appeal would deal much more satisfactorily with the varying shades of guilt than a Home Secretary possibly could. The same argument applied to other than capital sentences, and, indeed, to the whole administration of the Criminal Law. If appeal should be allowed in the most paltry civil cases, why not in these? In the County Court, a man who was sued for £21 had any number of appeals, and a similar principle ought to apply to criminal cases, where life and liberty were concerned. It existed in every civilized country except England. He would refer to the charge of Mr. Justice Mathew, in favour of an appeal against sentences delivered by the Grand Jury at a recent Assize for Liverpool. It showed what care we had for the rights of property, when the same privilege was not extended to the life of any individual. It was a fact that in the great majority of cases an appeal could not be justified; but there were exceptions, and those exceptions should be provided for. If he was told that there would be so many appeals brought before the Court that it would be flooded with them, he would reply that he did not believe it, for, as a rule, criminals charged with offences were mostly, he regretted to say, too poor and friendless, and had not the means wherewith to appeal. Besides, in his experience, the guilty quite acquiesced in their conviction and sentence. Therefore, he thought such appeals would, in fact, be few; and, beyond that, the Commissioners strongly recommended the establishment of such a Court, and there could be no higher testimony. In any case, he believed it would tend to prevent those cases of injustice which had so much shocked the public mind. To him it was a matter of surprise that the question should have been debated so long, and that, although similar Bills had been brought in year after year, they had been relegated to the depository of good efforts, and never came into effect. Though most people had expressed or affected sympathy with the object, few had exerted themselves to meet one of the plainest demands of justice. However, an hon. Member (Sir Eardley Wilmot) had charge of another Bill for establishing a right of appeal in cases of capital punishment, and the time had come when the question could be no longer delayed. The Bill also provided for new trials of a special character by order of the Secretary of State. The proposal contained was—Section 127—that if, upon any application for the mercy of the Crown on behalf of any person committed for crime, one of Her Majesty's principal Secretaries of State in England, or the Lord Lieutenant in Ireland, should think fit, either on the evidence given at the trial, or by reason of other evidence brought to his knowledge, he might, by an order in writing, direct a new trial or inquiry into the case before three Judges, who should not for this purpose be bound by the ordinary legal rules in regard to evidence, but should call any evidence they might think fit. This provision would, he believed, be a great relief to an overtasked Minister of State. It could not be expected that such a Minister should go personally into all the evidence in every case in which he was appealed to, and the result was that in most cases the Home Secretary referred such matters to the Permanent Under Secretary of the Home Office for consideration and report; and the House could readily understand what a relief it would be to an over-taxed Minister to be enabled to direct an inquiry before three Judges, who would take the responsibility of deciding upon the innocence or otherwise of the persons concerned. He did not say the opinion of the Judges who tried them was not of great weight, but it was not in all cases conclusive; and he would appeal to other Members of the House whether they had not in vain appealed to the mercy of the Crown in many cases in some of which a considerable remission of sentence might have been made, and in some of which the prisoners ought to have been allowed to go free? But these prisoners dragged the chain of hopeless captivity, darkness shadowed every prospect for them, and they were expected to obey the prison regulations with gentle and docile mind, and submit to the long servitude for life which was placed upon them. He himself had brought under the notice of the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Sir William Harcourt), among others, the case of two men who were condemned to death, and who were now undergoing a sentence of penal servitude for life. They were constantly making piteous appeals to him and declaring their innocence. He had exhausted every means of inquiry in order to bring evidence to bear upon an appeal which he had addressed on their behalf to the Home Secretary, and the evidence was, to his own mind, convincing that both these men were innocent. He could not complain of the refusal of the Home Secretary to liberate these men. He was bound in the matter by usage and practice. He was over-mastered by the pressure of great affairs. But he (Mr. Hopwood) felt that he had a right to tell the House of such cases. He believed that in this, as in other cases, if such an inquiry as that proposed in the Bill could be held, the innocence of the prisoners would be clearly established. There was, how ever, no remedy for these men, for there was no appeal at present from the decision of the Secretary of State. He submitted to the House that he had laid before them a good plea that the revision of convictions and of sentences should be placed in competent hands before a public Court, where the matter in question could be debated before the public gaze, and the decision of the Court given upon the facts. Where punishment had fallen upon innocent men society was incurring daily a great responsibility; and he believed an assurance from his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General, that a reform in this direction was intended, would bring to the public mind intense and general satisfaction. The hon. and learned Gentleman concluded by moving the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Hopwood.*)

Mr. MELLOR said, there could, he thought, be no doubt that his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Stockport (Mr. Hopwood) was justly entitled to the thanks of the House for having brought forward that subject, and for the trouble he had taken in connection with it. The reform of the Criminal Procedure of the country had for a long time been before the House in various forms, and all who were acquainted with the circumstances had been satisfied that reform was imperatively needed. He therefore hoped the day would soon come when the Government would find itself in such a position as to feel themselves compelled to take up the matter. He could conceive nothing more terrible than the lot of an innocent man sentenced to penal servitude, and that consideration ought to make them very careful with regard to their mode of action, and the way in which they dealt with prisoners on their trial, and how they altered the procedure that was to affect them. Above all, they ought to be most careful to avoid intrusting the trial of prisoners to inexperienced persons. He was greatly opposed to the proposal to extend the jurisdiction of Quarter Sessions, on the ground that an enlargement of their power would be both unwise and prejudicial. His experience was that the magistrates, as a body, were most sincerely anxious to do justice, and no doubt the cases which came before Quarter Sessions were very varied; but after the first day of the Sessions the attendance of magistrates was very small, and very often on the second day cases were tried by the Chairman and one magistrate. If the jurisdiction was to be extended some serious and extensive reform must be effected; they must have practised and experienced men, who ought to be thoroughly versed in the practice of Quarter Sessions. He was bound to say that his experience of 10 years at Quarter Sessions had convinced him that many of the Chairmen were thoroughly inefficient, and quite incapable of properly dealing with the cases brought before them. He had known instances of gentlemen being appointed as Chairmen of Quarter Sessions who had never had the slightest experience of criminal trials previous to their appointment; he knew of an instance in which a particular Chairman confessed his incapacity to perform the duties which attached to his position. He was not putting that as a universal rule. It was in Courts where inexperienced persons presided that miscarriages of justice occurred—persons who had no sort of experience in criminal trials. He therefore thought the House ought to hesitate before they extended the jurisdiction of such Courts. He hoped that when the Government dealt with the subject, steps would be taken to secure the appointment of experienced persons as Chairmen, so that prisoners should not be unduly exposed to the risk of unjust conviction. He condemned the present indictments as technical in the last degree, and he hoped this evil would be remedied. He quite concurred with his hon. and learned Friend as to the desirableness of abolishing the distinction between felony and misdemeanour. He also thought it was desirable that the Court should have power to change the place of trial, where there was a great amount of local prejudice, or where, from other local circumstances, it was desirable to do so. He did not see why a special jury should not be empannelled for the trial of criminal cases; but the system introduced at the suggestion of the Lord Chief Justice of a judicious mixture of special jurors with common jurors had proved very advantageous, besides giving universal satisfaction, and therefore diminished the importance of this proposal. He was also in favour of juries being enabled to " view " in criminal cases, and of the accused being allowed to give evidence on his own behalf. With regard to the latter, he had come to the conclusion that to permit that would be a most valuable improvement on the present system, as helping materially the administration of justice. He had never been able to see why the person who knew the most about the matter should not, if he chose to undergo the test of cross-examination, be allowed to give his own account of it. It had been said by some that to allow a prisoner to enter the witness-box would be to expose him to unjust treatment, but he failed to see how there could be any risk of that in this country. In many cases, if prisoners were allowed to give evidence, persons unjustly accused would be enabled to prove their innocence. With regard to appeals, he thought that a prisoner ought to be allowed to appeal, if leave were given him by the Court; but he did not think it necessary, as his hon. and learned Friend had proposed, to give the right of appeal in every case, his (Mr. Mellor's) opinion being that the Courts should retain a discretionary power in their hands. On the whole he approved the provisions of the Bill, and considered that it would greatly improve the law; and he hoped that either after it was allowed to go into Committee, or when the Government should bring in their own measure on the subject, a speedy consequence would be such a state of Criminal Procedure as would be generally regarded with something like satisfaction.

MR. GORST said, he thought it must be clear that this was a matter of importance, which could only be dealt with by the Government; but, at the same time, he thought that in so dealing with it his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General would not bind himself by this preliminary discussion. As the Government, therefore, were no doubt at present considering this subject, he (Mr. Gorst) desired to impress upon the House that it was the procedure part of the Criminal Law that stood in urgent need of amendment. Prominent among the points that required immediate consideration was the removal from the Statute Book of many grotesque punishments that had long been allowed to remain as part of the law of the country. Hon. Members were not, perhaps, aware of the nature of some of these punishments. He would give three instances to indicate what he meant. In the first place, he found that a person stealing a "hop-bine" from a hop-garden was liable to imprisonment for 14 years. Then, again, an attempt to injure, with intent to destroy, not machinery, but a tool used in the manufacture of textile fabrics, might be punished with penal servitude for life. And, lastly, he did not suppose any Member of the House would ever guess what the punishment was for breaking a bottle of pickles. Any person guilty of this offence was liable to death, an anomaly which arose from the fact that, in an Act passed to prevent the burning of Her Majesty's ships, the description of this offence was so extended as to include the destruction of any stores whatever in a victualling yard—such as that at Gosport. These punishments were, of course, manifestly absurd, and should be done away with. He thought also that his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General would find it expedient to effect a general mitigation of punishments. In other respects, except for the extravagance of these punishments, the Criminal Law of this country did not stand in need of any very pressing amendment, and the codification of the Law, though it might be satisfactory, was not urgently needed. If the Government did undertake the task of codifying the Criminal Law, he trusted that they would attempt to do it upon some scientific system, and that the excessive verbiage and repetition which now characterized our Statutes would be avoided. If they were not, our Code would not compare favourably with those of France, Germany, and other countries. Returning to the subject of the Bill itself, he wished to call his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General's attention to the conditions regulating arrests by warrant. The law as it stood at present was curious and inconsistent. Under the present law no one charged with perjury or with threatening to murder could be arrested by this process; yet no one would venture to say that those were not serious offences. But anyone who killed a deer in an enclosed place might be arrested without warrant provided he had killed a deer before. If these curious existing distinctions were to remain, some such clause as had been inserted in the Bill was necessary. But he would suggest a much simpler method of dealing with the whole subject. In other countries arrests without warrants were permitted only in cases where there was a danger that the offender would otherwise escape. There was really no other ground for permitting such arrests, and, in his opinion, our procedure should in this respect be assimilated to that existing abroad. In the Bill which he had submitted to the House—the Criminal Procedure Bill—he (Mr. Gorst) proposed the simple amendment of the law, that in all offences for which the punishment was death, or penal servitude, the persons suspected might be arrested without warrant, and in all cases where the punishment was less, they should not be liable to be arrested without warrant, unless it was thought they would otherwise escape justice. This simple rule would get rid of the anomalies to which he had referred. The law with respect to the granting of bail was equally unsatisfactory. Why should a man, charged with so grave an offence as unlawful drilling to the use of arms, be entitled to demand his release on bail? Or, again, why should a forger possess that right, when it was well known that persons of that class were often likely to be the readiest to break their bail at any risk? His own suggestion was that no person arrested upon a charge punishable on conviction with death or penal servitude should be entitled to bail in any case. That would introduce a consistent and reasonable treatment of prisoners in respect of bail. It had been argued that the jurisdiction of Quarter Sessions should be increased. He could not agree, however, with the expediency of that proposal, which would throw still more work into the hands of unprofessional men, and preferred seeking the remedy for overcrowding of the Assize Courts in relieving the Judges by disposing of the smaller indictments before Barristers, who would assist the Judges. He would propose, also, that the indictment should be simplified; a mere schedule would suffice, and might replace the cumbrous and absurd forms now in use. Nobody ever read them, and if they did they would be utterly unable to determine what it was with which the prisoner was charged. The object of an indictment was simply to show that a person was about to be put on his trial, and it should be without formality, and couched in the briefest and simplest possible language, which would effect a great improvement in the administration of justice. The question of appeal after conviction was a more difficult one. But if an appeal were to be allowed at all, it should not be optional, but be given as a matter of right. There was no danger of frivolous appeals being brought to a Court of Appeal constituted like the present; such appeals would be snuffed out at once. He should be very sorry if the right of appeal were subject to the opinion of the Judge, for, in his idea, appeals so given would be worthless. The only authority that should determine whether an appeal should or should not lie should be the Court of Appeal itself. He objected most strongly to the strange and unconstitutional power which it was proposed to confer upon the Secretary of State for the Home Department of ordering a new trial. The actual trial in England was a procedure of which we might all be proud; but the procedure preliminary to the trial—the procedure which consisted in finding out the truth or falsity of a charge—was primitive and barbarous. There ought to be arrangements for investigating the innocence as well as the guilt of the person charged, and, in his opinion, the interference of the Home Secretary should only be invoked when the Prerogative of mercy was to be exercised. In the case of convictions for murder, he did not think the functions of the Secretary of State were or ought to be judicial. He ought not to determine the question of guilt, as that was a matter that ought to be determined by the ordinary tribunals of the country, and, if necessary, by a judicial appeal. The Home Secretary's intervention ought not to be on the ground that the conviction was erroneous, but because there were circumstances in the case which would render interference necessary. On the point whether the accused should be allowed to give evidence, he thought that the proper time when the accused should be allowed to make a statement was when he was first apprehended, whereas the artful criminal would be most anxious to give his version of the affair at the trial, when he had had time to get up an ingenious and plausible story. There were some additions which he (Mr. Gorst) should like to see made to the Bill. He was in favour of an amendment of our laws in accordance with the principle of French and German Criminal Laws, by which the truth or falsehood of charges against persons was investigated in private, thus minimizing the unpleasantness of the situation in the case of innocent persons; and he thought that as soon as a prisoner was arrested he should be taken before a magistrate and discharged, unless the magistrate was satisfied that there were some grounds for the charge. It should be the duty of the Justice before whom the prisoner was brought to state the charge and the grounds for the charge, and invite the prisoner to make any statement he liked. He would suggest that at the latter stage of the case, when the prisoner was asked if he had any answer to make to the charge, the magistrate should state the points upon which an explanation was necessary. Such an examination, he thought, would tend to bring out the innocence of innocent persons, and establish the guilt of the guilty.

MR. CROPPER said, he desired to thank his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Hopwood) for the interesting speech in which he had introduced the Bill, as he believed it would tend very much towards elucidating and elevating the subject. His hon. and learned Friend had animadverted upon the sentences passed at the Surrey Quarter Sessions, which he said were far too heavy for the crimes in respect of which they were awarded. He (Mr. Cropper) was a justice of the peace, though he had nothing to do with the Surrey Sessions; and his experience of Quarter Sessions generally was that the sentences passed were very carefully weighed. More especially, in his opinion, did the sentences passed at Sessions in respect of offences against the person carry out the true view of the community as to the relative application of punishment between those offences and offences against property. He considered that the sentences passed for offences against the person, more especially where the victims were women and children, at Quarter Sessions were severer, and more in accord with the common sense of the people than the sentences passed at the Assizes. Clause 15 of the Bill effected a most useful change in giving Quarter Sessions the jurisdiction to try the crimes of robbery with violence, assault with intent to rob, and burglary. In some few counties in England, as in Westmoreland, the consequence would be, if the Bill became law, that it would be almost unnecessary for any Criminal Assizes to be held. Perhaps this, however, would be an advantage, as it would enable changes in the Assize arrangements to be made which would lessen the duties of the Judges. The proposal of the Bill which sought to prevent the failure of justice by reason of magistrates having no power in respect of crimes committed just outside their jurisdiction would be of great advantage. In respect of appeals in criminal cases, he did not think they would be advantageous, especially in such cases as those of flogging; but he agreed with the establishment of a Court of Criminal Appeal in all cases where the death penalty was in question. He believed the Bill, as a whole, would be of much use and advantage to all who were interested in the administration of justice.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that he would not detain the House for very long; but he wished to say a few words with regard to this very important Bill. The hon. and learned Gentleman who introduced the Bill (Mr. Hopwood) deserved great credit for the pains he had taken with regard to it, and for the attention to detail, the study, and learning he had employed. He (Sir R. Assheton Cross) took it, from the efforts which were made by the hon. and learned Gentlemen who had proposed measures upon the subject, that there was absolute proof that there was a very great and rapidly-growing desire in the country that the Criminal Law should be properly codified. He agreed, however, with what had been said by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), to the effect that no private Member could hope to prosecute such a Bill and carry it through the House. He was further of opinion that it would not be right to leave a subject of such vast importance in the hands of any private Member. In his opinion, the public would not be satisfied unless a Bill of such undeniable importance were carried through Parliament on the responsibility of the Government of the day. He was quite sure, from what he had heard said in the last Session by Members of the Government, that they were anxious to proceed as rapidly as possible with this work. He was sure the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would share his regret at the absence from that discussion of a man who had devoted himself with so much zeal and energy to the reform of the Criminal Law—he meant Lord Justice Holker. It would be a great loss to the country if all the labour and trouble which had been bestowed upon this complicated subject by him, and by which his name, together with those of Lord Blackburn, Lord Justice Lush, and Mr. Justice Fitzjames Stephen, would be inseparably connected with it, should be practically lost, and not bear proper fruit. Notwithstanding all the labour that had already been been bestowed on this subject, he could well understand that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General would be perfectly well able to assure the House that there were still points which required attention, and that a measure of such importance as a Criminal Code would require revision before it could be allowed to pass into law. At the same time, although that might be so, he was sure the hon. and learned Gentleman would be willing to pay a tribute of praise to Lord Justice Holker for his exertions in respect of this matter. He was glad to hear that, imperfect as it was, the Government was not only going to take up this Code, but to prosecute it. In the last Session of Parliament he ventured to express the opinion that the Code placed on the Table was too large, and that there was no hope that it could be carried in one Session of Parliament. He thought the Government had acted wisely in determining to bring it in in portions in different Sessions, and he was sure that it would be more quickly passed into law in that way. A great many subjects had been touched upon in this matter, and he did not wish to refer to them all; but there were one or two upon which he felt bound to say a word or two. In the first place, as regarded the preliminary steps before a criminal was brought to justice, some opinions had been expressed by his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham in favour of a private examination. Although he quite agreed that in the case of arrest of innocent persons injury might be done by public examinations, yet the whole of our procedure had been framed with scrupulous care to do every possible justice to accused persons; and he, for one, very much doubted whether the country was prepared to substitute a secret examination. With respect to indictments, he fully agreed that they might be simplified with great advantage. An anecdote was told of Mr. Justice Littledale, who, in his day, was a very eminent draftsman. He drew an indictment for conspiracy at very great length, with an immense number of counts, and then, as an afterthought, added a supplementary count. The indictment was so voluminous that it had to be brought into Court in a wheel-barrow. The learned Judge, on the application of counsel, ordered Mr. Littledale to elect on which count he would proceed. He decided to go on the additional count he had drawn at the end of the indictment; and it was then discovered that, through an error in copying, a line had been left out, the consequence of which was that the prisoner was acquitted. The question of their simplification was one, therefore, which deserved consideration, for there was vast room for improvement with regard to the form of indictments. There was another question to which he hoped that the Government would pay great attention. He doubted very much whether this part of the subject had met with as much attention as it deserved, either from the Gentlemen who prepared the Criminal Code or from the Committee who considered it—he meant the scale of punishment. When the first step in the consolidation of the Criminal Law took place, an important reform was accomplished; and when Peel's Act was passed, the object seemed to be to classify and divide offences into those against the person and those against property. When those Consolidation Acts were passed, the punishment as it existed under the old Statutes was left exactly as it stood. The tendency of Criminal Law of late years had been very much to modify the extreme punishments of former years; but when the law was thus consolidated, the old punishment from the old Statute was simply incorporated, and the result was that the present law was full of the greatest possible anomalies. Therefore, when they came to that part of the subject, he hoped that the sentences which might be passed would be carefully considered by the Government. There was another question with regard to punishment which was of a very serious nature, and for which it would be much more difficult to provide a remedy—namely, that whatever the punishment in the Statute Book might be, they could not possibly provide for the different temperaments of Judges, however eminent, who had to administer the law. He wished very much the Judges could, by some more intimate communication amongst themselves in some way or other, regulate the punishments given more completely than they did. He held that had been attempted in several cases; but he thought it rested with the

Judges for some means to be found in which particular classes of cases should receive a certain sentence, unless there was some exceptional cases in which the Statute allowed more. In that way he believed that something might be done towards establishing greater equality in the punishments for offences that were similar in character. Again, the line drawn between the jurisdiction of the Court of Quarter Sessions and between those cases which must go to the Assizes stood, at the present moment, in a very unsatisfactory state. He thought that the Court of Quarter Sessions might try a very great number of cases which now went to the Assizes, and in which the average punishments were very often far less than those given at the Court of Quarter Sessions. Cases of burglary, however simple, must now go to the Assizes, although the punishment given for them might be only a few months. That matter might with great advantage be carefully revised; and in simple cases of burglary the option might be given to magistrates, under proper conditions, to send the prisoners to the Court of Quarter Sessions instead of to the Assizes. As to the question of appeal, he agreed with his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham that the 127th clause of the Bill was based on an utter misapprehension of the duty of the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State had, in his (Sir R. Assheton Cross's) mind, nothing to do except to advise Her Majesty on a case after the decision had been given by a Court of Law; and he, for one, was strongly against any Bill that proposed to leave it to the Secretary of State to say whether there should be an appeal, or a new trial or not. That was totally distinct from the functions which the Secretary of State had to perform; he was not a judicial officer, and if there was to be a new trial that question ought to be decided by a Court, and not by a political officer. While an appeal on points of law would be right, it would not be wise to allow appeals as a matter of right upon questions of fact. If there was to be an appeal on a question of fact, and if it was to be a matter of right, the practical effect would be that the man who had had one trial, and who wanted to take the chance of another, would hope to get a different verdict from another jury. That would be a great innovation in our Criminal Law. At present, if the Judge said he was not at all satisfied with the trial, and the result was entirely against the weight of evidence, they knew that the Judge would make such a representation to the Secretary of State that no injustice would be done. But if they gave the right of appeal to prisoners it would be difficult to refuse it in particular cases. Another question which presented itself was as to the admission of the evidence of prisoners. That question had been before them many years, and public opinion on it had been gradually ripening. Not long ago public opinion would not have been in favour of allowing the evidence of prisoners to be given, subject, as must evidently follow, to the cross examination of the prisoner so tendering his evidence. And they knew that it had been thought by many persons of high authority that if they allowed prisoners to give evidence if they wished to give it, many innocent men who refused to give evidence would be prejudiced in the eyes of the jury by that mere refusal. He had thought that there was a good deal in that objection, and he thought so still; but he confessed that his mind had undergone a considerable change on that matter, and, looking at it as a whole, he thought, in the long run, it would be advisable to allow a prisoner to give evidence if he wished to do so, subject, of course, to cross-examination. At all events, it was worth a trial. He was aware that would be a considerable change in the Criminal Law, and he had not come to the conclusion which he had mentioned without much serious hesitation and consideration. He was anxious to hear what was about to fall from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General, who, he presumed, would allow those two Bills to be read a second time, and would also insist, and properly insist, on that matter being left in the hands of the Government. He felt sure that the hon. and learned Gentleman would obtain the full assistance of the House, if he would promise that the Government would proceed with all reasonable speed. He could wish also that they might have some assurance on the part of the Cabinet that they would do all in their power to allow, at least, some portion of that Code to become law during the present Session.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he could assure his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Hopwood) that the present discussion, so far from being an embarrassment, would be an assistance to the Government. There could, he thought, be no objection on the part of the Government to allowing this Bill and the cognate Bill which stood on the Paper to be both read a second time. That was only due to his hon. and learned Friends who had taken so much trouble in framing and drafting those Bills applying to a certain portion of the Criminal Law. But he perfectly accepted what had just fallen from the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir R. Assheton Cross), that the responsibility of altering the law to such an extent as it would be altered if such Bills as those were to be included in the Statute Book must rest with the Government; and an earnest of their desire to deal with the subject was to be found in the reference that had been made to it in the Queen's Speech. The responsibility, he might add, was a very great one, and the labour very onerous, when they attempted to codify a law of that character; but he could not, however, be so explicit as he should wish to be on the matter to the House. It was not a question of consolidation only; but they had to codify alike the Common Law and the Statute Law on those subjects; and in that process they incurred some peril by giving up the elasticity of the Common Law, which met every phase of every crime, because it was desired that the work of codification should in future form the whole law on those subjects. The House would understand that when a measure had been announced in the Speech from the Throne, the proper time for a statement of its details must be when leave was asked to introduce it; and it would, therefore, not be becoming in him now prematurely to offer any such statement in respect to a measure which he hoped would be presented to the House before long. He was only able on this occasion to deal in a general manner with the question under discussion. He should not, however, be breaking through any Rule of the House if he said that he should not have the slightest feeling of delicacy in appropriating the labours of others. It would, he thought, be a great error if the result of those labours, which had now become public property, were not used for the public benefit, without the least personal feeling on the part of one who introduced a Bill to the House. When the result of those labours was utilized, he trusted it would be understood that it was accompanied also with the fullest acknowledgment that the credit of any Bill that was introduced chiefly belonged, not to Members of the present Government who introduced it, but to those Members and those Commissioners who had borne the burden of framing the original Criminal Code that was presented to the House. The right hon. Gentleman had said that he (the Attorney General) should be the first to acknowledge the labours of Sir John Holker in connection with that subject. He had before, and he now again, made the fullest acknowledgment of those labours. The right hon. Gentleman said that they all regretted the absence of Sir John Holker from the House. Now, to his mind that feeling was mitigated by another circumstance. While Sir John Holker's absence from the House was a matter they might regret, his presence in another place, sitting as a Judge, was a subject of gratification, because his services to the public would be great and valuable. He valued Sir John Holker's presence on the Judicial Bench still more on another account; because he hoped, by that appointment, it would be established in the future that political opinions would never prevent the elevation to the Bench of those best qualified to render judicial service to the country. With regard to extension of the jurisdiction of Quarter Sessions, which his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Hopwood) in the 15th section proposed, he was afraid he could hold out no hope that he could, on this occasion, accept his hon. and learned Friend's view. His hon. and learned Friend would increase the jurisdiction of the Quarter Sessions over such crimes as robbery with violence, a crime which might vary in its character to a great degree. He thought that this was a question rather of administration than of judicial arrangement, and one that should be dealt with in connection, not with codification of the Criminal Law, but with other alterations of the law. As the Quarter Sessions were at present constituted, the extension of jurisdiction without any limitation was a matter which ought to be considered very carefully before it was adopted. His hon. and learned Friend dealt next in point of order with the comparatively unimportant subject of the right of the Attorney General to reply in all cases, and mentioned that that right, which was originally claimed only by the Attorney General or the Solicitor General, was now insisted on by every gentleman requested by the Attorney General to undertake a prosecution. That right had come down from times when the Crown strove much to obtain convictions in political cases. He thought the time had come when that right might be very much curtailed with respect to counsel representing the Attorney General, and that there might be considerable limitation with regard to the right of the Attorney General himself; but all he could say was that it was a matter which required, and should receive, careful consideration. The next point touched upon was the examination of the accused upon trial. The House had already, by a majority of considerably more than 2 to 1, voted in favour of a Bill of the hon. Member for the Isle of Wight (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) to allow prisoners to give evidence on trial. The Law Officers of the late Government voted in support of that Bill, as he did himself. Since that time he had not heard anything to alter his opinion; and he thought it a proposition which would receive the acquiescence of a great majority of the House, and that such acquiescence would be in accordance with public opinion. As to giving magistrates the same power to examine prisoners when first brought before them as was possessed by the *Juge d'Instruction* in France, he must say he doubted whether that ought to be done. A judicial officer was in a different position; he was a trained man; but it was very much open to doubt whether such a power should be given universally to untrained magistrates at the stage of the proceedings to which his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) referred. He would remind his hon. and learned Friend that it was different in France, where this duty was performed by trained, experienced men; and he very much doubted the benefit of private examinations at the stage of the case suggested by the hon. and learned Member. If the proposal was that at the termination of the proceedings, when the accused was asked to reply, he should then be allowed to make the same statement, on oath, which he would be able to make on the final trial, that was a point worthy of consideration. Then as to a Court of Appeal, the question was one which must be met; but no one knew of the difficulty of the subject until it was attempted to draw a Bill to meet it. There might be three kinds of appeal—one on questions of law, another on questions of fact as to the guilt or innocence of the accused, and a third as to the justice of the sentence. There was at present, in a certain shape, a Court of Appeal on questions of law, which could not, however, be considered altogether satisfactory. The right of appeal depended on the will of the Judge, and he never thought that a proper state of things. Then on questions of fact various difficulties arose. Was the appeal to be a matter of right? If they once put a limit to the right, they would lose a great deal of the benefits expected from it. If they made it to depend on the opinion of the Judge, that opinion would affect the right of the prisoner to appeal. Then, was the appeal to be at the will of the Attorney General? That was a proposition which ought not to receive approval. It was impossible for the Attorney General to have before him the proper materials for forming a judgment. It was most objectionable, when they would have all classes of cases to deal with—political cases among others—that a political officer should have the power of determinining whether there should be a right of appeal or not. On the other hand, were they to give a right of appeal in all cases? Then every man who had money at his command, if he were convicted of the smallest crime—of picking a pocket of a handkerchief, for example—would always appeal, otherwise he would be deemed to admit his guilt. Thus the number of appeals would block up the Courts. Therefore, some line must be drawn, either in relation to the offence, the punishment, or otherwise, before an absolute right of appeal could be given to every person. There was another practical difficulty, also, and that was with regard to the materials they would bring before the Court of Appeal to enable them to come to a decision. If guilt or innocence was to be proved, would they bring before the Court of Appeal the same witnesses as had appeared before a jury? The difference between a false and true witness did not always depend on the words he uttered. If they did not bring the same witnesses before the Court of Appeal, there would, in such cases, be insufficient materials before it. On the other hand, if they were to bring the same witnesses before the Court, great practical difficulties would arise. Therefore, he could not attempt to give any confident opinion as to the best course to pursue. The matter was one upon which he was sure the House would in the future bring its best judgment to bear. Then as to there being a new trial upon appeals by the Crown, he shrank from such a proposal. It was a principle of our law that a man should not be tried twice for the same offence. If they looked to the difference of evil between a guilty man being acquitted and an innocent man convicted, the balance seemed to incline against a man being tried twice. Moreover, he must confess that after a person had been acquitted by a jury, to ask for a second trial for a political offence would be a matter to be much deplored, and would, he thought, be strongly opposed to public opinion. Much had been said of the inequality of sentences passed by different Judges; but although certain sentences were applicable by Statute to particular crimes, there were so many degrees of guilt that sentences necessarily varied perhaps, also, according to the idiosyncrasies of the Judges. Of course, they might make sentences uniform with regard to particular offences by Act of Parliament; but they could not so adapt them to degrees of the same crime. Although there often appeared to be great inequality of sentences according to the reports in the papers, it must be remembered those accounts did not present all the facts which were brought before the Judges; and, therefore, great injustice was often done to the Judges by those who condemned them on such testimony. Again, there was a difference in the manner in which some Judges regarded particular classes of crime; and although agreement might be come to as to sentences to be passed in Post Office cases and the like, yet there could never be such uniformity as to disarm criticism founded upon the records of trials published in the public journals. It might be very desirable to have some review of sentences; but he would not say whether that should apply to cases where sentences were unduly light, as well as where they involved punishment grievous to be borne. He hoped his hon. and learned Friend would not be discouraged if he ventured to point out that the power proposed to be vested in the Home Secretary of causing inquiry to be made in certain cases by three Judges was open to serious objection, and that it was a subject which could not be received with great favour when it came before the House for graver consideration. The Home Secretary ought not to be converted into a Judge, and the power it was proposed to give him would tend to produce either too much laxity or evils of an inquisitorial character. In conclusion, he had only to say that he had been anxious to avoid committing himself to any exact propositions; but he hoped he had said enough to show that the responsibility of introducing a practical measure had now been brought home to the Government, and every effort would be made to carry out the wishes of the House with regard to legislation upon this important subject.

Mr. ARTHUR ELLIOT said, they heard a great deal about France and Germany from hon. and learned Gentlemen who were members of the English Bar; but they seemed to forget that there was such a country as Scotland, and that there was in Scotland already a system of private preliminary inquiries and a system of public prosecution. He (Mr. Arthur Elliot) felt that privacy of inquiry was, in many respects, not desirable; but there was no necessary connection between private examinations and public prosecutions. The two modes, he thought, ought to be combined and adopted in England, for there was a great deal in the Scottish system of public prosecution which they might have in England with great advantage; while, on the other hand, there was much in the administration of justice in England which might usefully be introduced into Scotland. The main changes of the Bill were that it proposed to establish a system by which a prisoner might be able to tell his own story, subject to cross-examination, a course which had hitherto been very much opposed in this country, and by no one more vigorously than the late Lord Chief Justice Cockburn, who had always strongly opposed private examinations; but he had equally advocated a system of public prosecution from the beginning to the end of every case. The most important part of this Bill was that proposing to give the Home Secretary the power to order a new trial, and that was spoken of as a new proposal; but in the Bill of the late Government there was a clause giving that power to the Secretary of State. With respect to the question of a new trial as of right, it should be remembered that that right would only be exercised by a person who had been convicted, and the prosecution could not, on its merits, get a new trial. The old principle of justice in England and in America was that a man could not be tried twice. In America that had been altered; and in this country new trials had been very nearly established, but the Privy Council had decided against them. It was not alleged that new trials in America were too frequent in consequence of the existence of a Court of Appeal in that country; and he believed if a Court were established in this country it would not result in any great number of appeals. In France a Judge who was dissatisfied with a verdict might order a fresh investigation; it was the same in Austria; and some system of new trials was gradually being established throughout the world. No doubt the danger, as had been said by Sir John Holker, was that if the law was altered everyone who was committed would move the Court for fresh investigation; but he (Mr. Arthur Elliot) did not think that would be the case. Under the Summary Procedure Act—an Act associated with the name of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross)—everybody who was sent to prison for three months without the option of a fine was entitled to appeal; and it was found that appeals were not brought unless there was some real benefit likely to arise from such a course being taken. One matter that he should like to say a word or two upon was the question of the enlargement of the jurisdiction of Quarter Sessions. There was no greater authority than the right hon. Gentleman on the subject of Quarter Sessions; and he had laid it down that there ought to be some fresh line of division between Sessions cases and Assize cases. At Manchester he (Mr. Arthur Elliot) had seen Grand Juries, over and over again, make presentments to the Court of Assize to that effect, and it was no use sending simple burglaries to the Assizes: and he had heard Judges state, over and over again, that they concurred in those presentments, and saw no reason why the Quarter Sessions were not as capable of deciding simple cases of burglary after 9 o'clock at night as of housebreaking before that time; but nothing had been done in the matter. He was aware this was a Government matter, and could only be dealt with by the Government; but he must remind the House that what they had hoped to do to-day, and what his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Hopwood) had chiefly hoped to do, was to elicit the general concurrence of opinion that something, at all events, in the nature of a Code, about which so much trouble and learning had been expended, that the fruits of all that labour should not be thrown away, and that, when they saw their way to do so, the Government might take up the subject again, and should find general support on both sides of the House.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, that this had been a useful if not an exhaustive discussion. During its progress the question had been asked whether the Government intended to proceed with any part of the Codification Bill? The best earnest of the intention of the Government was the promise made in the Queen's Speech, and if there were time, the Government desired to press that which was deemed the most important part of the Bill—that relating to procedure. If the proposal of the Government to delegate a part of the authority of the House to large Committees were accepted, these were questions which could give rise to no Party friction; and he could not conceive that any subjects could be more properly remitted to a Committee to be disposed of, or of any measures that the House would more readily accept on such authority. Occupying the position he did, it might assist in the formation of public opinion if he said that he was glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman opposite, his Predecessor, say that, after considerable doubts, his mind now inclined to favour the admission of the accused to be examined on his own behalf. He (Sir William Harcourt) did not believe it possible for anyone to occupy the position of Home Secretary without being satisfied that, in those cases—he hoped they were few, but still there had been too many—in which a miscarriage of justice had occurred, and in which innocent men had been convicted, the miscarriage might have been prevented if the accused had been able to tell his own story. Cases had come under his cognizance in which he was certain that if, when the evidence for the prosecution had been given, the man accused had been able to tell his own simple story, the result would have been different. Perhaps the examination of the accused might lead to the rightful conviction of some who otherwise would be acquitted; but that would not be a result to be deplored, particularly if, in other cases, innocent men were saved from conviction. No one could see as much of the administration of the Criminal Law as he did without deeply regretting that there should be in appearance one law for the rich and another for the poor. He saw every day that, from want of means to secure adequate defence, many were convicted who otherwise might be acquitted; but it was difficult to say how this could be remedied. It was impossible that the State could undertake the defence of every prisoner as well as the prosecution. [Mr. WARTON: Why not?] Well, anyone could see the answers to that question of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport. At all events, one of the best correctives would be to allow a man to give evidence on his own behalf. Many a man whose mouth was now closed was not able to summon witnesses, and to bear the expense of producing them. The inequality of the sentences given by the Judges was, to his mind, most unsatisfactory, and the suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman opposite was well deserving of consideration. It was that the Judges should concert among themselves, as far as possible, to give sentences with something more like regularity and equality, and that it should not happen, as it too often did, that the character of a man's sentence should depend very much on the accident of the Judge before whom he was tried. The matter had been brought strongly under his (Sir William Harcourt's) notice by one Department of the State, the Post Office, the fact being pointed out that, for nearly as possible similar offences, extraordinarily divergent sentences had been passed, and, as far as could be seen, without any sufficient reason. His situation in the matter was peculiar, for he was attacked on two sides, with complaints that sentences were too light in some cases, and that they were too heavy in others. He had, however, no power to interfere, and it was right that he should not have. One of the first principles of our jurisprudence was that the Judges were independent of the Executive; and if the Executive could order them to pass heavier or lighter sentences, we might have the Executive dictating the sentences for political offences. Applications to the Secretary of State to influence the sentences passed by Judges were applications that ought not to be made; he had no such power, and he ought not to have; he had nothing to do with the matter; the Judges were, and ought to be, the only authorities on the question of sentences. He admitted, however, the scandal which arose from sentences of an enormously different character for offences that were very similar; and he concurred with the right hon. Gentleman opposite in wishing that the Judges would, at all events, in certain classes of cases, take counsel together to secure something more like equality in sentences. He supposed that no one had more reason than he had personally to desire that there should be provision for new trials in criminal cases, in respect of which sometimes the Home Secretary had a grievous and heavy responsibility; but he had never yet seen a plan which he could approve for the institution of a Court of Appeal in criminal cases. If appeal were allowed, there would be an application for a new trial in almost every case. It seemed to him to be the essence of justice that it should be speedy and, and as far as possible, final. A similar delay to that allowed in cases concerning property could not be tolerated. He should be glad to consider any plan for appeal which would be likely to prove satisfactory. He failed, however, to understand what advantage would be gained by a Court reviewing the decision of a Judge and jury, who had all the facts and circumstances before them at the time, and perhaps reversing the decision at which they had arrived. He thought a debate of that kind was extremely useful, as it would lead the public to consider the question; and no change could be made in the law which affected the rights of the citizens unless they had the support of the public opinion of the country.

MR. MORGAN LLOYD said, he did not desire to detain the House at that late hour; but he could not allow the discussion to close without it being understood that the House was not unanimously in favour of altering the law, so as to enable prisoners to give evidence, or rather to compel them to do so, as was proposed by the Bill. He would admit that the question was one which deserved attention, and very considerable attention; but he was not sure that changes in the manner proposed would be at all desirable. For instance, if a prisoner might be cross-examined, he might admit a previous conviction, and there was then a danger of his being found guilty, merely on the ground that he was a man of a character likely to commit such a crime. He could not agree with the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Secretary of State for the Home Department that injustice had been done, because prisoners were not allowed to make their own statements. Where the prisoner was not represented by counsel, he was not only allowed, but invited to do so. Even when the prisoner was represented by counsel the late Lord Chief Justice Cockburn, on many occasions, allowed the prisoner to make his own statement of facts to the jury; and, if that practice became general, every legitimate object aimed at by the proposal to enable prisoners to give evidence on oath would be attained. He (Mr. Morgan Lloyd) did not believe that the jury would doubt such a statement, simply because it was not on oath, especially if it offered a reasonable explanation of the circumstances under which the prisoner had been charged. He thought they should abide by the old rule that a prisoner ought not to be bound to criminate himself. As regarded indictments, he thought there ought to be a distinct line drawn between criminal cases proper and those which were criminal in form, but civil in reality. It was his intention, when the opportunity offered, to bring the subject forward; but as regarded the law relating to the examination of prisoners, unless he should be satisfied he was wrong, he should certainly oppose any change. One reason why he objected to the change was that it entirely revolutionized the law. He, for one, was not prepared to change the law of England to that extent, unless he was satisfied by much stronger arguments than he had yet heard. Similar changes which had been made in the Criminal Law of America had not worked very satisfactorily, and he referred to the Guiteau trial as an illustration of this. The scandals which had been witnessed in connection with that trial should make them pause before they carried out a change which would probably have such momentous consequences.

MR. BROADHURST said, he was of opinion that anyone who had given attention to the subject would admit that the question of the codification of the Criminal Law was one surrounded with the greatest possible difficulties. He had had the privilege to go through the first draft of the Criminal Code Bill brought in by the late Government with some very distinguished men in law; and the further they discussed the question of codifying the Common Law of the country, the more the difficulty presented itself to them, and the more hopeless seemed the task of arriving at any satisfactory conclusion. One of the main difficulties, and one which the House would easily understand attracted his attention and rivetted his interest, was the question of the right of public meeting, and the definition of what might be termed riotous assemblies. It seemed to be hopeless almost that any number of men could agree upon any particular description of what should constitute offences of that kind; but there could be no difficulty, he thought, in further consolidating the Statute Law. Much had been done, he understood, in that direction; and he hoped, as the result, if the Bills under discussion were not passed, the Government would, at least, do something towards the further consolidation of the Statute Law. Then there was the question of procedure, which was one of interest to everyone, both layman and lawyer. There was no doubt that even the securing of criminal convictions in this country was fraught with the greatest possible difficulty and enormous expenses; and he sincerely hoped that something would be done to remedy the present condition of things. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) had informed them that afternoon of an indictment that had had to be wheeled into Court in a wheelbarrow, because of its extraordinary extent; but in the discussions to which he had referred, among some very learned and distinguished men in law in this country, he (Mr. Broadhurst) had heard it stated that a recent prosecution in the case of some fraudulent transactions on the part of a secretary in London, the indictment would cover sufficient parchment to cover the whole of Waterloo Place, Regent Street. He felt sure that much good would arise from the present discussion, and from the assurances of his hon. and learned Friend (the Attorney General) on the subject. Great credit, and very proper and well-deserved credit, had been accorded to the late Attorney General—Sir John Holker—for the part he had taken in making this question of criminal codification one of a practical nature. He (Mr. Broadhurst) was sure the House would forgive him if he, for one moment, directed their attention to something even more remote in connection with it. He felt that the House was mainly indebted to a very much abused interest for making this a practical question, and creating a public opinion on it—namely, the trade unions of the United Kingdom. It was now more than eight years since they first discussed this subject, with the assistance of some very able gentlemen not having seats in that House; and if the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire had been in his place now, he (Mr. Broadhurst) thought he would have been quite ready to bear evidence as to the usefulness of the work which those much-abused people had done with regard to Law Reform—not only with regard to the Criminal Code now under discussion, but with regard to the reform of many other laws which had done much good to the country, and had secured the removal of vicious and unjust laws from the Statute Book. He felt that he was entitled to say this after the years of action he had had as a layman, and the interest their unions had taken in this matter, and the money and time they had expended in impressing on successive Governments the necessity of making plain to the people the laws they were every day called upon to obey.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY, in replying to the objections raised to the granting of appeals in criminal cases, said, as he understood the proposal, it was intended so to limit the right of making applications for new trials in criminal cases as that no improper delay should be interposed between the offender and the sentence he deserved, and that no such application would be granted except on adequate grounds. Subject to that, he thought that there ought to be a power of granting a new trial; for he was at a loss to see what distinction in principle there was between granting a new trial in a civil case and in a criminal case, or why a new trial should not be granted as much in the one case as in the other. If a verdict were against the weight of evidence in a criminal case, there should be the same right of applying for a new trial as in a civil case under similar circumstances. He particularly objected to the vicious distinction made by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General with regard to the right of new trial in cases where sentences were light and where they were heavy, for if injustice had been done it ought to be rectified, whether the sentences were severe or not. With regard to Quarter Sessions, whatever line might be drawn between them and the Assizes, he (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) hoped in future the commissions to the Judges of Assize would be so revised as to relieve them from the necessity of clearing the gaol by trying cases which could be very well disposed of by Quarter Sessions. He was in favour of the proposal of allowing accused persons to give evidence; but he had some doubt whether in that way they would elicit anything in the nature of substantive evidence of any great value; but, at any rate, they would be able to discover at some stage of the inquiry whether the prisoner had put forward different defences which were inconsistent with each other, and thus, in a large number of cases, make impossible the preparation of all those elaborate *alibis* by which justice was now so often defeated. He trusted that in dealing with this subject Her Majesty's Government would not consider themselves bound to take up the whole of the Code, but would see their way to dealing separately with its independent parts. Although there was great need of codification of the Criminal Law, yet the necessity was not one which pressed with particular heaviness upon the public, because, as a matter of fact, the duty of interpreting and administering the law fell upon persons who were competent to perform the duty; so that it was really only a question of a smaller or greater amount of expense in obtaining opinions of the necessary weight. But, in matters of procedure, he thought there was great reason in the desire of the public for an improvement; and he hoped the Government would soon see their way to dealing with that portion of the Code.

MR. R. T. REID said, he agreed with the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) that there was great necessity for Amendment in the law of criminal procedure. He also thought that a right of appeal in criminal cases was absolutely necessary. There could be no difficulty in granting a right of appeal in such cases, any more than in civil cases. In his opinion, pressure, if necessary, should be put on the Government to induce them to establish a proper tribunal for the hearing of criminal appeals, there being no satisfactory promise to be deduced from the assurances given. He was disappointed that the Bill had not met with greater encouragement as regarded its principles than it had received from the Government.

MR. EDWARD CLARKE said, he should be glad to see any improvements in criminal procedure; but in this Bill there were so many controverted points that he feared its promoters could hardly expect to make any real progress with it in the present Session. As to the Court of Appeal, he could not agree with the last speaker, because an appeal would be made in every case where the accused person had sufficient means; and, as a rule, he believed the Criminal Law was rightly administered. There was, however, one proposal in the Bill to which he gave his entire approval—namely, that a prisoner should be entitled to give evidence on his trial. He could not understand on what principle the law shut the mouth of a person who was charged with an offence. It was a still more monstrous scandal that the wife of an accused person could not give testimony on his behalf in a Court of Justice. He had himself known instances of great injustice being done in consequence of the operation of this rule. It was also said that cross-examination would be dangerous; but he did not believe it would be at all dangerous to an innocent person.

MR. BULWER said, he altogether dissented from the opinion expressed by the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth (Mr. E. Clarke) as to the advantage of allowing prisoners to tender themselves as witnesses. He protested against the statement so frequently repeated in Courts of Justice and in the Press that a prisoner's mouth was shut. On the contrary, a prisoner had the very best opportunity of giving an account of his conduct when he was charged before the magistrate, at a time when it could be inquired into; and any reasonable account of his conduct which he might then give, however false it might be, would, if the prosecution did not inquire into its truth, be taken at the trial to be true. The most that could be said was that his mouth was shut on his trial in the same sense as hon. Members' mouths were shut while he (Mr. Bulwer) was addressing them; but it was not always shut. It had been suggested that persons should be examined and cross-examined from the dock. This might lead to gross injustice; not only by encouraging the police to bring an unfounded charge against a man of bad character, but of a man being convicted, not because it was proved that he had committed the offence with which he was charged, but because the jury would know—what at present they were not allowed to know—that he had committed some other. It was very difficult to see what limits could be put on such a cross-examination. If it were permitted, difficulties would arise from statements made at the last moment. Few prisoners would ever make a defence when before the magistrate, but would reserve it for the trial, and rely upon legal ingenuity in the meantime supplying them with some plausible statement to put before the jury, into the truth of which it would then be impossible to inquire. But in many cases inquiries would be absolutely necessary, and great inconvenience would be occasioned, either by preventing the jury from dispersing—perhaps for weeks—or by letting them go and summoning them again. From an experience of 30 years in the practice of the Criminal Law, his belief was that no great amount of injustice was done. It certainly was not administered in any spirit of harshness or injustice towards the accused, for he believed that for every innocent man convicted 99 guilty ones escaped. With respect to appeals in criminal cases, he would merely add to the objections to the proposal, that he thought that the institution of an Appeal Court might lead to less trouble being bestowed on trials of prisoners, because it might be thought that errors could be rectified by the Court above.

Mr. THOMAS COLLINS said, he was very glad that the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General had practically pronounced against persons being put for the second time on their trial for one offence, because everyone familiar with Courts of Justice must be aware that juries occasionally gave the most perverse and wicked verdicts. But, notwithstanding that, it would, in his opinion, be far more in the interests of justice that the finality of proceedings should not be disturbed, than that an appeal should be possible in a few cases of mistake. When legislation was proposed on this question, the House would do well to let prisoners tender themselves as witnesses, for although he did not agree that their mouths were entirely closed, it would be far more satisfactory; and he still thought that the interests of justice would be promoted by permitting them to tender themselves for examination. If that were allowed, juries would convict in many cases by reason of the prisoner not tendering himself for examination. It was highly desirable, also, that the wives of prisoners should be made admissible as witnesses for the defence. Great injustice was now occasioned by prisoners not being able to call them. There had been much uncalled for animadversion upon the Judges for the supposed inequality of their sentences; but with regard to the matter it should be remembered that a sentence depended not so much upon particular offences then laid to the prisoner's charge, and of which he had been found guilty, as upon his previous career in crime. As regarded it, he would throw out the suggestion that, in order to equalize them, there should be maximum and minimum sentences within which a Judge must keep in all cases in which previous convictions within a short period were recorded against a prisoner.

Mr. W. H. LEATHAM said, he entirely differed from the view taken by the hon. and learned Member for Knaresborough (Mr. Thomas Collins) that wives should be permitted to be examined in favour of their husbands, because the thing they most wished to avoid was the manufacture of evidence; and who was more likely to be tempted to manufacture evidence than the poor wife in favour of her husband? He (Mr. W. H. Leatham) had always regretted that in affiliation cases the defendant was now permitted to be examined in his own case, which often led to perjury. He would not, however, jeopardize the second reading of the Bill by saying more, as the hour was so late.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Wednesday* 7th June.

QUESTION.

PARLIAMENT—ORDER—THE PARLIAMENTARY OATH.

Sir WILFRID LAWSON: Before the House adjourns, I wish to ask you, Sir, a Question on a point of Order. It is this—Whether, when the return of Colonel Miles (the newly-elected Member for Malmesbury) has been communicated to the House in the usual way, it will be competent for any Member to make a Motion dealing with that return before Colonel Miles comes to the Table, as was done by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devonshire (Sir Stafford Northcote) before the duly elected Member for Northampton came to the Table?

Mr. CALLAN: Before you answer the Question, Sir, I wish to remind you of an answer you gave to me on Monday, when you said it was time enough to answer such Questions when they came before the House.

MR. SPEAKER: In reply to the Question of the hon. Baronet (Sir Wilfrid Lawson), I have to state that no such Motion would be justified, except on grounds public or notorious, or within the cognizance of the House, otherwise it would be simply vexatious.

MOTIONS.

INTERMENTS (FELO DE SE) BILL.

On Motion of Viscount EBRINGTON, Bill to amend the Law relating to the Interment of any Person found Felo de se, *ordered* to be brought in by Viscount EBRINGTON, Sir JOHN AMORY, and Sir JOHN KENNAWAY.

Mar 9—Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 98.]

BILLS OF EXCHANGE BILL.

Select Committee *nominated:*—Sir JOHN LUBBOCK, Mr. WILLIAMSON, Mr. R. B. MARTIN, Sir FARRER HERSCHELL, Mr. ROBERT REID, Mr. LEWIS FRY, Mr. COHEN, Mr. COMMINS, Mr. ROBERT FOWLER, Mr. BARING, Sir CHARLES MILLS, Mr. JACKSON, Mr. WHITLEY, and Mr. MULHOLLAND:—Power to send for persons, papers, and records; Five to be the quorum.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 9*th March,* 1882.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Pilotage Provisional Order (Tees) * (33).
Second Reading — Committee negatived — Consolidated Fund (No. 1) *.
Third Reading—Post Cards (Reply) * (23), and *passed.*

NEW PEER.

William Ulick Tristram Earl of Howth in the peerage of Ireland, having been created Baron Howth of Howth in the county of Dublin in the peerage of the United Kingdom—Was (in the usual manner) introduced.

ATTEMPT UPON THE LIFE OF HER MAJESTY.

ADDRESS TO HER MAJESTY.

THE LORD STEWARD (The Earl SYDNEY) acquainted the House that Her Majesty had appointed To-morrow, at One o'clock, at Windsor Castle, to receive the Address of both Houses: Ordered, That the Lord Steward and the Lord Chamberlain do present the Address on the part of this House.

A message sent to the Commons to acquaint them that Her Majesty has appointed To-morrow, at One o'clock, at Windsor Castle, to receive the Address, and that the Lords have appointed the Lord Steward and the Lord Chamberlain to present the Address on the part of this House, and do desire the Commons to appoint a proportionate number of their members to present the said Address with their Lordships.

NAVY—THE BOARD OF ADMIRALTY—CONSTITUTION OF THE BOARD.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

THE DUKE OF SOMERSET said, he rose to ask the First Lord of the Admiralty whether any change was contemplated in the Board or in the Office? During the last 20 years a great number of changes had taken place in the *matériel* of the Navy—not only in the construction of ships, but in the style of armour, both offensive and defensive. Those were changes which had come within his own personal observation during his connection with that Department. For example, they began with a 4½-inch plate. By the time he left the Admiralty they had got as far as a 14-inch plate, and he believed they had now got as much as a 24-inch armour plate. Their offensive power had also increased. Twenty years ago, 35-ton guns were considered enormous; now they had guns of a calibre of 80 tons, and he believed there was some even larger. When all these changes were going on, it was natural that the public should be anxious to know upon what principle these changes were made. There was a general feeling—a feeling which, he believed, was shared by the Board of Admiralty and the First Lords—that some great changes were required in the office of the Department. Taking, for example, a ship like the *Inflexible,* which, he believed, had 39 engines on board, and all sorts of arrangements and contrivances, it was natural that there should be some superintending authority, with special qualifications, able to guide the Admiralty in the matter. He did not desire to remove the Naval officers from the Board, as he believed that they were necessary; but, in addition to them, there should be some person possessing scientific skill and a practical knowledge of the management of large engineering establishments. He was not one of those who were very anxious that rapid progress should be made in the building of large iron-clads. He rather doubted whether we were not going to see a further change in the system of shipbuilding. He believed that ships of a lighter draught and greater speed were coming into favour—ships capable of carrying heavier guns, and with a cellular system of water-tight compartments, rather than ships covered with heavy armour-plating. He did not attach much importance to a great deal that had been said during last autumn as to the inferiority of British ships to many in the French Navy; but he observed that among those who were acquainted with the subject there was great interest in the question as to the course that should be pursued with the view of placing at the command of the Admiralty the greatest engineering ability. He wished, therefore, to ask the First Lord whether any changes in this direction were contemplated? He was not satisfied with the gun, the ram, or the torpedo. As regarded the gun, he believed we were still keeping to the system of muzzle-loading. He had long since come to the opinion that we must have breech-loading guns. Further, he thought that a gun of 50 or 60 tons was preferable to a 100-ton gun, if we had compressed steel; and if that was not possible at present, it would be soon. Again, there was the torpedo—an engine which required great care in its management to prevent it damaging the very vessel which carried it. As to the ships, they must be constructed with the greatest care, and every attention paid both to the armour and all the internal parts—the machinery. Those were only a few of the difficulties in the way of the Board, and they made it very desirable that more mechanical and engineering skill should be brought into the Admiralty. He hoped, therefore, that his noble Friend the First Lord of the Admiralty would be able to state that some changes were in contemplation, and that he would give their Lordships some idea of what they were.

THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: My Lords, I am much obliged to the noble Duke for giving me an opportunity of shortly explaining to your Lordships a change which is proposed in the constitution of the Board of Admiralty, with the object of strengthening the administration of the *matériel* of the Navy. But, before doing that, I should like to say one word upon a subject touched upon by the noble Duke—namely, the large guns which are now being manufactured at Woolwich for the future ships of the Fleet. The present arrangement with respect to large guns is that they shall be breech-loading, and not muzzle-loading guns. The alteration in the construction of guns and the enlargement of the powder chamber has given greater power to the guns than they had under former systems. To obtain a very powerful gun the barrel must be long, and therefore it must be loaded at the breech, in order to be worked on the broadsides of ships. The noble Duke has rightly pointed out that by using steel instead of wrought iron for coils greater strength will be given to guns; and I have no doubt, speaking on the authority of able officers who are acquainted technically with these matters, that it will be possible to place on board ship guns of a weight not exceeding 60 tons which will be sufficiently powerful to pierce any armour-plate, whether compound or otherwise, on any ship now afloat or building. With regard to the Question of the noble Duke, your Lordships are probably aware that the business of the Admiralty is transacted in three principal divisions—The *personnel* of the Navy and the movements and condition of the fleets, under the First Naval Lord of the Admiralty, assisted by the Second and Junior Naval Lords. The *matériel* of the Navy, under the Controller, a Naval officer, who is appointed for five years; he is not a member of the Board of Admiralty, but has the right to attend the Board when designs for ships or any other matters emanating from his department are discussed. The third division is the finance of the Navy, under the Financial Secretary. These high officers are responsible to the First Lord of the Admiralty for the business under their charge; and he, again, is responsible to the Queen and to Parliament for all the business of the Admiralty. This distribution of business, and this responsibility, were prescribed almost in the very words I have used by an Order of the Queen in Council, passed in March, 1872, when my right hon. Friend Mr. Goschen was First Lord of the Admiralty, founded upon a former Order framed by Mr. Childers, and it has remained in force up to the present time. My Lords, during the last 25 years I have been connected with the Admiralty in different capacities. I was Private Secretary to Lord Halifax at the end of the Crimean War, and afterwards Civil Lord under him. I was subsequently Secretary to the Admiralty under the noble Duke (the Duke of Somerset). I have, therefore, some experience in the matter; and I can say, with perfect sincerity, that I believe the Department has never been in better working order than it is under the provisions of the Order in Council which was passed by Mr. Goschen in 1872. My Lords, while this is so, I have found it generally admitted that the machinery of administration which deals with the *matériel* requires strengthening. I use the word "strengthening" deliberately, for I do not wish it to be supposed that I desire to make any substantial change. In my opinion, and I believe in that of all my Predecessors, it is essential that the responsibility for the *matériel* of the Navy should be placed upon a Naval officer of distinction—such as Rear Admiral Brandreth, who now fills the office of Controller—who knows the requirements of the Service, and possesses the confidence of the Navy. As to the constructive and engineering staff, I have taken every opportunity of ascertaining the sentiments of officers of the Navy and other professional men; and I feel confident that the constructive staff of the Admiralty may fearlessly challenge comparison in respect to the ships of war built of late years, and their engines, with the Naval Constructors of any other nation. But the want which I have indicated has been pressed upon me by the very men who are engaged upon this important work—by Admiral Sir Houston Stewart, the distinguished officer who for 10 years filled, and who has only very lately left, the office of Controller, and by Mr. Barnaby, the able and accomplished Director of Naval Construction; and the reason of this want requires but little explanation. It has arisen from the vast changes which, as everybody knows, have taken place of late years in the types of our ships and guns, and in the introduction of torpedoes as an arm of offence and defence. These changes involve not only new problems of Naval construction, but engineering and mechanical contrivances of great intricacy and delicacy, upon which the efficiency of our fighting ships must in future greatly depend. Your Lordships will readily perceive that it has thus become not only greatly to the advantage of the Public Service, but even an absolute necessity, that the Admiralty should be able to command the ablest advice and assistance from outside upon these subjects. It is, therefore, proposed to make no substantial change in the duties or responsibility of the Controller of the Navy, or in the Constructive Department, but to strengthen the Controller by giving him the assistance of a gentleman who, to use the terms of the proposed Order in Council,

> "Shall possess special mechanical and engineering knowledge, as well as administrative experience in the superintendence of large private establishments."

The best and most appropriate position for our new Adviser is that he should have a seat at the Board of Admiralty as an additional Civil Lord, and this necessarily involves replacing the Controller upon the Board—a position which he held for some time before the Order in Council of 1872. It will be provided that neither the office of additional Naval nor that of additional Civil Lord shall be held by a Member of Parliament. By this plan the Board of Admiralty will secure the advice and assistance we require in the most convenient manner, and with the least possible interference with present arrangements. I must, however, frankly admit to your Lordships that the success of such a proposal as I have sketched must mainly depend upon the selection of a fit and proper person to fill the new post upon the Board of Admiralty. I have the satisfaction of feeling that in this the Government have been fortunate, for they have been able to secure the services of Mr. George Rendel, who is well known as one of the ablest engineers and mechanicians of the day, and who, as one of Sir William Armstrong's partners in the management of the great Elswick factories—a connection which he will, of course, now give up—has had large experience in the construction of the wonderful hydraulic machinery which many of your Lordships may have admired on board the *Inflexible* and others of our most recent men-of-war, as well as in the designing and fitting of ships of war, and in the management of a large manufactory. I have never, in the course of my experience, found so great an unanimity of opinion among all persons qualified to judge, as upon the value of Mr. George Rendel's services in the particular position which I have indicated. I am authorized by my Predecessor in my present Office (Mr. W. H. Smith), to state to your Lordships that he had come to the conclusion that it would be greatly to the public advantage to obtain Mr. Rendel's services, and that he had already entered into some communications with him on the subject before Lord Beaconsfield's Administration resigned. This change, my Lords, which will immediately be proposed for the approval of the Queen in Council, and carried into effect as soon as I am satisfied of the concurrence of the other House of Parliament, will add two members to the Board of Admiralty, although, as respects one of them—the Controller—it is hardly a real addition, for he has now the right to attend the Board when business relating to the *matériel* is under discussion. The number of the Board will be six besides the First Lord, and I am satisfied that no practical inconvenience will result from this addition. The Board of Admiralty is now, as your Lordships are probably aware, used as a consultative body only for the discussion of subjects of considerable importance; and, as a matter of fact, the number of members will now be no more than the number which composed the Board during the 30 years which ended with 1822. I may observe that the Order in Council has been so drawn as to provide that, in case my successor at the Admiralty should wish to revert to the present arrangement, the Controller, if no longer appointed to be a member of the Board, would continue to hold his Office for the term of five years for which he was originally appointed, and the Office of additional Civil Lord would lapse. Your Lordships will understand that it would not be consistent with the constitution of the Board of Admiralty that the tenure of Office of any member of the Board should depend upon anything else than the Letters Patent issued from time to time by the Crown. Mr. Rendel fully understands this, and has accepted the position subject to the same conditions as attach to the tenure of Office of other Lords of the Admiralty. I feel that I shall be excused for not dwelling any longer upon my own reasons for the conclusions which I have thus shortly explained when I inform your Lordships that the changes which I have described have received the unanimous and cordial support of Sir Cooper Key and the other members of the Board of Admiralty, as well as of Mr. Trevelyan, who so well fills the Office of Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty. We trust that the change will promote the efficiency of the administration of the Navy, as well as the most advantageous disposal of the sums of money which the liberality of Parliament places at the disposal of the Board of Admiralty. I may take this opportunity of mentioning a smaller change, which, if, indeed, it can be rightly termed a change at all, will be proposed in the new Order in Council. Under the scheme of 1872 three Secretaries to the Admiralty were provided—the Parliamentary Secretary, the Permanent Secretary, and the Naval Secretary. In 1877, when Mr. Vernon Lushington left the Office of Permanent Secretary, it was decided, I think rightly, that two Secretaries besides the Parliamentary Secretary were not required. The Office of Permanent Secretary has accordingly not since been filled up, and the secretarial duties have been faithfully discharged by the Naval Secretary, Vice Admiral Hall, without a Colleague. The term of service of Vice Admiral Hall will shortly expire, and it is proposed to revert to the old arrangement—that besides the Parliamentary Secretary there shall be only one Secretary, who shall be called the Permanent Secretary, and who, as in former times, may be a Naval officer or a civilian. I have much pleasure in informing your Lordships that when Vice Admiral Hall's term of Office expires, the Office will be filled by Mr. Hamilton, the Accountant General of the Navy, one of the ablest members of the permanent Civil Service, who will, I am confident, be a worthy successor to the many distinguished men who have filled that important post.

Lord ELPHINSTONE said, that he had hoped to hear from the noble Earl that very much more substantial changes were about to be made. He was glad to hear that the Controller was about to have a seat at the Board; but nothing was said about the Constructor. He would suggest that in view of the large number of persons in this country who were engaged in the ship-building trade, the Government should deal with the matter of construction on a broader principle than that on which they now acted—that it would be far better if the Admiralty, having first settled as to what ships they wanted, should throw the matter open to the whole Kingdom, inviting designs, and leaving the Board to decide as to what ships should be built. Such a system would prevent the Department from falling into any particular groove. He congratulated the Government on having secured the services of Mr. Rendel.

ATTEMPT UPON THE LIFE OF HER MAJESTY.

ADDRESS TO HER MAJESTY.

Message from the Commons that they have appointed Mr. Gladstone, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, the Comptroller of the Household, and the Vice-Chamberlain of the Household to go with the Lords mentioned in their Lordships' message to wait upon Her Majesty with the Address of both Houses of Parliament respecting the attempt upon the life of Her Majesty.

House adjourned at Six o'clock,
till To-morrow, half past
Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 9th March, 1882.

MINUTES.]—New Member Sworn—Charles William Miles, esquire, *for* Malmesbury.

Select Committee—Distress (Law of), *nominated.*

Public Bills—*Ordered—First Reading*—Parish Churches * [99].

First Reading—Interments (Felo de se) * [98].

Committee—Report—Boiler Explosions [4].

NOTICE.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.

Lord JOHN MANNERS gave Notice of the following Amendment to the 1st Resolution moved by Mr. Gladstone on the subject of the Business of the House:—

"To move as an addition at the end of the Resolution the words, 'Provided also that on any such division the votes shall be taken by secret ballot.'"

QUESTIONS.

POST OFFICE—LETTER CARRIERS, &c., IN RURAL DISTRICTS.

Mr. GEORGE RUSSELL asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is the case that, though letter carriers and other post office servants in towns have regular holidays, no such holidays are allowed to similar officials in rural districts; and, if so, whether he would be prepared to extend to the rural officials the same indulgence as is enjoyed by those engaged in towns?

Mr. FAWCETT: Speaking generally, Sir, it is the case, as stated by my hon. Friend, that rural letter-carriers have no holidays. I am glad, however, to be able to say that a proposal I recently made has just been sanctioned by the Treasury, which will henceforward enable rural letter carriers to have a week's holiday in each year. With regard to town auxiliary letter-carriers having holidays, this is one of the points which are now being considered in connection with the Memorials they have forwarded to me.

INDIA—THE MAHARAJAHS SCINDIA AND HOLKAR.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS (for Mr. Onslow) asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true that a meeting is to take place between the Maharajahs Scindia and Holkar; and, if so, what steps Her Majesty's Government have taken to express their approval, through the Viceroy of India, of such an auspicious event?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, I have no information with regard to this event, except what has appeared in the newspapers. I have no doubt that the Government of India will take any steps which they think necessary in the matter. We have not thought it necessary to issue any directions to them on the subject.

ARMY—MILITIA SERGEANTS.

Lord BURGHLEY asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is usual for Militia Sergeants receiving two shillings a-day and four pence lodging allowance, with no rations or allowance for rations, to be ordered to mess at the Brigade Depôt Sergeants' Mess, where the Line Sergeants receive, in addition to their pay, sixpence a-day or a free ration ?

Mr. CHILDERS: Yes, Sir; unless they are married. But it is not the case that Militia sergeants receive only 2*s.* 4*d.* a-day. Those who are serving on their Line engagements have that pay, besides 6*d.* or a ration in kind; and those serving on their Militia engagements have 2*s.* or 2*s.* 3*d.* a-day, besides their Army pensions, which vary from 8*d.* a-day to the highest non-commissioned rates. The low rate of pay is only received by Militia sergeants who have never served in the Army, or who were discharged without pension.

CRIMINAL LAW — AGGRAVATED ASSAULTS—PUNISHMENT OF FLOGGING —LEGISLATION.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in view of the prevalence of aggravated assaults, he will introduce a Bill this Session for the purpose of amending the provisions of the Act 26 and 27 Vic. c. 44, so as to extend the punishment of flogging to persons convicted of such assaults, thereby rendering them liable to the same punishment as that inflicted under the said Act on persons committed for assaults with intent to rob ?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, this matter was very carefully considered in 1875, when my Predecessor in Office introduced a Bill having the object indicated by the hon. Member. There was a Blue Book laid on the Table with the opinions of Judges, magistrates, and other authorities in regard to extending the punishment of flogging. After that Bill was discussed in this House the late Government very wisely, I think, abandoned it, and I do not propose to re-introduce it.

COOLIES (INDIA) AT LA REUNION.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether, considering the important and difficult questions regarding the treatment of the Indian Coolies in the French Colony of Reunion which have occurred for several years past, and are now pending, Her Majesty's Government is represented in Reunion by an officer who has special qualifications for dealing with these Coolie questions, including a knowledge of the language and habits of the Coolies; and, whether the British Consul was responsible for the protection of the British subjects despatched from Reunion, in the Coolie ship "Francis," which put into the Seychelles in October last leaky, overloaded, and without hospital accommodation ?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Mr. Annesley, Her Majesty's Consul at Réunion, was appointed in 1878, and should be familiar with the habits of the Coolies. It is not known whether he personally has a knowledge of Hindostani; but there is, at least, one interpreter attached to the Consulate for the especial benefit of Indian immigrants. The immigration of Coolies to Réunion is, for the time being, virtually stopped by the Indian Government pending a more satisfactory understanding than at present exists with the French Government as to their treatment. As regards the second portion of the hon. Member's Question, Consul Annesley reported, on the 27th of September last, that he had visited the ship *Francis* previous to her departure, and added—

> "I inspected and questioned these immigrants individually before their embarkation, and, in reply to all my inquiries, they declared that they had no complaints to make, and they appeared well satisfied to leave this Colony."

Consul Annesley makes no reference in his despatch to the ship being overloaded or wanting hospital accommodation, and was, of course, not qualified to pronounce any opinion as to the seaworthiness of the vessel.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary of State for India, If he has ascertained the circumstances of the

Coolie ship "Francis," from Reunion, which put into the Seychelles in October last in distress; and, whether it is true that in an unsafe vessel of three hundred and fifty tons were packed four hundred and ten human beings; that there was no hospital, insufficient and improper food, and very little medicine; and that the people were landed in the Seychelles in a state of great suffering and destitution; that another vessel, the "St. Jaques," sent for them, also proved insufficient, and that further delay, suffering, and mortality, were occasioned?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, I have received full information as to the circumstances of the voyage of the *Francis* with Coolies from Réunion, which vessel put into the Seychelles in distress. The *Francis* is of 330 tons, and when she sailed from Réunion had on board about 410 souls, including her crew and Indian return Coolies officially entered as representing 367 statute adults. The customary official inspections of the vessel were held at Réunion, and reported to the British Consul there, who made the usual inspection of the Coolies before embarkation. In the Reports of these inspections there was nothing which indicated that more Coolies than the French law allowed were despatched. The ship, when eight days out, sprung a leak, and had to put into the Seychelles, where the Coolies were landed on the 10th. Meanwhile, three deaths had occurred on board, and five more happened on shore. The emigrants complained to the British Chief Commissioner of the Seychelles that the food, space, and medical attendance on board the *Francis* had been insufficient and bad; and some of them looked ill and in an unsatisfactory condition. They seem to have been neglected by the French, who were in charge of them on first landing at the Seychelles, and much sickness prevailed among them. After attention had been called to their condition, however, all care seems to have been taken of them; and about five weeks after reaching the Seychelles they all—except 67 of them—again embarked on board the *St. Jaques*, a vessel of 390 tons, sent by the Réunion Government to take on the Coolies ex *Francis*, which ship was unable to continue her voyage. The *St. Jaques* reached India in due course, and the Indian Government have reported well of the treatment of the Coolies on board of her. The 67 Coolies detained were prevented by the Chief Commissioner from embarking on the *St. Jaques*, that officer considering that, according to the terms of the Coolie Convention of 1861 with France, there was not room for them in the *St. Jaques*. Eventually, shortly after the sailing of the *St. Jaques*, the 67 who had been detained were despatched to India by the Mauritius Government in a ship chartered for the purpose. Various questions, suggested by the case of these Coolies who sailed from Réunion in the *Francis*, are still under consideration in the Indian Office, the Colonial Office, and the Foreign Office.

MERCANTILE MARINE—THE PILGRIM SHIP "JEDDAH."

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the President of the Board of Trade, If he has satisfied himself that there is no criminal Law applicable to the case of the master of the British ship "Jeddah," who, on the voyage from Singapore to Arabia, abandoned his ship with many hundred pilgrims on board, and that there is no means by which that captain's conduct can be submitted to the ordeal of a criminal prosecution, or by which, in any way, he can be subjected to penalties more severe than the temporary suspension of certificate imposed by the local Wreck Commissioners at Aden; or, if he has not ascertained these points, with what Department of Her Majesty's Government the function of doing so lies?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, that when the Report of the local Wreck Commissioners on the abandonment of the *Jeddah* became known the Board of Trade felt that the punishment of the master was altogether inadequate to the magnitude of the offence; and, accordingly, the whole case was reviewed by them. But the difficulties in the way of a criminal prosecution were found to be insuperable, owing to the absence of witnesses and the fact that the captain had gone on to Singapore, and probably to New Zealand. He learned that the question had been under the consideration of the Government at Singapore, and the Attorney General there advised that no criminal prosecution should be undertaken. Though the suspension of the certificate for three years was an inadequate punishment, he did not think that the penalty would be confined to that. It appeared to him from the stigma attaching to his character the captain never could obtain employment as master of a ship again.

PARLIAMENT — PUBLIC BUSINESS — RIVERS CONSERVANCY AND FLOODS PREVENTION BILL.

MR. SALT asked the President of the Local Government Board, If, inasmuch as the Rivers Conservancy Bill contains important provisions for the creation of new rates, new areas, and new local authorities, he will endeavour to place the Bill as a first Order of the Day, or postpone the Bill until the proposals relating to local administration, promised in Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech, have been brought before the consideration of the House?

MR. R. H. PAGET asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he will be good enough to inform the House on what day he proposes to proceed with the Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill; and, whether, in deference to the amount of interest taken in this measure, he will undertake to put it as a first Order of the Day, and will give sufficient notice of the time at which he proposes to bring it forward?

MR. DODSON, in reply, said, that he would willingly endeavour to make the Bill the first Order of the Day; but, looking to the state of Business, he should be only misleading hon. Members if he were to enter into any undertaking on the subject. He could only repeat what he had said before, that he was aware of the desire of several hon. Gentlemen to have some discussion on this subject with the Speaker in the Chair. He would, therefore, use his best efforts to bring on the Bill at a reasonable hour. With regard to the first Question, it appeared to him that no advantage would be gained by postponing the consideration of the measure until the County Government Bill was passed. From the nature of rivers which often flowed through several counties, and many of which flowed between different counties and formed their boundaries, he thought that the watershed was the area to be considered. That was the view taken by the Select Committee of the Lords which inquired into the subject, and by the Committees of both Houses, to which the Bill had been referred last year. It was also the view taken by the Local Government Board, when the hon. Gentleman himself (Mr. Salt) was connected with it, and by the late Government when they proposed to legislate on the two subjects.

CRIMINAL PROCEDURE AMENDMENT BILL (INDIA).

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true that, according to the new Criminal Procedure Amendment Bill (India), a magistrate may not inflict upon a European British subject imprisonment for a longer period than three months, but that he may inflict upon an Indian British subject imprisonment for three years and solitary confinement?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, the Criminal Procedure Amendment Bill does not make any alteration in the law relating to this point. As this Question appears to point to some proposed alteration, it would be hardly necessary to trouble the House by entering into the subject.

MR. O'DONNELL asked, Whether this was not a re-enactment of a previous measure, and whether it was not true that under its provisions no European British subject might be sentenced to more than one year's imprisonment, while an Indian subject might be sentenced by the same Court to imprisonment for 14 years, to transportation for life, and even to the penalty of death?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that the Criminal Procedure Amendment Bill did propose to re-enact the existing law with regard to which there was an undoubted disparity.

INDIA (REVENUE, &c.)—SALE OF INTOXICATING DRINKS.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for India, If he is aware that the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab has announced that the Excise Report of the Punjab for the year 1880 shows that

> "The Excise Revenue for the year 1888-1 is the largest income yet collected in one year, notwithstanding an enhancement of the rates of still head duty;"

and whether he will lay upon the Table of the House the letter of the Reverend Mr. Evans, Baptist missionary at Monghyr, to Lord Ripon, deploring the enormous increase of drunkenness among hitherto sober populations in India, in consequence of the multiplication of facilities for the sale of intoxicating drinks in connection with the Excise Department of the Revenue?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, it is correct that the Excise Revenue of the Punjab for 1880-81 is the largest yet collected, the gross receipts having been Rs.11,09,000, against Rs.10,49,000 in 1876, the causes of the increase are—recovery of the Province from agricultural depression, and return of the troops and camp followers from Afghanistan. The Punjab rates of taxation on country liquor are very high, and the Excise Revenue lower per head of population than in any other Province. The reason of this is that the consumption of country liquor is small, a large part of the population using opium instead of liquor. The hon. Member is, of course, aware, though the House may not have noticed, that Mr. Evans's letter has nothing to do with the Punjab Excise Revenue. It relates to the drinking habits of the population at Monghyr, in Bengal, nearly 900 miles distant from the capital of the Punjab; and it assigns as the cause of an increase of drunkenness at Monghyr, the substitution of the "out-still" for the "sudder distillery" system of raising a revenue from country liquor, the "sudder distillery" system alone being in force in the Punjab. The letter, with the Report of the Government of Bengal, and the Orders of the Government of India, can be laid on the Table, if the hon. Member likes to move for them.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—THE "SUSPECTS" (EXPENSES).

MR. FITZPATRICK asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether there is any objection to laying upon the Table of the House a Return of the extra expenses incurred, up to the present date, in providing accommodation for "suspects," and in repairs of gaols for that purpose, or in the employment of extra warders and other officials?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, there is no objection to the Return asked for being laid upon the Table of the House; and I will give directions for its preparation.

RELIEF OF DISTRESS (IRELAND)—SEED POTATOES.

MR. O'CONNOR POWER asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If it is true that many tenant farmers in the district of Addergoole, and Union of Ballina, are now liable for the payment of seed potatoes obtained on credit from the Guardians of the Poor, but which, owing to their inferior character, proved to be useless; whether the Irish Local Government Board have given due consideration to the representations addressed to them on this subject by the Addergoole Relief Committee; and, whether some means can be devised to relieve the tenant farmers, to whom bad and useless seed was distributed, from the payment of a rate levied on account of that seed?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, I am informed that Addergoole is in Castlebar Union, and that some tenant farmers complained that the scheme had failed; they were, however, afterwards aided by free grants of seed from charitable sources. Castlebar is one of the Unions in which the payment of the first instalment of the seed rate was postponed for a year, and the Local Government Board have further authorized its collection in four annual instalments. It is not considered that further measures are necessary.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked whether the Government would be prepared to extend the same treatment to all places where bad seed had been given?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): In the majority of Unions the indulgence has been extended more or less.

IRELAND—THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

MR. REDMOND asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If it is a fact that, during last year, 300 members of the Royal Irish Constabulary Force resigned; and, if so, whether this was due to the nature of the duties recently devolving upon the police in Ireland?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, the total number of resignations in the Royal Irish Constabulary Force in 1881 was 352; of these 151 were recruits who had never done any police duty. The reasons assigned by the others were generally "to better their condition," or "required at home," or "to emigrate." Very few, indeed, of this loyal and trustworthy force, of which it is impossible to speak too highly, have assigned "the nature of the duties recently devolving on them" as any reason for quitting the Service.

INLAND REVENUE — INCOME TAX (IRELAND)—SCHEDULE A.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether the Income Tax in Ireland, Schedule A, being paid directly by the landlord, the Government are prepared to allow those landlords who have received no rent during the past year time for the payment of such Tax?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Sir, instructions were given last year that, in the case of agricultural lands in Ireland, the Income Tax under Schedule A should be accepted from landlords on the actual rents received; supplemental lists of subsequent receipts of rents being furnished by them, on which the duty would be received until the full charge was accounted for. Those instructions have been repeated for the present financial year.

Mr. GILL asked whether it was not the case that for many years, if not since the institution of the Income Tax, the landlords of Ireland had only paid on the Government valuation, while they received rents very much in excess of that valuation?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Yes, Sir.

POOR LAW (IRELAND)—DR. J. E. KENNY.

Mr. GRAY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether, in the event of Dr. Kenny, who was dismissed by the Local Government Board, Ireland, because of being a political suspect, being reinstated in his office under the Board, his ten years service will count towards future claim for superannuation?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, if Dr. Kenny should be re-elected by the Board of Guardians his former service will count in computing his pension.

MADAGASCAR—VISIT OF ADMIRAL GORE JONES TO THE QUEEN.

Mr. GOURLEY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If it is true that Admiral Gore Jones, of the Indian Station, recently landed and marched to the Royal residence of the Queen of Madagascar, for the purpose of arranging a Treaty engaging to recognise and assist her in assuming Sovereignty over the whole of the Island, he being aware at the time that some of the tribes on the West Coast claim to be independent of the Hova Queen, and that in the exercise of their independence they had at various times presented sketches of their Coast to France, and also granted charters to French settlers; and, whether, if true, Admiral Jones acted upon his own responsibility or with the authority of the Home or Indian Governments?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, the recent visit of Admiral Gore Jones to the Queen of Madagascar was intended as one of compliment, and in response to a wish expressed by the Hova Government. Admiral Gore Jones did not attempt to arrange any Treaty, although the state of the South-Western coast of Madagascar, and the question of establishing the Queen's authority over that portion of territory, was referred to by the Queen of Madagascar and the Prime Minister.

POST OFFICE—TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT—SECRECY OF TELEGRAMS.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If any warrant issued by him to authorise infringement of the secrecy of telegrams is at present in force in the Post Office Telegraph Department?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, in the debate which took place the other night I informed the hon. Member that this is a subject on which it would be entirely contrary to my duty to give information.

INDIA—THE MADRAS CIVIL SERVICE.

Mr. GIBSON asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether, since the date of his last reply, any step has been taken by the Government of India to remove the grievances of the Madras Civil Servants, except to inquire how far the contemplated introduction of certain minor administrative changes will afford any relief; whether he is aware that the proposed changes will not have the effect of remedying to any appreciable extent the block in promotion; and, whether he will now urge the Government of India to withhold no longer from the Madras Civil Service all the concessions which have been granted to the Civil Service in other provinces under similar conditions, and the grant of which has been already delayed for nearly two years since the first representations of the Government of Madras in the matter?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, it has been decided by the Secretary of State in Council, on the recommendation of the Government of India, that the concessions which were granted to the Civil Service in Bengal and Bombay should be granted to the Madras Civil Service; and orders have been given to the Government of India, by telegraph, to offer proportionate pensions to all Madras civilians who have completed 20 years' service, or who will do so during the present calendar year.

RELIGIOUS DISSENSIONS (GIBRALTAR)—DR. CANILLA.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any petition or representation has been made by the inhabitants of Gibraltar respecting the appointment of Dr. Canilla as Vicar Apostolic; and, whether such documents, together with the other Correspondence on the same subject, can be laid upon the Table? He also inquired whether the employment of troops at Gibraltar to break in the Roman Catholic Church had been with the concurrence of the authorities?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, with respect to the last Question, I must ask the hon. Member to put it on the Paper. With reference to the other Questions, some representations have been received, and there will be no objection to publish the Correspondence.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT — STATE SCHOOL EDUCATION AND PARISH RELIEF.

MR. P. A. TAYLOR asked the Vice President of the Committee of Council on Education, Whether his attention has been called to an opinion lately expressed by the presiding magistrate at Hammersmith Police Court, to the effect that a parent who takes advantage of the State schools to get his children educated must be regarded as being in receipt of parish relief; and, whether he will give emphatic denial to the correctness of such opinion?

MR. MUNDELLA: Sir, there is nothing in the Education Acts which justifies the statement attributed to the presiding magistrate at the Hammersmith Police Court. On the contrary, the Acts expressly provide that even in cases where, through the inability of the parent to pay the school fees of his children, the Guardians of the Poor provide the necessary funds, the parent shall not be deemed to have received parochial relief. It has been held by the present and the late Government that the children of the poorest and of the wealthiest classes are equally entitled to attend a public elementary school. I do not see why a parent who educates his children at a State-aided school is to be regarded as a pauper, any more than one who educates his sons at a State-aided University.

STATE OF IRELAND—THE DISTURBANCE AT BALLYRAGGET.

MR. P. MARTIN asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether the finding which the coroner's jury came to at Ballyragget that the two sub-inspectors of Constabulary in command of the police, who, without necessity or lawful excuse in the judgment of the jurors, gave the order to the police to charge with fixed bayonets, were guilty of the wilful murder of James Mansfield, who died from the effects of a bayonet wound inflicted on him on the 9th of October, has been quashed by the Court of Queen's Bench in Ireland on technical grounds; whether the Executive Government sent large bodies of military and police into Ballyragget on that 9th of October, and no magistrate accompanied or was in command of those military or police; and, has any inquiry been directed into the conduct of the sub-inspector, and the circumstances under which Mansfield thus lost his life; and, if not, is it the intention of the Government to have an investigation held?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, as to the first Question of the hon. Member, this inquisition has been quashed by the Queen's Bench Division of the High Court of Justice in Ireland on the ground of the misconduct of the Coroner and jury. As to the second and third Questions of the hon. Member, a considerable civil and military force was sent to Ballyragget, on the 9th of October last, to preserve the peace on the occasion of a Land League meeting. There was no magistrate there; but all passed off quietly, and the force proceeded to the railway station to return by train to their quarters. The police were followed, and, without any provocation, were savagely attacked, and stoned by a riotous mob, and to save themselves they were obliged to charge and drive back the mob. The Government is in full possession of all the circumstances, and further investigation is not contemplated.

IRISH LAND COMMISSION—RETURN OF JUDGMENTS.

MR. J. N. RICHARDSON asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether, according to the Returns recently placed before Parliament, there are not 4,998 originating notices for fixing a fair rent from the county Armagh on the books of the Land Commission, whereof only eighteen cases have been adjudicated upon by the Sub-Commissioners up to 28th January; and, whether the Chief Commissioners intend, either by the appointment of a Sub-Commission specially for Armagh, or by some other means, to accelerate the hearing of cases in that county?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, the figures were, as stated by the hon. Member in his Question, up to the 28th of January; but on the 7th of March they were different. On the 7th of March 5,038 originating notices had been received, and 152 cases disposed of. The subject of expediting the hearing of cases ripe for disposal is, I believe, engaging the attention of the Land Commission.

MR. GIBSON asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether he will give directions that any further Returns, showing the rent decisions of the Land Commission, shall contain columns indicating when last before the decision the old rent had been varied, and what had been the amount of such old rent before such variation?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, the Land Commission have settled the forms of their books in which the proceedings are recorded, and any variation from those forms will necessarily cause considerable inconvenience; but, notwithstanding this, the Commissioners are desirous of giving all information which can reasonably be asked for, and I am requested by the Chief Secretary for Ireland to state that he has ascertained that the Commissioners will not object to furnishing what is requested by my right hon. and learned Friend's Question.

TUNIS—THE ENFIDA ESTATE.

THE EARL OF BECTIVE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, When a decision will be arrived at, by arbitration or otherwise, with respect to the Enfida Estate in Tunis, from which Mr. Levy, a British subject, was forcibly ejected a few months ago by persons acting under the orders of the Société Marseillaise; and, if Her Majesty's Government will present to the House all Correspondence on this and other matters connected with Tunis (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, Tunis, No. 8)? Also, Whether the French Government intend M. Roustan's successor at Tunis to discharge not only the duties of French Consul and Political Agent, but also those of sole intermediary between the Bey's Government and the representatives of Foreign Powers; and, if so, what arrangements Her Majesty's Government propose making in order to safeguard our Treaty rights with the Bey?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, the Enfida case is still pending before one of the Native tribunals at Tunis, and no final decision has been pronounced on Mr. Levy's claim. Further Papers on the subject will be laid on the Table. Her Majesty's Government have not been informed that the position of M. Roustan's successor will be different from that occupied by him; and they do not propose to make any new arrangements for safeguarding our

Treaty rights as long as they are not infringed.

POST OFFICE—INTERNATIONAL PARCELS POST.

MR. WHITLEY asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is the intention of Her Majesty's Government, upon the establishment of the International Parcel Post, to compensate fairly those who are now carrying on that business, and who will be ruined by having their means of livelihood taken away by the Government?

MR. FAWCETT: Sir, in reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that, in the event of an Inland and International Parcels Post being established, it is not the intention of the Post Office to seek to obtain any new monopoly, or to ask for any exclusive powers. It has, therefore, been concluded that no claim for compensation can arise.

FRANCE AND MOROCCO—ALLEGED CONFLICT OF TROOPS.

MR. MONTAGUE GUEST asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government are in possession of any information with regard to the alleged conflict which is stated to have taken place between French and Moorish troops on the borders of Morocco?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Her Majesty's Minister in Morocco reported in December and January that information had reached him that a French force had entered the district of Figuig, in the Empire of Morocco, and, after engaging in hostilities with the Arab tribes there, had retired into Algeria. The fact was, however, denied by the French Government, who were questioned on the subject by Her Majesty's Ambassador in Paris, and has not been confirmed.

POST OFFICE—COLONIAL MONEY ORDERS.

MR. MONK asked the Postmaster General, Whether he can hold out any hope that the present cost of money orders between the United Kingdom and our Colonies may be reduced?

MR. FAWCETT: Sir, the subject is under consideration, and I hope shortly to be able to announce that it is possible to make some reduction.

CHINA—DOMESTIC SLAVERY AT HONG KONG—THE PAPERS.

MR. A. M'ARTHUR asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If he can state when the Papers relative to domestic slavery in Hong Kong will be in the hands of Members?

MR. COURTNEY, in reply, said, he was sorry these Papers had not already been distributed. They had been for some time completed, and were, he believed, in print; but a question had arisen on which it was necessary to consult the Law Officers of the Crown. He had just heard from the Attorney General that their opinion might be expected immediately. As soon as it was received the Papers would be distributed.

AUSTRO-HUNGARY—ARREST OF MR. EVANS.

MR. BRYCE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that Mr. Arthur Evans, well known as the author of books on South Eastern Europe, and as Correspondent of the "Manchester Guardian," has been arrested by the Austrian Government in Dalmatia; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government are taking steps to obtain his immediate release?

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: Before this Question is answered, may I be allowed to ask if this gentleman was ever "reasonably suspected" by the Austrian Government?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: On the 4th of March Her Majesty's Consul at Ragusa reported that Mr. Evans had received notice to quit Austrian territory within three days. On the 7th, Consul St. John reported that he had been arrested when about to leave. Her Majesty's Ambassador at Vienna inquired yesterday of the Austro-Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs, and was told that directions had been given for Mr. Evans's expulsion, but that the Government had not heard of his arrest. Her Majesty's Ambassador and Her Majesty's Consul at Ragusa have been telegraphed to in reference to the arrest.

CURRENCY—THE GOLD COINAGE.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the large proportion of light sovereigns now in circulation; and, whether Her Majesty's Government propose to take any steps in the matter?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, the hon. Baronet asked me a Question on this important subject in the first Session of the present Parliament. I was then obliged to point out that the question of the site of the Mint was in so unsettled a state as to render it impossible to enter into any particulars, or to hold out any definite prospects on the subject. Since that time the site of the Mint has been determined, and the works necessary for the extension of its power and machinery are now in rapid progress. I am not, however, encouraged to hope that the Mint will be able to resume gold coinage before the close of the present year, after which time I hope its energy and resources will be devoted in the direction indicated in the Question of my hon. Friend.

INDIA—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether he has received any details of Major Baring's financial statement to the Legislative Council of India, and when it is proposed to abolish the import duty on manufactured goods in India?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, I am aware it was the intention of Major Baring to make his statement to the Legislative Council yesterday; but I have not received any official information respecting it. The contemplated remission of duty will date from the commencement of the financial year.

PARLIAMENT—ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Baron DE FERRIERES asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, considering that private Members' nights were subjects to counts out, and a great waste of time was thus occasioned, Her Majesty's Government would, in order to expedite Public Business, take more than two nights a-week for the discussion of the important measures now awaiting the consideration of Parliament?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I am afraid that the Government have no power in the matter, and that before they could attain the very desirable object of the hon. Member, they would have to submit his proposition to the House. In pleading this cause before me, the hon. Member is appealing to a tribunal which may not be altogether impartial. I can only say that whatever donations and contributions of time the House may be graciously pleased to make to us with the view of expediting the Public Business will be most thankfully received by us.

Mr. MAC IVER said, he also desired to make an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman respecting the course of Public Business and the rights of private Members. It would be in the recollection of the House that there was a very late Sitting on Monday night, and that the Government took until 3 o'clock on Tuesday morning for the consideration of the Estimates, and that very large sums of money were voted at that hour. It would also be in the recollection of the House that, entirely through the fault of the Government, a "count out" took place on Tuesday night. [*Cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is entitled to state such facts as are necessary to make his Question clear; but he is out of Order in referring to controversial matters.

Mr. MAC IVER said, he wished to ask the Prime Minister, whether he would consent to the debate being adjourned to-night at a reasonable hour, in order that the important Motions which stood upon the Notice Paper for to-morrow night might be properly considered. By taking the Estimates at so late an hour a double injustice was done—in the first place, the House was too weary to listen to private Members' Motions brought forward on the following night; and, secondly, the Estimates were passed in a hurry, without due consideration being given them. The fault of the recent "counts out" lay entirely with Her Majesty's Government.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am not quite sure, Sir, that I entirely comprehend the hon. Member's Question. But I do understand it to contain a request to me to pledge myself to consent to the adjournment of the debate that is about to be resumed at an early hour this evening. I certainly cannot give such a pledge, because I believe that it is the very general wish of the House that that debate shall be brought to a close to-night.

ARMY—THE REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR RECRUITING.

Colonel **ALEXANDER** asked the Secretary of State for War, When the Report of the Inspector General for Recruiting would be ready?

Mr. **CHILDERS**: Sir, had the hon. and gallant Gentleman given me due Notice of this Question I should have been able to have answered it without difficulty. I may, however, say that it will not be long before the Report to which he refers is prepared.

RELIEF OF DISTRESS (IRELAND)—SEEDS SUPPLY ACT, 1880.

Mr. **GRAY** asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether the Local Government Board have power to postpone the payments due under the Seed Supply Act of 1880, in cases where they may be satisfied that owing to the high prices charged, the low rates now prevailing, and other circumstances, its stringent enforcement would inflict hardship upon those for whose benefit the Act was intended?

The **ATTORNEY GENERAL** for **IRELAND** (Mr. W. M. Johnson): The Local Government Board were empowered by the Relief of Distress Amendment Act of 1880 to postpone payment of each special rate for one year, and by the Act of last Session to divide each rate into two equal parts, leviable in successive years. In the majority of the Unions in Ireland these powers have been exercised.

ATTEMPT UPON THE LIFE OF HER MAJESTY.

ADDRESS TO HER MAJESTY.

Message from *The Lords,*—That they do *acquaint* this House that Her Majesty has appointed To-morrow, at One o'clock, at Windsor Castle, to receive the Address of both Houses of Parliament respecting the Attempt upon the Life of Her Majesty, and that The Lords have appointed the Lord Steward and the Lord Chamberlain to present the said Address on the part of their Lordships; and that The Lords do desire this House to appoint a proportionate number of its Members to present the said Address with their Lordships:—Message *considered.*

Ordered, That Mr. Gladstone, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, the Comptroller of the Household, and the Vice Chamberlain of the Household, do go with The Lords mentioned in their Lordships' Message, to wait upon Her Majesty with the Address of both Houses of Parliament respecting the attempt upon the Life of Her Majesty.

Ordered, That a Message be sent to The Lords to acquaint them therewith:—And that the Clerk do carry the said Message.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

LAND LAW (IRELAND)—OPERATION OF THE ACT.—RESOLUTION.

ADJOURNED DEBATE. [FOURTH NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [27th February], that the Question then proposed,

> "That Parliamentary inquiry, at the present time, into the working of the Irish Land Act tends to defeat the operation of that Act, and must be injurious to the interests of good government in Ireland,"—(*Mr. Gladstone,*)

—be now put.

Previous Question again proposed, "That the Original Question be now put."—(*Mr. Gibson.*)

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. **BUTT** said, that, if any justification were required for this Motion, it was to be found in the action of the Conservative Party, who had since the commencement of the debate entirely changed their front. He could not help thinking that that Party were now conscious that in appointing that Committee they had made a very serious mistake. It had been stated in the public journals, and it had been repeated on the Front Opposition Bench, that a certain letter had been written by the Chairman of the Committee to Ministers making some offer that the Committee should not go into the question of the judicial administration of the Act; but if that offer were intended to have had any binding effect, it should have been made in the form of an Instruction by the House of Lords to their Committee. The truth, however, was that the Committee was appointed mainly with the object of showing that the Sub-Commissioners had misconducted themselves in the discharge of their judicial duties, and had acted as partizans rather than as Judges, and this offer to limit the scope of the inquiry was a mere after-thought. He believed that the result would show that the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners had not been so much in favour of the tenants, and so much opposed to the interests of the landlords, as hon. Gentlemen opposite supposed. The Land Act was in less danger from hon. Gentlemen from Ireland than it was from the hostility of the Conservative Party. It was a striking fact that the Act was attacked with equal virulence by the Representatives of the landlords and the apostles of the Land League. They had been told that this Resolution was a Vote of Censure, and a direct attack on the prerogatives of the House of Lords. But, he would ask, was not the action of the other House in bringing that matter forward an attack on the Administration? Nay, more; was it not so intended? The Sub-Commissioners were only at the threshold of their inquiry, and yet a Committee was to sit to inquire into the way these functionaries discharged their duties, on the suggestion that they had acted, not as Judges, but as partizans. The tribunal before whom the action of those officials was to be called in question was composed of landlords, some of whom were Irish landlords. What must be the effect on the minds of the people of Ireland if that were allowed to pass unchallenged, and if some such Resolution as the one under discussion were not come to, declaring, in unmistakable terms, the opinion of the majority of that House that such a proceeding was dangerous to the public welfare, and tended to hamper the action of the Government in the administration of Ireland under the present difficult circumstances? The hon. Member for Leitrim (Mr. Tottenham) had stated that if a re-valuation were made the rateable value of property in Ireland would be found to have increased by £4,000,000 sterling. But what had brought about that augmentation in value? Was it due to the action of the landlords or of the tenants? If the allegation of the hon. Member were true, there could be little doubt that that effect had been produced by tenants' improvements. If that were so, what was the value of the suggestion? The hon. Member had also taken exception to the Sub-Commissioners. He seemed to think that no persons other than landlords were eligible for those offices. He would be pleased with nothing else than the Committee of Inquiry which was then sitting, and the appointment of which they were then criticizing. It appeared to him that the hon. Member for Leitrim went to the very confines of the propriety, not to say the decency, of debate, when he described those functionaries by such words as he had heard him use. He said the appointments were "parodies of justice;" that the Sub-Commissioners were a "medley crew," "a horde of inexperienced persons;" and he accused them of having been guilty of "malversation of justice," whatever that might mean. His right hon. and learned Friend the senior Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket) had made a great impression on his mind—as, doubtless, on the minds of all who heard him—by the letter which he read from an Irish landowner and J.P. for the county in which he lived, who described himself and his family as brought to such a pass that they contemplated emigrating to Australia. It was a sad and touching letter, and it lost nothing of its pathos from the tones in which it was read by such a master of his art as the right hon. and learned Gentleman. But he ventured to say that such cases ought not to have any effect on the question before the House. He would not dwell upon the fact that the writer of the letter was giving an account of a litigation to which he had been an unsuccessful party. He would not pause to ask whether that litigation alone was the cause of the distress of that family? Whether greater frugality in the past and the adoption of another style of living might not have saved them from their present necessities? Besides, was there not another side to the question? Had there not been numerous cases in which a suffering, striving, and despairing tenantry, forced to pay rents totally incommensurate with their means of subsistence, had been driven to look upon emigration as their only hope? The fact was that such letters had little to do with the question. His right hon. and learned Friend's argument carried him too far. The same line of reasoning would lead to the total suspension of the administration of justice, not only in Ireland, but in every civilized community. It might be a melancholy reflection, but it was none the less true, that law and justice could never be administered without working injury to innocent persons, and entailing hardship and suffering on many who were guiltless of offence. Law and justice were like some of the vast forces of Nature. Once set them in motion, and they marched blindly and irresistibly towards their end, regardless of those whom they mutilated or crushed on their way. You execute justice upon the murderer, regardless of the unspeakable pain and misery you inflict upon his innocent parents or children. You imprison the night-poacher, heedless of the fact that, by the very act, you deprive his wife and children of their pittance of daily bread. You impose a fine upon the husband who has committed an assault upon a gentle and unoffending woman, and you forget that it is her blanket or her shawl that goes to the pawn-shop to pay the penalty. This was a matter that had been tersely and eloquently put by a great writer, who has only just gone from among us, and who says—

> "So deeply is it inherent in this life of ours that men must suffer for each other's sins, so inevitably diffusive is human suffering, that even Justice makes its victims, and we can conceive no retribution that does not spread beyond its mark in pulsations of unmerited pain."

Such appeals as that of his right hon. and learned Friend might affect the sentiment, but would have no influence on the reason. He would add one word as to the time of this inquiry. The Act had been in operation four months. He was not surprised at the course which had been adopted, for before the Act had been in existence four weeks the noble Marquess at the head of the Opposition went starring in the Provinces, speaking in the same breath, if not in the same terms, of the Land Act and the Compensation for Disturbance Bill, which he described as a measure of public plunder, and intimated that there was little to choose between Mr. Parnell and the Prime Minister. That showed the spirit animating the promoters of this inquiry. It was said that the occasion was exceptional; that it was necessary to strike at once, or the evil would become irremediable. What did that mean? It could only mean that an inquiry should be made into the mode in which judicial functions were exercised, or that compensation should be given to the landlords. If the former explanation was correct, it was open to the objection urged by the Government that it was an inquiry into the methods according to which Judges, exercising important functions, were doing their duty; if the latter, he saw no reason for the hasty and intemperate proceedings which had been taken. The Opposition presented a bold front, because they counted on the support of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. No doubt they felt that their Leaders in "another place" had placed them in a serious difficulty, and they were glad of help from any quarter. It was said that misery made men acquainted with strange bedfellows; and it would be a striking and edifying commentary on that text to see the Leader of the Opposition walking into the Lobby arm in arm with the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) and the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar), coyly responding to the ardent, if not very sincere, advances of the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin). When they found the landlords and the Land League advancing shoulder to shoulder, there could be no doubt that their object was to deal a deadly blow at the Land Act. But he would ask, if they took such a course, why they did not do so earlier? Why did not the large majority in "another place" throw out the Bill instead of acquiescing in it, adopting it, and modifying it in some respects to suit their own views? It was obvious why they did not do so then. Certainly, now, they should not be allowed to interfere with the proper and legitimate development of an Act for which they were themselves, in a considerable measure, responsible.

MR. LEWIS said, he desired to express the views of many Members for Ulster, sitting on that side of the House, who held, as he did, that there could be no inconsistency in those who supported the second reading of the Land Bill strenuously resisting the Motion now under discussion. In the first place, he could not help referring to the singular misapprehension of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Butt), as to the mode in which the Motion had been met by the Opposition. Instead of presenting a Motion, for the purpose of attracting the support of hon. Members below the Gangway, with whom they had had no sympathy, the course his right hon. Friend took was to make a Motion which excluded the hope of the support of those hon. Members. Consequently they would go to a division as a united Conservative Party, speaking their deliberate conviction that in supporting the action of the House of Lords they were doing that which was just and wise and necessary in vindication of the first principles of right and wrong. In opening this debate, the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government made the astounding assertion that the whole Province of Ulster would be prepared to go against the Government —and by that he presumed the right hon. Gentleman meant that they would pass into the ranks of disloyal and disorderly men—if there were any tampering with the Land Act. The words of the right hon. Gentleman, which he took down at the time, and had since verified, were—"All the Northern population is ready to go against you if there is any tampering with the Land Act." In carrying out the policy commenced by the Solicitor General at the Derry Election, the estimate formed by Her Majesty's Government concerning the loyal population of Ulster was that their loyalty and order were only to be depended upon if they were bought with sugar-plums. He was astonished that the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson), who considered himself a Leader in Ulster, did not vindicate the loyalty of his Liberal friends, and of Ulster generally. Instead of that, the hon. Gentleman warned the House that if this Resolution were not passed a new agitation would be commenced in Ulster on more extended lines. That was a somewhat mysterious threat, and it was not so outspoken as the statement of the Prime Minister. He (Mr. Lewis) had been for 10 years the Representative of an important, though not an agricultural, constituency, in Ulster; and he maintained it was a libel—at all events on the Protestant population of that Province—to assert that their loyalty depended upon their being bribed. What was the state of this discussion? Was there any interest excited in it within the House? Were not the Benches of the House almost deserted as it proceeded? What was the feeling through the House generally? Was it not that they were engaged in a simple wanton discussion and waste of time, for which there was no need from the beginning, and to which there appeared no likelihood of our reaching an end? The House had been told, in the strongest possible terms, by the Prime Minister, in his most impassioned speech, that this was a great Constitutional question. One House of Parliament—one Estate of the Realm—had set itself up to destroy and to annihilate, or to emasculate, an Act passed only a year ago; and they were told, in the most impassioned terms, that the action of this House would lead either to something like rebellion in Ireland, or to great disorder. They had had so many prophecies from the Treasury Bench during the last two years, every one of which, in reference to law and order, had been falsified by subsequent events, that the Government must pardon them if they were not prepared to be afraid of the evils with which they threatened them, so as to be induced to alter a vote or a speech on the subject. Then, what was the state of feeling in the country? The Birmingham Caucus and Confederation had piped loudly enough; but the country refused to dance. The bell was rung, as usual, by Schnadhorst and Co.; but the British public thought more about the fate of "Jumbo" than about the fate of the Resolution. Anyone who had read the papers during the last fortnight, while the Resolution had been under discussion, would have supposed that the House of Commons was meeting at the Zoological Gardens, and that the great question of the fate of the Constitution was involved in the question whether "Jumbo" was to be shipped on board the *Assyrian Monarch*. Where were the signs of that great public excitement with which they were threatened because the House of Lords had dared to lift up the sword of justice and fair play, for the purpose of protecting the unfortunate landowning class in Ireland? The speeches delivered by hon. Gentlemen opposite had been remarkably contradictory. What was the logic, for example, of his hon. and learned Friend the

Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell)? His logic came to this—that because in England, where there was no competition for land, landowners submitted to reductions, therefore in Ireland, where there was great competition for land, the landlords must submit to still greater reductions; that because English landowners had made large voluntary reductions in their rents, Irish landowners were to be subjected to compulsory reductions; and that because English landowners had power to select and eject their tenants according to their pleasure, and subject to the ordinary processes of law, that power was to be taken away from the Irish landlords, who were compelled to grant a fixed term at a judicial rent. In conclusion, the hon. and learned Member had argued that, because the English farmers had, without any variation for five or six years past, put up with continuously bad harvests, therefore they were to proceed exactly upon the same lines in Ireland, where the last two harvests had been singularly good. His hon. and learned Friend had, in fact, presented to the House a series of paradoxes and illogical conclusions. In introducing this Motion, the Prime Minister's great argument was that the appointment of the Lords' Committee would interfere with the judicial administration of the Land Act. In his opinion, scant courtesy had been shown towards two eminent Members of the Committee. He would mention first, as an unquestioned authority, Lord Penzance, who was a Whig Nobleman, and certainly not an enthusiastic supporter of Conservative principles. His judicial position and character were such as should place him in the very highest ranks of judicial authority; and could it be supposed for one moment that on going upon that Committee as an active Member he would be induced to sanction any undue interference with the judicial administration of the Land Act? Could they suppose for a moment that Lord Cairns would be guilty of any such motive? Sometimes the Prime Minister talked as if interference with the Act might be justifiable at some future date, provided its judicial administration were not questioned. If that were so, the Act could never be inquired into at all, for the judicial administration was a continuous and all-important portion of it. They had all been struck by the quotation the Prime Minister gave the House of Chief Justice Holt's reply to the House of Lords. That quotation appeared to him to be a misfit. Chief Justice Holt was sworn to administer justice. The Government did not think the *status* of the Sub-Commissioners of sufficient importance to administer an oath to them, or even the much-belauded affirmation, so popular on that side of the House. The working out of the Commission was entirely different from that which was represented when the Bill was brought into the House. They were told not that the Sub-Commissioners would go about all over Ireland, like Dick, Tom, or Harry, fixing the rents as between landlord and tenant, but that there would be a first-class Commission, consisting of men whose names would be submitted to this House, sanctioned by this House, and included in the four corners of this Act. It was only when he and others who, by long experience, knew the course which things were likely to take under such an Act, challenged the Government with respect to the appointment of these Sub-Commissioners, that they could finally ascertain what was the course they intended to pursue; and what had been the result? Why, that those Sub-Commissioners were so informally appointed that they were not even put upon their oath as men of honour, or bound to any condition or system whatever in the administration of the grave and important duties they had to perform, but the whole matter was left to them, and the entire landowning classes were left to the mercy of a set of men who had been so well described by the hon. Gentleman. It was said that these Sub-Commissioners were judicial persons; but they were not meant to be judicial persons. In the real Commission they had two lawyers and one layman. It was intended that it should be a judicial body—all its functions, sanctions, and arrangements were to be of a judicial character. But it was totally different with the Sub-Commissions, which had two laymen and one lawyer—gentlemen whom nobody knew, who went up and down the country reducing rents, and acting, not as judicial functionaries, but as mere valuers between landowners and tenantry; and he failed to see anything at all of a judicial character in their proceedings. Now, the next objection that was made was very singular. He was quite certain, when he heard this Resolution propounded, that the suggestion would be made—"Why, you are pulling up the plant to see how it grows;" but if that analogy were complete and accurate it would be an idle, it would be a ridiculous and childish operation to which the House of Lords was putting its hand. But was that so? A plant that was growing was subject to the ordinary laws of nature and progress, unchecked by other than natural causes. Was the Land Act subject to the ordinary act of nature and of law? Why, it was the Act of Parliament which prevented economic laws from taking effect. It prevented people from doing what they liked with their own, which was the ordinary condition of the growth and character of property. Therefore, he denied there was any analogy between the Land Act and the plant that was growing, the true analogy was this—they had a patient in a high state of fever, and the quack doctor thought he had a nostrum which he would propound. The patient did not improve under the treatment, and accordingly they called in some other people to advise. They asked what were the necessities of the case, so that they might ascertain whether, under their treatment, they could improve the patient. That was more like the analogy than that they had heard in the course of this debate—that of pulling up the plant to see if it was growing. So far from the charges brought against the House of Lords being true, he thought there was every ground for such an inquiry as they desired. There was one thing, and one thing only, which might have justified the Land Act, and that was its success. Had it been successful from any point of view? Had it been as successful as was prophesied by hon. Members upon the opposite Benches, who said that within six months they could restore order and peace to Ireland? They knew upon the highest authority—the authority of the Chief Secretary for Ireland himself, who had been visiting the disturbed districts—that things were now far worse than they were believed to be, instead of being far better. What was the condition of affairs? Why, nearly 600 men of all classes and ranks of society were now in Kilmainham and other gaols, placed there, not under the ordinary process of the law, but without trial, and by orders that were necessarily and distinctly given by the Government in order to attempt to restore order and peace. By placing these men in gaol there had been a suspension of ordinary law, in addition to a failure in the protection of life and property in Ireland through the ordinary tribunals. He thought he was not mistaken when he said that February—last month—was more rife in actual murders and most diabolical outrages than any month in the 18 months preceding it. If they looked at the Returns which had been placed on the Table of this House, what was the state of the facts? Taking the whole of last year, there was a larger average of crime of an agrarian character in the latter half of the year than in the first, while the past month of January last was worse than the latter half of last year; so that, instead of the Act having resulted in such general public advantages as might have palliated the condition of the landowners, it in no way approached that end. Now, they were obliged to put up with the lame and inconclusive promise of the Chief Secretary for Ireland that he hoped, within five years, to see the working of this Act result in the restoration of peace and order. He did not know how long they were to have the blessing of a Liberal Government; but if a Liberal Government was to stay in power for five years for the purpose of keeping alive an imbroglio of such a disastrous character in Ireland, all he could say was, that he hoped England and Scotland would find some process for ridding themselves of such a nuisance. But he just now approached the other side of the question—had this Act been a success from a landlord's point of view? He supposed it was not passed merely to please the tenants, for the right hon. Gentleman opposite put it forward as a boon to both. He did not believe the Prime Minister's righteous and just mind would have framed this Act merely in the interest of the tenant. He believed it would answer the purpose of the landowner as well as the occupier. But had it? It was said they were asking this a little too early, and that they had better wait until there had been 5,000 or 10,000 cases decided. But what was the case? Why, there were indications that all over Ireland, in every Province—

aye, in every county—there was an all-pervading reduction of rents approaching between 20 and 30 per cent, although checked in a miserable minority of cases. He would not trouble the House with many cases. He asked permission to cite one instance, in order that the right hon. Gentleman opposite might follow it out if he liked. Of the 13 tenancies on the estate of Mr. M'Neill that were decided on February 18th by the Derry and Donegal Sub-Commissioners, the total aggregate of the rents was £329 12*s.* 5*d.*; and he asked how long did this House think the rents had been paid without alteration, and apparently without objection? Would the House believe that, although these rents had been paid for 66 years without any increase except some miserable sum in the shape of drainage work which had been done by the landlord, they were, under the action of this Sub-Commission, reduced 30 per cent on the evidence of one man? It was easy for right hon. Gentlemen opposite to complain of the landowners of Ireland querulously, as they said, asking Parliament to take their case into consideration; but the possibility of one such case as that was overwhelmingly in their favour, for it was enough to engender distrust of the whole of the action of the Sub-Commissioners. Why, not only the House of Lords, but also the House of Commons should, as a matter of justice, inquire into the circumstances of such a disastrous mode of treating the interests of the people which had so long existed under the law. In the case he had mentioned the Sub-Commissioners, Messrs. Bourke, Davidson, and O'Brien, delivered judgment on February 18, the Chief Commissioner observing in his decision—

> "The rents are all old, and have not been altered for a very considerable number of years, save by a small addition for land drainage. We are always unwilling to disturb old rents, but we have come to the conclusion that the land is too highly rented."

Now, the very considerable number of years mentioned in that judgment, was, as he had said, the long period of 66 years, and yet the rents were all reduced 30 per cent. He would not take up the time of the House by citing others of the many similar and equally instructive cases. He now proceeded to ask whether the Act had been successful from the tenant's own point of view? He had been somewhat startled by the satisfaction with which the Government had announced that, though by the beginning of December there was a great rush of suitors to the Court, and 70,000 originating notices were served, there was now not the same great influx of business. It seemed to him that if no more than 70,000 originating notices had been served, the fact did not speak volumes for the popularity of the Act among the 600,000 tenants of Ireland. His own belief was that the expense and the network of litigation into which both parties were plunged often prevented the beneficial application of the Act. A tenant whose holding represented no more than £5 or £6 a-year would find it scarcely worth while to pay a guinea or two to a lawyer and a further sum to a valuer to get a chance of a reduction of rent by 25 per cent, seeing that his gain would immediately be absorbed by law charges. This was a minor reason for the unpopularity of the Act, and there were, doubtless, other minor reasons which he need not specify; but he wished to mention the two great causes which, in his opinion, combined to render the Act a failure. In the first place, the Act would never succeed unless some liberal provision was made for dealing with the question of arrears. He was perfectly persuaded, looking at it either from a landlord's point of view or a tenant's point of view, that unless that question was dealt with liberally by the Imperial Legislature the long wished for goal of peace and order would not be arrived at. In the second place, the Purchase Clauses of the Act ought not to have been subordinated to the Fixed Rent Clauses. He did not see the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster or the Chief Commissioner of Works in their places opposite; but the present condition of the Irish Land Question probably made them both miserable. Both those right hon. Gentlemen believed that the true panacea for all the evils of Ireland was to promote the purchase of land by the tenant, and to turn the land-occupying into the land-owning classes. But, as things were, how could the tenants take advantage of the Purchase Clauses of the Act; or, rather, why should they do so? They had now been taught a more excellent way, and declined even to commit themselves to a 15 years' tenancy at reduced rents, because they knew that the next time the Government played with agitation there would be more changes, more reductions, and further curtailment of the landlords' power. More than anything else the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, as compared with his utterances in the year 1870, had embittered the feelings with which the Act was regarded by the landed interest in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman must pardon him if he appropriated for the occasion, with a slight alteration, a phrase once used by him in reference to the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), and said that there was nothing essential connected with the Land Question, and denied by him in 1870, that he did not now affirm, and nothing affirmed by him then that he did not now deny. The House, then, had it upon the authority of the right hon. Gentleman that any idea of fixing rents by a Judicial Court was one of the wildest and idlest things that could be suggested; and that was only one of the propositions affirmed in 1870, that had now been opposed and destroyed by the right hon. Gentleman's present actions, language, and principles. But, however that might be, it was more important to inquire whether there were not fair grounds for an investigation into the working of the Act—as, for instance, whether or not it was operating justly with regard to the owners of land. For himself, he held that this class was not receiving justice, either from the Sub-Commissioners or from their Chiefs. The first act of the Head Commissioners, before they were sworn, was to compose a Circular, not addressed to both parties of the litigants, but published as a manifesto to draw the tenants into Court as the persons to be supported against the landlords. Whenever the halo of the sacredness of their functions was flung round the Commissioners he asked himself whether that act was consistent with the conduct of a judicial body. The next distinction earned by the Commissioners was due to the dictum of their Chief, that in estimating a fair rent they had to consider whether the tenant could live and thrive upon his holding at the rent he was paying. Was any such principle ever before enunciated in any Court or Chamber of either Law or Commerce? What, for example, would be the effect of a doctrine that would raise or lower the price of a commodity according to the number of the purchaser's family, or the frugality or profligacy of his private life? That was just the effect of the speech, he might say the peal of bells, which the Chief Commissioner thought proper to ring when he entered the Land Court. Really, it looked as if the landlord was to suffer for the number of wants of the children of the tenant as if they were his own. It might next be asked whether the Irish landed interest had been fairly treated in the appointment of the Sub-Commissioners. He ventured to say that never before in the whole range of legal, social, or commercial arbitrations had men been appointed with so little regard to the representation of the different interests concerned. Not the slightest effort had been made on the part of the Government to secure the services of any impartial body of men who might be said to represent the interests of both classes, to say nothing of the absolute absence of all who might be supposed to be favourably inclined towards the landlords. There was another point upon which inquiry should be made. What was the unhappy condition of the landlords of Ireland, great and small, who had to meet the fixed charges on their rent rolls, notwithstanding those rent rolls were reduced? It was impossible to keep up that glorious indifference assumed by hon. Gentlemen opposite to the suffering and distress which the landlords had to go through in consequence of recent and deplorable events. The Legislature was bound to provide some mode of redress, even though it should be by what hon. Gentlemen opposite might consider the odious means of compensation. The landlords had, many of them, fixed rents, with upwards of 60 years' title; yet, now, with one-third of those rents taken away, with still the same charges to pay, they found themselves in a helpless condition in having to meet charges which could not be reduced, but which were created with reference to the old rental. The Ministry might harden their hearts against such a state of things; but when the landlords were seen to fall, one after another, into a condition of abject misery and poverty, they might rest assured that the English and Scotch people would at last be aroused to feel that a state of things existed which demanded the sympathy of the Legislature. Then, there was another matter, upon which inquiry was absolutely essential, and that was the efficiency of the Land Court. The Attorney General for Ireland had stated that two or three years would suffice to settle all the claims; but he had not taken into account the numerous appeals that the landlords would feel bound to make in the hope of escaping annihilation. No information had been given as to how the block in the Courts was to be stopped. The Government, like the ostrich, had, as regarded the Chief Commissioners, thought proper to place their heads in the sand, and imagined there was no obstruction in the way. The delay in getting cases tried by the Chief Commissioners was one of the gravest questions, and which the Attorney General for Ireland did not touch. But, even as regarded the Sub-Commissioners, there were 5,000 cases awaiting trial in one county alone, which, as the junior Member for Tyrone had pointed out, could not possibly be disposed of under some years. Therefore, that was a question which demanded inquiry. Then there was the utter failure of the Arrears Clauses. Could anybody who knew anything of the matter help being struck by the unworkable clause by which the landlord had to forgive the tenant one half the rent, and become debtor to the Government for the other half? It was said that the intention was to assist both the tenant and the landlord; but, as a matter of fact, the tenant remained under the old conditions, and the landlord did not get his money. Moreover, the Purchase Clauses had proved a grievous failure. Even if the Act were a success, which it was not, the present tenants would alone receive any benefit; the next race of tenants would be in a much worse condition. In Ulster, so enormous in many instances had become the value of tenant right, that that right, instead of being a blessing, had become a curse. If a man wanted to put his son into a farm of 20 or 30 acres, the price demanded was so high that he had to borrow the money at an exorbitant rate of interest, and lead a miserable existence under the thumb of the village money-lender. What would be the effect of lowering the rents in Ulster? The result would be that the difficulty of buying farms at a moderate rate would become gradually greater, the number of money-pressed destitute tenants would increase, and a state of things would be produced which would require another Land Bill. This was a point which had never yet been answered. He had intended to make his concluding observations during the debate on the Address, but had been prevented from doing so until the present moment. In order to afford the Solicitor General for Ireland, who had already spoken, a fair opportunity of answering his remarks, and not place the hon. and learned Gentleman at a disadvantage, he would move the adjournment of the House. During the course of the debate on the Bill last year, he was afraid the very distinguished Gentleman who then filled the office of Attorney General for Ireland must have thought him very pertinacious on one point—the appointment of the Sub-Commissioners. To use a common phrase, he thought he "smelt a rat." He thought it was the intention of the Government to do what it had since done. Although they had told the House that it was a high judicial office, they had broken the Constitution by getting the people to do the work either by the job or the day. He was told by the present Lord Chancellor of Ireland that it was not intended to do anything of the sort; but, pressing the question further, he extracted from him the confession that it might be necessary to appoint Sub-Commissioners for a short period, but that the usual appointment would be for seven years. What was the fact? Twelve had been appointed for seven years, and 24 for one year, and were going about the country endeavouring to earn and maintain their character with the Government, which they could not do unless they earned and maintained their character with the tenants by reducing rents. He was not prepared to admit that these were judicial appointments; but on the assumption that they were, was there ever anything so foreign to the spirit of the Constitution as to appoint men who had to administer justice between man and man for short periods, leaving the appointment renewable under the auspices of the Government of the day? The consequence was seen in what happened at the Derry Election, and in the return of the Solicitor General for Ireland. The election was on the 6th of December, and, being an elector, he received a circular dated the 22nd of November from the Solicitor General's Committee Room, signed by R. H. Todd, agent, informing him where his polling station was, and adding, in large letters—

> "Mr. Gladstone, in the present circumstances, asks you to return his Solicitor General for Ireland, among other reasons, as a mark of your approval of the Land Act."

On a fly-sheet it was stated that the Land Act had given reductions of rent, and the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners—who, however, had not begun their "angel visits" to the county of Derry at that time. But, as a specimen of what might be expected from them, examples were given of reductions from £19 2*s*. 6*d*. to £9 11*s*. 3*d*., from £15 to £6 5*s*., and from £4 10*s*. to £1. There might have been no harm in pointing out that the Act had operated beneficially in cases judicially decided; but the matter did not end there. The county was saturated with handbills, copies of which he produced. These proclaimed—"What Gladstone's Land Act has done for the farmer. Rents reduced nearly 40 per cent." The statements were addressed to the tenant farmers, whose loyalty, they were told, was not to be depended upon if the Land Act were tampered with, whose loyalty was consistent only with the proceedings of the Sub-Commissioners being unchecked. These were the tenant farmers of Ulster who were appealed to by the Solicitor General for Ireland, who had talked about the greed excited by the Land Act. The virus of the whole thing in the placards was the question, "What will Porter do?" The answer was, "Preserve the Land Act; maintain Gladstone's fair rents." But it did not end there. Hon. Members were familiar with the instructions to benighted voters, as to the filling up of voting papers, that were sent out before the polling day. Now, he was speaking the truth strictly, as he had done in everything he had narrated, when he stated that just before the poll a circular was sent to the electors which contained these words—

> "Vote for Porter; preserve the Land Act; maintain the present fair and honest Commissioners, and seure fair rents."

In other words, like a political "House that Jack built," they were to vote for Porter, who would keep in the Government, who would keep in the Commissioners, who would reduce the rents. Why were certain men in Canterbury Gaol? At the time these circulars were being issued wholesale to the electors of Derry, men were crossing the streets of London handcuffed on their way to Canterbury Gaol for petty acts of bribery. What respect could the receivers of such circulars have for bribery laws, or the proposal of the Attorney General formulated last Session in reference to corrupt practices? Was there not in this mode of treating the Land Act a pandering to the greed and avarice of the constituency? Was this not conduct of a far worse character than any that had been heard of before the Bribery Commissioners? But the matter did not end there, for, immediately after the election, three of the prominent supporters of the hon. and learned Gentleman were appointed Sub-Commissioners. He charged the Government with having appointed these three gentlemen, who had gone about intreating the electors to vote for a Member of the Government on the ground that it would keep the Sub-Commissioners in power, and that they would reduce the rents. He asked, in face of the House and country, if it could be expected that the Land Act would go down to history as an Act justly and righteously administered towards the landlords, after these occurrences? One of the gentlemen appointed was a Mr. Morrison, a legitimate representative of the farming class, and no doubt a very proper man to appoint, if there had also been representatives of the landlord class. But it seemed to be forgotten that the landlord had rights. It was thought that every sort of obloquy and distress should be thrown upon him. Mr. Morrison was a prominent supporter of the hon. and learned Member. Another was Mr. Weir, an inhabitant of the adjoining county of Tyrone, who "coached" the Solicitor General for Ireland, and went about with him as one of his prominent supporters. Then there was Mr. John Cunningham, of Foyle Street, Derry, a constituent of his own, whose history he knew. Twelve or 15 years ago Mr. Cunningham was a clerk to a wine merchant; now he was a meal and corn merchant in the middle of the city of Derry. All that he had to do with agriculture was that he had a mill some eight miles off, with a small quantity of land attached to it; and his chief distinction—and no doubt it was his chief qualification in the eyes of the Government—was that he was a leading Liberal and a prominent supporter of the hon. and learned Member. When a Liberal Law Officer went down to an Irish county constituency, there was no end to the benefits, large and small, which he conferred on his political supporters. Even the Londonderry Lunatic Asylum did not escape the handling of the Solicitor General. And although there was only room for 10 people in the Board Room and there were 25 Governors, he appointed 11 more at a stroke, and all of them his own supporters. That was the political use made of the Land Act, into which it might legitimately answer the purpose of that House or the House of Lords to make close and scrutinizing inquiry. He could not help thinking that the conduct of the hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland, which he had now placed before the House upon facts, figures, and documents, had been entirely misconceived by the hon. and learned Gentleman himself when he suggested, upon a previous occasion, that he supposed he was charged with saying that he would influence the Sub-Commissioners. Nobody had suggested that. Unfortunately, he did what was ten times worse—he influenced the constituency, and influenced wholesale, under circumstances compared with which the famous "rabbit case" of which they had all heard so much was perfect purity. The Solicitor General for Ireland had acted as a kind of political Cheap Jack, putting up the interests of the landowning class to a Dutch auction. Now, what were the real objects of the Motion before the House? As to anybody caring for it outside of the House, they could all judge by the state of public feeling. The Prime Minister, no doubt, thought he could by that Motion charm back the allegiance of hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on that (the Opposition) side. The right hon. Gentleman lately threw out a bait to that quarter in the shape of a Home Rule speech, and this Motion was thought a fitting supplement for obtaining their votes. He did not, however, believe that the device would succeed. But another object which prompted the action of the right hon. Gentleman had been answered. The Ministerial Benches had become disorganized. There had been great discontent in the Liberal ranks. Wild shieks of liberty had been heard. The Government had been defeated in the hapless controversy on the Bradlaugh question; and it was necessary to summon their shattered forces to Downing Street. The Liberal Party could now congratulate one another on their wonderful union—such as had not been seen for years—in that attack on the House of Lords. One of the right hon. Gentleman's chief objects apparently was to "Feed fat the ancient grudge," which he had long borne towards the House of Peers, and to excite the people against it as an Estate of the Realm. If the latter had been the right hon. Gentleman's object, he thought it had signally failed. At one time the right hon. Gentleman had evoked the Prerogative of the Crown to punish the House of Lords for the exercise of its Constitutional rights in regard to the measure on Purchase in the Army; and now he invoked the House of Commons to punish the House of Lords because they dared to say they did not believe in his land legislation, and wished to know a little about its effect. Whatever might be the exact figures of the impending division, they might feel assured that the country understood who were its real friends and the value of the House of Lords. When he heard the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the other night, it reminded him very forcibly of what he had often experienced in a passing Atlantic storm—it was so fierce, so grand, so violent, and so short for the right hon. Gentleman—it was so innocuous, and it passed away without leaving a trace behind. The House of Lords had, however, weathered that storm like a well-built well-found ship; and notwithstanding all the opprobrium sought to be cast on the House of Lords for their conduct in reference to a question of such transcendent importance, and that the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues said they would be no party to the investigation instituted by the other House, and would not assist in its fair prosecution, the result of the inquiry, one-sided though they might call it—and, if it was so, it was the Government's own fault—would prove that there were great evils to be remedied, great mistakes requiring to be corrected, and that, in pursuing the course it had done, the House of Lords had been following the path of righteousness, good sense, and justice. He now begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Lewis.*)

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has moved the adjournment of the House for the avowed purpose of enabling a Member of the House who has already addressed the House to speak a second time, in contravention of the order of our debate. I wish to point out to the House that such a practice, if often pursued, would lead to very great inconvenience.

MR. LEWIS: I beg to withdraw my Motion.

MR. SPEAKER: I would submit to the hon. Member and the House, that the more regular and proper course would be for the House to extend its indulgence to the hon. and learned Gentlemen.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER) said, he had to thank Mr. Speaker and the House for affording him an opportunity, which he trusted he should not abuse, of saying a few words of personal explanation on matters which had been brought forward by the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Lewis). It was quite true that the hon. Member had on the 6th of last month informed him that he intended to draw attention to some matters connected with his personal conduct; and he was glad to find that the hon. Member's voice had sufficiently recovered to enable him to formulate his charges against him after he had twice addressed the House. He had to thank the hon. Member for welcoming him to the House, although the hon. Member evidently considered that a more appropriate place could be found for him in Canterbury Gaol. Now, he did not mean to repeat what he had already said in the House, nor to go again over his speeches at Londonderry. As to the election placards, as a matter of fact, he had had nothing whatever to do with their preparation, nor had he ever seen them until they appeared on the walls. But, of course, he was responsible for them, and he had never endeavoured to repudiate that responsibility. But there was an opportunity on which his responsibility could or ought to have been tested. He was accused of conduct which was said to be worse than that of giving voters the power of freely shooting rabbits. His crime was that he had pointed out to the inhabitants of a county in which the Land Act was untried the benefits which it was capable of conferring if properly administered. If there was any analogy between the two cases, of course the hon. Member would have the advantage of it. But the charge that was made against him was a matter far more grave than that he had influenced the Commissioners, and he said that if the charge that he had bribed the constituency had any foundation, it ought to have been brought before that tribunal, where it could alone have been properly inquired into. It had been openly stated, on behalf of his Conservative opponent, whose only complaint against the Land Act was that it did not go far enough, that he would petition against the return in order to have that matter raised. And that not having been done, and the Party to which the hon. Gentleman belonged having deliberately abandoned that to which they had been challenged, it was not fair to bring that matter forward now. There was one other matter —with reference to the appointment of three of the Sub-Commissioners who, the hon. Gentleman said, were prominent supporters of his in the county of Londonderry, and were appointed in consequence. The hon. Gentleman prefaced that allegation by saying that he was "now going to state the exact truth." The hon. Member said that Mr. Morrison was a perfectly competent man. Well, he had nothing to do with the appointment—it rested with others—although he believed it was a good one. But this he could say, that until he attended a meeting of his supporters in a remote country town, he had never seen or heard of Mr. Morrison, and from that day he had never laid eyes upon him. He never knew that Mr. Morrison had any political position in the county. He had since been informed that Mr. Morrison was not a prominent politician, and that he had no commanding influence in the county; but, at all events, he had nothing to do with Mr. Morrison's appointment, good, bad, or indifferent. Then as to Mr. Weir, that gentleman was not a voter of the county —was never upon his committee, never "coached" him on any occasion; and all he knew of Mr. Weir was that he believed him to be one of the best qualified persons appointed as Sub-Commissioners. With Mr. Weir's appointment he had something to do, and it was this. In the summer, he believed it was in August last, before any vacancy occurred in Londonderry, and long before he had the slightest notion of ever being Solicitor General for Ireland, or contesting any constituency, Mr. Weir, who was known to him, called upon him and asked him for his testimony as to his fitness for the office of Sub-Commissioner. He gave him that recommendation, and, except that, he never had anything to do with his appointment. Mr. Cunningham had been spoken of as having a place in Londonderry. Until the hon. Member (Mr. Lewis) mentioned that fact, he was not aware of it; but he did not know that Mr. Cunningham was not a voter, nor was he a member of his committee. Mr. Cunningham was not a supporter of his, so far as he was aware, in any shape or form, and he knew nothing of that gentleman's appointment until it was completed. These were the real facts, and all the facts, and he left them to the House.

SIR PATRICK O'BRIEN said, it was a source of deep regret to him that, in the present sad and critical condition of Ireland, when the Houses had under consideration a Resolution referring to that condition, this debate should have been turned into a miserable squabble by the hon. Gentleman opposite, because his mind might have been affected by the success of a political opponent. That hon. Gentleman was an Irish Member, but he rejoiced to say that he was not an Irish-born Member. The hon. Member spoke of the peculiar loyalty of the North of Ireland as if the name of Orr was unknown in Ulster, and as if the hon. Member never knew that the Irishmen who nearly a century ago almost revolutionized that country were principally composed of those loyal gentlemen to whom the hon. Gentleman in his ignorance referred. A London solicitor, accustomed to questions, and to quarrelling and fighting, was doubtless the proper person to put up to make a Party speech. But the subject now before the House was one which ought not to be made a question of Party. The question they had to consider was not one of controversy between the Whig and Tory Benches, but how to bring back to a state of repose a country which they all knew to sadly need it. He ventured to intrude in the debate because hon. Members opposite had given him notice to quit. That he did not object to; but they had used a term to which he did object, inasmuch as they had described him and other hon. Gentlemen who acted with him as being discredited. He repelled that observation, and would repeat what he had often said, that since the time that he first entered the House, when the name of Sharman Crawford was on every lip, down to the present, he had always been an advocate of the claims of the tenants. They had been successful in carrying a measure which he still believed would be of the greatest advantage to the country; and the Resolution of the right hon. Gentleman he regarded, not as an attack upon the House of Lords, but as the necessary defence of an Act they had spent so much time last Session in endeavouring to pass. The hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), in the able speech he made in that debate, had been guilty of the common error of rash generalization. He had almost entirely confined his observations as to the failure of the Act to counties like Galway, Mayo, and Donegal, excluding other counties where its good action was undeniable. When the "Undertakers" commenced this agitation they selected Mayo as their best ground, well knowing that the smallness of the farms, coupled with the arid nature of the soil, would incapacitate any unassisted tenant from living by the land, if he even held it for nothing. But there were other parts of Ireland which even the hon. Member for Sligo had not denied would be benefited by this Act if it were fairly administered. Neither the hon. Member for Sligo, nor the Gentlemen around him—who talked so much that one would think their brains were in their throats—had stated whether their object was to promote the "no rent" manifesto. He would like to be informed whether hon. Gentlemen opposite were recusants to the manifesto, or was it to be an open question? If rumour was to believed, there was not that unity among hon. Gentlemen opposite which once they boasted of, for it was said that at the meeting the other day, at which they mustered only "a baker's dozen," when they were to decide on the course to be adopted, even that small number was divided, he believed—as eight to five. He should not be justified in making those remarks had not his motives, and those of some hon. Gentlemen near him, been misrepresented by those men who, out of the House, in America, and in Paris, described themselves as "the great Irish Party." The hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond) asked why were the number of ejectments increasing in Ireland? His answer was because of the "no rent" manifesto. Let hon. Members opposite abuse the Act, and call it an imposture and a sham; yet he (Sir Patrick O'Brien) insisted that no man 10 years past, no matter of what opinion, could have dreamt of such a beneficent measure ever becoming law. The hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) was almost the last man he would have expected to have seen in league with hon. Gentlemen opposite. The hon. Member reminded him of the lady in *Nicholas Nickleby*, who was "so kitteny playful, and yet so sewerely wirtuous." But, unless he was blind, he had seen a letter which Mr. Egan once wrote, not very complimentary to the hon. Gentleman. Would the hon. Gentleman inform the House was he the Leader of the Irish Party? The hon. Member for Londonderry had said there was no excitement in Ireland in regard to that Committee. He could understand there was no excitement in Ireland amongst those who were under the tutelage of the Land League, because the Lords' Committee was doing sound Land League work in that transaction. They were doing what hon. Gentlemen opposite were endeavouring to do —namely, destroying all confidence in the Land Act, which had amalgamated within it that doctrine for which the people of Ireland were so long crying out —namely, the "three F's." The only hon. Member who had the courage to defend the "no rent" manifesto in that House was the right hon. Gentleman the Lord Mayor of Dublin, and he did so on high theological grounds, taken from the Fathers of the Church. No doubt, the right hon. Gentleman had authority to speak dogmatically of the opinions of the ancient Fathers—Tertullian, Chrysostom, St. Bernard, and others—and had opportunities of instruction in abstruse theology from high sources not open to humble individuals like himself. For his part, wanting the Lord Mayor of Dublin's special knowledge, he was content to accept the instruction which his Church taught him was inspired—"To give unto Cæsar the things which were Cæsar's, and to God the things which were God's." But hon. Members opposite opposed the Act because, forsooth, landlordism must be destroyed! Was Ireland its only refuge? What about France, where one-third of the land was subject to rent? What about America? Were there no Junkers in Prussia? Was Lord Clare, was Lord Dillon, was Sarsfield, Earl of Lucan, a landlord? Was the Lord Charlemont of "82"? These were names often in the mouths of hon. Gentleman opposite. When they boasted, too, of American sympathy, had they likewise made allusion to the law in the United States? Had they forgotten the terrible manner in which an Irish riot in New York some years ago was suppressed? He could not then hear the screams of the Irish National Press against what, if it had occurred in Ireland, they would have assailed as a butchery. Hon. Gentlemen opposite also talked of America as if it were a sort of Irish nation, forgetting that the Germans outnumbered the Irish in the Union, and that the very Yankee accent was imported into Massachusetts by Winthrop, its first Governor, and the Suffolk men who accompanied him. He was there to give his unqualified condemnation of the dishonest manifesto, and he thought the Irish people were entitled to learn, by their declarations in that House, how many men representing Irish constituencies supported that manifesto. [Mr. HEALY: If you allude to me, I do.] He (Sir Patrick O'Brien) never meant to allude to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wexford, because that hon. Member always advanced unblushingly and openly any opinion he entertained. He did not share the opinion of the hon. Member for Wexford; and had he alluded to him, and had it been necessary to say so, he would have done so fearlessly. He was speaking of those who were opposed to robbery of that description, who said they did not want the feeling and opinion of the country demoralized, and who said they were not prepared, for the sake of a political advantage, to pull the country that sent them to the House through the mire, and not of the hon. Gentleman. Let those hon. Gentlemen say what they thought about the "no rent" manifesto. He and others had been told they would be excluded from seats in that House. If they should be excluded, they would feel that they had performed their promises to their constituents; and he, for one, would decline to sacrifice his opinions, even for the sake of a seat in that House. Hon. Members who spoke about their exclusion must know that they would die with "harness on their backs." For the last 30 years he had been hearing periodically about his "last Session." Yet he was slow to believe; and it was a question which would have to be determined, and which he meant to try, whether the people for whom the Land Act had been passed, and the benefits of which would become apparent to all before the next General Election, would prefer to live under its advantages, or under the rule of "Captain Moonlight." Amongst all those who acted with him there was the common feeling—that if they could not command success, they would do all they could to deserve it.

MR. M'COAN said, he would endeavour to respond to the challenge of the hon. Baronet in reference to the "no rent" manifesto. It had been very fairly made, and he hoped every man near him would have the courage to declare his opinions in reply to it. He should have been content to have given a silent vote on that occasion had it not been for some of the speeches which had been made from the Benches behind him. Recognizing the right of those who had made them to hold extreme opinions, and to express them freely, he claimed for himself a similar right to hold and to express opinions which were not extreme. He understood the narrow issue now before the House was whether the beneficent operation of the Land Act —for he regarded it as beneficent—was to be paralyzed and discredited by virtually pulling that measure up by the roots to see how it was growing; for that would certainly be the effect of the action of the Lords in this matter. Not only was he opposed to inquiry by the Committee of the House of Lords, but he equally objected to any inquiry that might be conducted in the spirit of the speech of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). He thought it would be not only premature, but absolutely mischievous. The Land Act had only been a few months in operation, and its trial was not complete, and had not been exactly fair. That the Act had many deficits was recognized by probably three-fourths of the Members of that House. Certainly, the Lease Clauses had proved disappointing; the Arrears Clauses had also proved a failure; and the Purchase Clauses had met with, practically, no success. But it needed no inquiry to demonstrate all this, either from the tenant's or the landlord's point of view. At the proper time, he should have no objection to support any amending legislation; but he should certainly oppose any attempt, from whatever quarter, to tamper with the Statute at the present moment. He entirely shared the hon. Baronet's opinion with regard to the "no rent" manifesto. He had for some months been a member of the Land League. When the Dublin State Trials came on, he joined it to show his sympathy with the traversers, whom he believed to be the objects of an attack by Government prosecution of which he did not approve; and during his membership of the association, he had endeavoured to advance what he believed to be its legitimate objects. But when it developed new methods of operation, and disclosed new aims with which he had no sympathy, he lost no time in dissociating himself from it. On the very day following the issue of the "no rent" manifesto he severed his connection with the body, as he regarded the issue of the manifesto, not only as a grave moral offence, calculated to demoralize the whole Irish tenantry, but as, even from the lowest ground of policy, a suicidal blunder. That manifesto had immensely discredited the Party who issued it, and had alienated from them the sympathies of all honest land reformers, without, in return, giving them the support of the classes who were now dishonestly profiting by it. His own political creed as regarded Irish Land Reform was comprised in the "three F.'s;" and, in his opinion, this Act not only gave the Irish people the "three F.'s," but a good deal more—in fact, it had effected nothing short of a beneficent revolution. On the subject of coercion, he wished to say that when the Acts of last Session were passing through that

House, he had honestly done his best to obstruct and oppose them as being unnecessary, and not likely to prove successful in pacifying Ireland, and everything that had occurred since had abundantly justified that view. In spite of all the honesty and good intentions of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, the endeavour to administer those Acts had resulted in immense injustice, and therefore he should be glad to see their application very greatly restricted. He personally knew of several such cases in the County Wicklow, and he felt certain that hon. Gentlemen around him knew of many more. He would rejoice if it were possible to so reduce its application, or, better still, to grant a complete amnesty to the prisoners. The pacifying effects of such a measure would be very great throughout Ireland. He thought he could state the solution of the whole Irish difficulty in a few words. It lay, he believed, in two things—the immediate remedy, or the abandonment of a coercive policy; and the agrarian remedy, or the extended operation of the Land Act, especially in the direction of abolishing landlords altogether and making the farmers the owners of the soil. Nothing short of this would solve the difficulty. But with this, and the political concessions of which some foreshadowings had been given by the Prime Minister, he had strong hope of the reconciliation of England and Ireland, and that a happy *modus vivendi* might be established between the two countries. But without some such radical remedies as these, it would be hopeless to expect loyal contentment on the part of the Irish people, or to escape from Irish obstruction in that House.

Mr. LEAMY said, it had been attempted to show, by speeches on both sides of the House, that in opposing the Motion of the Prime Minister the Irish Members were supporting the Committee of Inquiry instituted by the House of Lords; and in order to justify that conclusion they had been told that the Motion of the Prime Minister, though declaring against any Parliamentary inquiry into the working of the Land Act, was solely directed against the inquiry instituted by the House of Lords. But they felt that if they were to support the Motion of the Prime Minister, or if they did not distinctly vote against it, they would commit themselves to the proposition that inquiry of any kind would defeat the operation of the Act. He did not believe that any inquiry, whether conducted by the House of Lords or by a Committee of this House, could really interfere with the operation of the Act at all. A great deal had been said by the hon. Members for Ulster about the serious effect which would be produced upon the popular mind in Ireland if this Committee of the Lords was agreed to without a Vote of Censure, for that was practically what the Prime Minister's Motion amounted to. But for the last two months there had been serious and growing dissatisfaction in Ireland, not only amongst the landlords, who were seeking this inquiry, but amongst the tenants, respecting the administration of the Land Act. The hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. Dickson) had told them that if the working of the Act had failed—and he seemed to think if this Committee were allowed to go forth one of the results would be the failure of the Act—the tenant farmers of Ulster were ready to begin the agitation again with increased vigour and upon very advanced lines. His answer was that all this had already happened. The farmers of Ulster had not only begun a fresh agitation, but were carrying it forward on advanced lines. At a meeting of farmers recently held a resolution was passed condemning the Sub-Commissioners and affirming that a rent equal to half of Griffith's valuation was quite enough for the tenant farmers of the North of Ireland to pay. His hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had been represented by the hon. Member for Tyrone to have been in favour of an inquiry to be conducted in "another place." His hon. Friend said nothing of the kind. He had said that some inquiry was necessary—that the Act had failed—and that it would be impossible even for noble Lords to shut out entirely evidence in favour of the tenants. His hon. Friend thought that even such an inquiry was better than none at all. It was said that an inquiry by a Committee of the House of Lords would be hostile to the interests of tenants. He did not deny that that was its object; but he thought it would be impossible for the Committee of the House of Lords to shut out from their inquiry evidence that would be of material advantage to the hon. Members from Ireland, who believed this

Act needed improvement and extensive amendment. The position they took up was this—the Prime Minister wished them to believe it would defeat the working of the Act; but they believed inquiry was necessary, and would be most advantageous to the people of Ireland. The hon. and learned Solicitor General for Ireland had said there was no precedent for such an inquiry. But neither was there a precedent for the Land Act, which really introduced a brand new land system into the country. He did not say there was not the amplest justification for such a change—indeed, the change did not go far enough. They were told that the enactment of the measure could only be justified by imperative necessity; and, if that were so, how could it be argued that an inquiry into its operation and effects should not take place at the earliest possible moment? Perhaps the strongest proof that some inquiry was necessary lay in the fact that proposals to amend the Act had come, not only from hon. Gentlemen sitting on that side of the House, but from some of the stoutest supporters of Her Majesty's Government. Hon. Members from the North of Ireland and hon. Members on his side of the House intended to bring in a Bill to amend the Act; but they might be told that it was premature to attempt to amend it until it had been in operation for a sufficiently long time to enable them to judge of its working. It was admitted that the Act had failed in some respects. That was allowed by the hon. and learned Member for Dundalk (Mr. Charles Russell), who said that the Act had failed in respect of the Arrears Clause. It had failed, too, in the Leases Clause, and in the clause dealing with agricultural labourers. The hon. and learned Member for Dundalk said, "We know all this; we do not want an inquiry into it." But there was no evidence that the Government recognized these truths. If the Government gave them any assurance that they intended to legislate without any inquiry, and that inquiry was unnecessary, as they knew the defects and shortcomings of the Act, of course they would not think it necessary any longer to contend that an inquiry was necessary; but, unfortunately, they did not hear anything of this kind from the Government. It was said that the Act had been received with great satisfaction by the Irish people. The fact was the only people who were satisfied with the Act were those who had personally benefited by its operation. But the people who had made the Act possible—the vast majority of the tenants—were left out in the cold, because there had been no adequate provision for cases of arrears. The hon. and learned Member for Dundalk had truly said that, notwithstanding the Land Act, the work of extermination was going on in Ireland. Surely there could be no stronger argument in favour of the view that some inquiry into the operation of the Act was necessary and would be advantageous. They believed that the defects in the Land Act were so serious, that the miseries brought about by the facilities which the landlords still had for oppressing and evicting the tenants were so numerous, that they could not stave off inquiry if they were to have peace in Ireland. But they could not in a month hence put a Motion on the Table for an inquiry into the Act if they declared themselves in favour of the Prime Minister's Motion. As the Prime Minister's had chosen to make his Motion in general terms, and as they thought an inquiry was necessary to develop a feeling which would lead the House to approach the work of amending the Act, they considered it their duty to vote against the proposition of the Government, but they did not intend to vote on the Previous Question.

Mr. A. MOORE said, the chief burden of the charge they heard from the other side of the House was that, to use the words of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), the operation of this Act was "partial and feeble to a singular degree." But why was it so? The reason why the Act was not now in rapid operation throughout the country, so far as his experience went, was this — it was suppressed by terrorism. There was no other word for it. There was an organized—and lavishly subsidized by foreign money—system of terrorism throughout the country. It was not the work of the people at large—it was an organized system of ruffianism and assassination. When the hon. Member spoke of the Act as "partial and feeble," did he forget the "no rent" manifesto? While this agitation was going on, that manifesto was posted throughout the county of Tipperary, and one of his constituents had forwarded him a copy of that document. He said—

"I have pleasure in sending you a copy of the document which troubles you so much. During the last week I have sent 100 copies to your tenants in Tipperary. Your speech in the House will not be forgotten."

The real gist of this document was—"Do not pay rent, and avoid the Land Courts." It had been argued that the document merely meant a postponement of the payment of rent. In reality it meant nothing of the kind. He might observe that it was signed—"By order; Patrick Egan, treasurer." This was the reason why the Land Act was not working throughout large districts in Ireland. Then they were told a great deal about the increase in the number of evictions. Who had caused the evictions? What were those orders that had come out? Was it not that no rent should be paid till the landlord had been forced to the greatest degree of inconvenience—that the costs would not be paid if the tenant paid his rent one hour before the sheriff came to his door? And many of the tenants who had paid their costs had been left in the lurch, and would not get their costs at all. Why, in many districts people were more terrified at the approach of the officers of the Land League than of the officers of the law. This was the reason why the Act was not working. There were some obstacles to it, and to which he would call the attention of the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, though he was afraid he would not have a very sympathetic hearer in him. He did not wish to argue the question of compensation; but he called the attention of the Government to the fact that there was an idea that compensation would be given, but not to those whose rents had been compulsorily lowered in Court. The consequence was that many were holding back because they feared they would lose all title to compensation if they entered into arrangements with their tenants. It would be for the Government to take notice of that point. In his opinion, the Act would work in spite of all the opposition it had met with. As to the labourers, they had been, he might almost say, betrayed throughout the course of this agitation. A great deal had been done by the Government—at least, the Government had shown great goodwill towards the labouring classes. They put in a very important clause in the Land Bill for their benefit. But the labouring classes had for two years been out of employment. Farmers who had not paid their rent had not paid their labourers; and the cry of the labourers went up from one end of the country to the other. In point of fact, the clause in question, empowering the Commissioners to order the erection of buildings for labourers, was practically useless. He believed that the Act only required a few modifications to become thoroughly workable; there could be no doubt the Act would work well when the present disaffection was put an end to. He could not support the Government in the policy of these arrests on suspicion. He voted staunchly against the Coercion Bill, and could only view these arrests with dismay and detestation. When these powers were obtained from the House it was clearly understood that they were obtained for repression and not for punishment. When he saw an hon. Member of the House detained in solitary confinement for seven days under them; when others were locked up in their cells for 18 hours a-day, he could not believe that that pledge had been kept. Not only did these arrests create a wide circle of discontent and disaffection in the districts in which they occurred—a disaffection not alone amongst the humbler classes, but rising to the middle class—but he could not disguise from himself that some day the men would come out of prison more powerful than they went in. He thought that some other remedy was required, and not coercion. At the same time, he was by no means blind to the outrages, though he did not believe that they were the work of the great bulk of the people. He thought that the outrages were the work of an organized system by which the assassins and incendiaries were liberally paid with foreign money. It was the duty of the Government to put them down by whatever means they could; and in so doing he was sure they would have the support of all the well-disposed classes of the community. The great hope for the country lay in the rapid extension of the Purchase Clauses of the Act. They were not working well, and there was an earnest desire for their extension. The only question in his mind was, whether they should take this step now or later, as he believed they would have to take it. The question was, whether it was not wiser and cheaper and more statesmanlike to take it now, when they might receive the thanks of the people, than to postpone the change to a time when they had widened the breach more and more between the two countries by further measures of coercion, and when they were impelled to it by the duty of saving from annihilation a ruined and impoverished proprietary. In his opinion, if the House dealt with the question without delay, that would do more than anything else to restore tranquillity to Ireland.

Mr. FITZPATRICK said, the speech of the Prime Minister on Monday, when introducing his Resolution, had cleared from his mind a great deal of the uncertainty and hesitation which he might otherwise have had in speaking on this question. The Prime Minister had plainly told them that the Land Act was meant as one more of the sops which he was in the habit of providing for his enemies when they became too many for him. He avowed that the whole power of the Executive Government was, in October last, overwhelmed; that it could do nothing more, and that the only way out of the difficulty was to bid, by means of the Land Act, for the suffrages and affections of the Land Leaguers. Therefore, the Land Act need not for the future be considered as a judical measure, since it became merely a political necessity without finality, which might be enlarged at any time to meet the danger of some further and more powerful agitation. The right hon. Gentleman apparently looked on it not as a grave Judicial Court settling with justice the whole tenure of land in Ireland, and having for its end and aim a vast reform of the Land Laws, but rather as hush-money to agitation, which would not bear examination on any side, either from those to whom it was given, or those from whom the black mail had been exacted. This was, indeed, a false, an undignified position for a responsible Minister to place himself in. That House was well aware that this Act was put forward and passed not as a matter of political expediency, but as a judicial reform or an equitable re-adjustment of the status of landlord and tenant in Ireland. They were told that they were to be guided by the divine right of justice, and that in acting under that guidance they could not err. He thought they had erred very much indeed. They had been tempted by specious phrases and high-sounding words to do what had proved very unjust and unfair to a great many people. And now they were told that they ought not to criticize the maladministration of their own handiwork. Justice was generally portrayed as blindfolded; but he could not see why those who took her as their guide should be blindfolded as well. If they were they would probably, as in the case of the blind leading the blind, both fall into the ditch, and that was what they were now asked to do. The Prime Minister contended that, as the Act was now law, they, ought, as law-abiding citizens, to abide by it. That might be true; but what they said was that the Act was being badly administered, and that it was being utilized in a manner at variance with the intentions with which it was passed. He believed that the operation of the Act tended to postpone the restoration of law and order in Ireland. What had always been wanted in Ireland, as in many other countries, was strong and evenhanded justice. Ireland especially required it, owing to the continual agitations, pandered to by both Parties in the State, which had from time to time convulsed her. The administration of the Land Commission had not persuaded them of its fairness and its impartiality. The solicitor of the Commission had been chosen from the ranks of the Land League, and nearly all the district solicitors were men who had conducted the work of the Land League branches. Then the Sub-Commissioners had been sent out without any instructions having been publicly laid down by the Commissioners as to the basis on which fair rents were to be settled. In the first instance, only 12 Sub-Commissioners were sent out, but, finding the competition of the Land League severe, the number had been increased to 36. The Sub-Commissioners were not, for the most part, men in whose ability or impartiality they could have any confidence. They went out without instruction, and yet they all arrived at this remarkable result—on all estates, whether in Kerry or Cork, in Wexford or Donegal, whether the rents were high or low, the reduction made by the Sub-Commissioners in rents averaged all round a certain amount over Griffith's valuation. Sir

Richard Griffith's Commission was a Commission to value land for rateable purposes; but the Commission they were now dealing with had a much more valuable and a much more onerous task, and, therefore, all necessary instructions ought to have been given to them with regard to prices, labour, and a vast number of other points. Such instructions would have prevented them from making decisions that were perfectly absurd and contrary to Common Law and common sense. If such instructions had been given the country would have felt greater confidence in these men. After as long a delay as possible, and not until public opinion began to make itself heard on the subject, did the Court of Appeal sit in Belfast; and what did they do? They confirmed in most cases the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners, and they launched this threat at the heads of the landlords—they said they would not alter any cases that came before them on appeal unless they found that the Sub-Commissioners "had erred in principle or seriously in amount." They therefore became practically not a Court of Appeal, but a Court to register the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners. By the threat that landlords, by coming into the Court of Appeal, might simply add enormously to their costs, they forbade them to come to the Court of Appeal at all. If the Court of Appeal was to be a mere Registry Court, it would have been better that it should have had only one member, and that a legal member. What was the advantage of having Mr. Vernon, with his great agricultural knowledge, sitting as a member of the Court of Appeal, if that Court was merely to register the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners? While the Land Bill was under discussion in the House the Prime Minister said that the Government had arrived at the conclusion that the question as to what the rents ought to be would be left wholly to the action of the Sub-Commissioners. Well, the House, on their part, left this moot question to the Head Commission. They left it to the Sub-Commission, and inasmuch as most of the Sub-Commissioners were themselves tenant farmers, that was like asking a butcher to fix the price of a fat beast that you wanted him to buy. The Sub-Commissioners had, as a rule, given in their judgments no principle to act upon. Then, again, it was difficult to find out what the Sub-Commissioners really were. They were a very nondescript sort of animal. They acted as if they were appointed to value the whole of Ireland in a panic, or under the pressure of political exigency. Different opinions had been given by different Sub-Commissioners on the question whether, in fixing a rent, the Sub-Commissioners were to make an independent valuation on their own judgment, or were to act on the opinions of witnesses. Mr. Wylie, who was a legal Sub-Commissioner, in answer to Mr. Darley, County Court Judge, said on one occasion that he was not a valuer. Clearly he regarded his duty as merely to take the legal evidence. Mr. Garland, speaking as a non-legal Commissioner, said they were their own valuators. Mr. M'Carthy, who was very outspoken, said the Sub-Commissioners did not care a straw for the evidence of professional valuers. They had all become so mixed up in their opinions of their own functions that Mr. Justice O'Hagan found it necessary to declare that agricultural Commissioners were not valuators. Mr. Litton, shortly afterwards, made confusion worse confounded by announcing "the Sub-Commission Courts are Courts of Arbitration." All these confusing statements were very mischievous, and an inquiry which would help to elucidate them could not fail to to be valuable. He apologized for detaining the House so long; but as there were very few Irish landlords in that Branch of the Legislature, he thought he had a right to speak. No matter how long rents might have existed unchanged, they were now ruthlessly cut down. He was prepared to hear from the other side of the House that this was only done in isolated cases. He, however, knew differently, and could cite numberless cases of rents being reduced on the oldest and most liberally-managed estates. He thought it most unfair that landlord and tenant alike should be hampered in connection with appeals by the action of the Sub-Commissioners. They were told there would be no reversal of judgment except in cases where the Sub-Commissioners "might err in principle or seriously in amount." At first the Sub-Commissioners gave some reasons; but lately, however, those functionaries had enunciated no principles. How, then, could the parties exercise their right of appeal? The merits and law of the case were not placed before them, and no consideration was given to guide them as to the wisdom of appeal. In one case, Commissioner M'Devitt had said that arguments based upon elementary principles of law had no more effect upon the Bench than water on a duck's back; and, after hearing that the tenant received from some of his land between £7 and £8 per acre, he reduced the rent, without alleging any reason, from £400 to £360. In another case the only reason adduced for reducing the rent was that the land was near Clonmel, a reason which, in his opinion, might constitute very good ground for increasing the rent, but certainly not for reducing it. When asked by counsel for a reason for a decision, Mr. Sub-Commissioner Morrison replied, "I will give you no reason." In another case a most extraordinary reason was given for reducing the rent—namely,—

> "That as the farm in question was a grazing farm, it had not deteriorated so much as a tillage farm would have done."

In yet another case, Mr. Sub-Commissioner Roche gave as a reason for reducing rents from £14 to £13, and from £22 to £20, that the tenant had been very improving and industrious. That was a case in which the rents had not been raised since 1849, and were but very little over Griffith's valuation. It was noteworthy that the Commissioners repeatedly reduced rents below the valuation of the best valuators themselves. One Commissioner had reduced rents in four cases out of six between 10 and 20 per cent below the valuator's estimate, having stated that the valuator's evidence was the best and clearest he had ever heard. The facts which he had glanced at led him to the supposition that instructions must have been given to the Sub-Commissioners to reduce rents in every instance. He could not forget the words of Mr. Baldwin—

> "The principles on which we have proceeded in determining a fair rent were laid down before we set foot on a sod of land, and before we commenced our labours in the Court House of Belfast."

He supposed these were the principles Mr. O'Hagan spoke of when he said they would reverse no decisions unless "wrong in principle;" and, as Mr. Litton or he must have laid down the principle, they could not naturally consider their Sub-Commissioners wrong in the principle which they had given them for guidance. Their function as an Appellate Court, was therefore, a farce. The landlords of Ireland had been told, in almost every speech that had been made from the other side of the House, that they should wait and see what was going to happen; but it must be remembered that every drop of blood was being drained from the veins of landlords in the meantime. He knew cases where men were now actually starving, and going without the necessities of life, in consequence of being unable to get in their rents. What was the advantage of this state of things? Did the Government mean to buy up the land now that they had got it at sufficiently low price? Was that their object? Even the tenants did not thank the Government for the Act. He considered that the Arrears Clause had been a complete failure. The fact was the Act had not succeeded in any direction. As a message of peace, the Act had failed, and as a judicial measure, it was regarded with distrust and contempt. He did not blame the Act; he blamed the administration of the Act. From whatever point of view they looked at the question, criticism and inquiry were absolutely necessary. But they were told they were not to criticize the Act. Why not? [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman shook his head. The first person who criticized it was the hon. Member for Cork City. Where was he now? Then others did the same; they were suppressed. Hon. Members on the other side hardly dared open their mouths; the gag had been applied to them. Then because the House of Lords desired to criticize, they were told—"If you do, we shall obliterate you." The Coercion Act had certainly affected the liberty of the subject as far as freedom of action was concerned; but the Land Act was apparently a more stringent measure, as under it even liberty of speech was not to be permitted. He maintained there must be criticism of the Act, and to stifle that would be an act of tyranny.

MR. CHAPLIN said, that, under ordinary circumstances, he should not dispute the proposition that the working of an Act which had been in operation for less than six months should not be inquired into. Perhaps, under ordinary circumstances, he would be the first to admit, without pledging himself to its words or even to its sense, the force and justice of the Resolution; but the circumstances under which the discussion had arisen were by no means of an ordinary character, and there was, in his judgment, a variety of reasons which rendered it not only expedient and wise, but in some cases absolutely necessary, that inquiry should be made, and made immediately, into this matter. He would not follow the remarks of the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down further than to say that he hoped the House would have from the Treasury Bench, before the discussion concluded, some distinct explanation of the statement of Professor Baldwin, quoted by the hon. Gentleman, that the principles upon which the decisions of the Commissioners had been given were all laid down before a single case was decided. He desired, with the permission of the House, to point out, as briefly as he could, one or two of the main reasons which appeared to him to justify this demand for inquiry into the working of the Act. The very first of these reasons appeared to be this—that with regard to the great majority of the tenant farmers of Ireland, who were supposed to be those who were to be most benefited, the measure was nothing less than an absolute mockery and a farce, and it neither had had, nor could have in any appreciable period of time, any real or practical effect at all. That much had been already shown in the course of the debate; but as no Member of the Government, up to the present time, had deigned even to notice the arguments that had been put forward, he must ask leave to press it again. A few nights ago a question was asked by an hon. Member who represented an Ulster constituency bearing directly on that point. That hon. Gentleman perceived—what, indeed, seemed to be known to everyone except the Government—that there was an absolute block in the Land Court already. To his great surprise the hon. Member was answered by the Attorney General for Ireland somewhat flippantly and certainly most curtly. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said there was no reason to suppose that any cases ripe for hearing would be postponed for a number of years; but that, on the contrary, all these cases would be heard within a reasonable period of time. He could not pretend to fathom what might be considered a reasonable time by the right hon. and learned Gentleman; but the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had demonstrated, according to the figures he gave the House, that this "reasonable period" of time could not be less than 14 years. Fresh Returns had been laid on the Table of the House yesterday. He had carefully examined those Returns, and the case seemed to him to be even worse. According to them, not counting those applications which were withdrawn, or which had been dismissed—841 in number—the total number of applications for fair rent had been 71,567; and of these, excluding cases settled by so-called voluntary arrangement out of Court—on which he should have a word to say directly—in only 2,365 cases had fair rents been fixed by the Sub-Commissioners. But of these 2,365 cases only 1,661 had been finally determined by their action, for no less than 704 of their decisions, or nearly half, had become the subjects of appeal. Of these appeals only 46 had been decided up till now, and, consequently, if they added 46 to 1,661, they arrived at the sum total of the cases which had been decided—namely, just 1,707 out of the 71,567 applications which were made for the fixing of fair rent. Now, the Land Court had been sitting nearly, if not quite, five months, and, therefore, at the present rate of progress, a very simple calculation would demonstrate the fact that, even according to their last Returns, if it took five months to decide 1,707 cases, it would take nearly 17 years to decide the 71,567 cases. The total number, however, of tenants in Ireland approached 550,000, and the character of the decisions had been such as to induce nearly all of them, sooner or later, to go into Court. Up to the present time no property had been safe from the Sub-Commissioners. It did not matter whether the rent was high, moderate, or low, whether it was above or below Griffith's valuation, or whether the rent had been stationary and had been cheerfully paid for years, or had been raised within the last few months, none of these things mattered to the fair, enlightened, and liberal Sub-Commissioners; and, under these circumstances, and with this golden prospect before them, they must look forward to the time when all these 550,000 tenants would apply to the Land Court. The Prime Minister made a statement the other night the like of which, he ventured to say, had never before been made by any English statesman within the walls of Parliament. He told the House of Commons that there were two powers in Ireland at the present time—the Land League on the one hand, and the Land Act on the other. They might well stop to inquire what had become of the Executive Government of the Queen, and of the extraordinary powers which had been committed to their hands? But he should let that pass for a moment. What he wanted to ask the Prime Minister was this—Supposing that he conquered in this struggle, supposing that even the feeblest Administration that ever sat on those Benches should at last be victorious in the struggle, what would be the position of the Land Court then? The very moment the influence of the Land League and the "no rent" manifesto disappeared, every one of the 550,000 tenants would come clamouring into the Court; and with the present rate of progress they might expect that 130 years hence the last appeal under this curiosity of legislation—this memorable work of art—would be finally disposed of—this memorable work of art—which he believed would be immortalized in future years as "Gladstone's folly." The fact was, that had happened with regard to this Act which everyone who was not blinded by Party feeling must have foreseen would happen, if any considerable use or advantage was taken of the Act. The machinery had broken down already. It was totally inadequate, and, consequently, with regard to the vast majority of cases now before the Court, they were at a deadlock, and likely to remain so for many years to come. Last Session he, as well as other Members, ventured to foretell the possibility, nay, the certainty, of this collapse. They pressed it on the attention of the Government, but no heed was paid to their remonstrances. The Government were reminded of the observation of the Premier himself, that if ever it was attempted to introduce the principle of the valuation of land by the State, such were the inherent difficulties in such a proposition, and such would be the army of experts and officials required for the purpose, that, independent of all other considerations, it must inevitably break down. But although they recalled to the mind of the Prime Minister the weighty and sound opinions which he had declared, they were only flouted and sneered at and ridiculed for their pains. However curious and instructive it might be, it did not, unfortunately, mend matters now to observe how accurately and how justly the Prime Minister estimated at that time the folly and absurdity of his own measure by the ludicrous results that were patent to the public to-day. In the interests of the tenantry of Ireland alone some inquiry into the Act and some amendment of it was absolutely needed, and, indeed, should be carried out without an hour's unnecessary delay. But there was another class whose interests were seriously affected. They were told that the deadlock would shortly be removed by arrangements made out of Court; and he observed in these Returns that credit was taken for a great many cases which had been settled in that manner. The first thing that struck him was that the Returns conclusively proved that the Land Courts, instead of gaining, were losing ground with regard to their arrears; for it was a fact that the new applications made since the first Returns were issued exceeded considerably the whole number of cases decided up to the present time. And, with respect to those Returns, although he would not say that they were cooked, they certainly were so adjusted as to present a comparatively imposing, but utterly misleading, total of 5,386 cases of judicial rents settled up till now. For, of that considerable total, 814 were cases which had been withdrawn, and 2,180 consisted of so-called voluntary arrangements out of Court. Now, he would show directly what the nature of these voluntary arrangements was, and that it was absolutely monstrous, if they were looking to future arrangements of this nature, for a solution of that question. But even if these cases of arrangement were included, and taking the figures as they stood, the position of the Government, on their own showing, was ridiculous enough, for it would take them, even then, something like eight years — or one year more than an ordinary lease—to settle the applications which were already awaiting the decision of the Court. He wanted the House seriously to consider in what manner these private arrangements out of Court were brought about. He did not hesitate to say that in the great majority of cases these private arrangements were only brought about by the grossest and cruelest injustice to the owners of the soil. He should like to take the case of those estates where the Sub-Commissioners found the rents to be so fair, so moderate, and so low, that they had been totally unable to find any cause for reducing them. He would quote an instance, as one instance was worth any amount of argument, and would carry conviction to the House. It was the case of a farm of 41 Irish acres, held at a rent of £54 from Sir Victor Alexander Brooke, at Lisnaskea, County Fermanagh. The case came on before the Sub-Commissioners on February 13, and the old rent was allowed to remain as it was without change, all buildings and improvements, except a labourer's cottage, to belong to the landlord. No costs were given to the landlord; but even though the holding was a very small one, the costs actually amounted to no less a sum than £34 13*s*. He should like to know the meaning of that sentence, "No costs were given to the landlord?" The meaning was that, under the operation of the Act, every landlord in Ireland, however fair, or moderate, or just, or low his rents might be, was at that moment liable to one of two alternatives — either he must accept one of the Prime Minister's favourite arrangements out of Court, on whatever monstrous and inequitable terms the tenant might choose to offer; or he must become the subject of a law process, damaging enough even to a rich man, if repeated on all the farms on his estate, but which meant to the poor man nothing but absolute and irrevocable ruin. Such were the alternatives, such the kind of justice offered to the landlords of Ireland, who, with few exceptions, were undoubtedly a poor and embarrassed class of men. It had been said by an hon. Member that the Prime Minister was fond of making perorations on the principles of justice. They had heard from the right hon. Gentleman instances of splendid eloquence, unequalled in the past, and probably to remain unsurpassed in the future. That eloquence had always had for him a wondrous fascination; but, much as he delighted to hear those exhibitions of surpassing power in the man, he confessed he never now heard them without something approaching to a shudder; for all past experience had shown him that they were the invariable prelude of some act of tremendous spoliation and injustice—such as the measure of last year. He had given the right hon. Gentleman a specimen of the injustice wrought by his handiwork, and he would venture to suggest to him that if, by any means, he could be induced in future to practice justice rather more instead of perpetually preaching it, he would earn the lasting gratitude of the most cruelly illtreated, but the most loyal, class in Ireland. Now, if the present deadlock in the Court could only be removed by private arrangements out of Court, that in itself would constitute another and an unanswerable reason for inquiry into the working of the Act; but there were also many other reasons. The right hon. Gentleman had made a statement last year, which he had carefully noted at the time, as containing a crumb of comfort, almost the only crumb of comfort derivable in the course of the long struggle over the Bill. Speaking on the subject of compensation, and answering some remarks of his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), the right hon. Gentleman had said—

> "With regard to the case now before them, he did not hesitate to assert, if it could be shown, either now or hereafter, that ruin and heavy loss would be brought upon any class in Ireland by the direct effect of this legislation, Parliament ought to be prepared to look that case in the face."

Having regard to these words, he might well ask the right hon. Gentleman to answer and refute, if he could, the speech made the other night by his right hon. and learned Friend the senior Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket). On that occasion his right hon. and learned Friend had made a touching and pathetic appeal to a sentiment which he trusted was not yet extinct in the House. He had quoted a letter, for the accuracy of which he was prepared to vouch, from an Irish landlord. He (Mr. Chaplin) wished to recall the attention of the House to that case, because it appeared to him to meet almost exactly in its very words the case for which the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister undertook last Session to provide. The friend of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the senior Member for the University of Dublin wrote—

> "Last November I was compelled to appeal to some relatives in England for pecuniary assistance, as I and my family were on the brink of starvation. I wish I could make these facts known to the English people. I, for one, am a ruined man by the operation of the Act. I am simply a ruined man, and have decided on emigrating to Australia."

And the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Plunket) added—

> "This was by no means a solitary instance, for there were numbers of other people in the same position."

He (Mr. Chaplin) assumed the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland would take part in this debate. He would like to ask him, if he was able to do so, to meet and refute the assertions of his right hon. and learned Friend. If not to-night, would the right hon. Gentleman meet them after inquiry, and if he could not do so at all, would he act up to his words and promises of last Session? It was a smaller matter, perhaps; but the Act was being carried out in the teeth of principles announced by those Ministers who were in charge of it. The sanction of Parliament had been obtained for it by something that differed little from false pretences. The value of land in Ireland was to be increased, and it was asserted that there would be little, if any, diminution of rents, and that rents that had been stationary for many years would be respected. None of those expectations had been fulfilled. Without going into details he would give a short summary as to this latter point. He found that where the rent had remained unaltered for over 20 years, there had been 24 cases in which the Sub-Commissioners had reduced it on an average by 26·6 per cent. Where it had remained unaltered for over 30 years, there were 12 cases of reduction averaging 19·0 per cent. Where it had remained unaltered over 40 years there were 19 cases, averaging a reduction of 22·1 per cent. These figures were not taken from the sum total of the present Returns, but from Returns published some time ago, when the cases decided amounted to only 1,300 altogether. Surely these were facts of startling significance that deserved the earnest and careful attention of Parliament, and afforded a strong justification of the inquiry condemned by the Government. Was it possible that it could have been the intention of Ministers last year that rents that had been cheerfully paid for 30 or 40 years by prosperous tenants should be sweepingly reduced 25 per cent without a single penny of compensation? If not, no one could deny that there was established a fair *bonâ fide* case for inquiry. What he could not understand was the attitude and the silence of the Party opposite. He presumed that hon. Gentlemen opposite found it impossible to meet the arguments of their opponents, and admitted their claims? ["No!"] If not, why were their arguments not met in debate? Was he to understand that there was an enforced silence on the opposite Benches? If that was the solution of the riddle, he began to see that it was all part of the new policy which was lately described by a distinguished writer, who was once a Member of the House, in these words—

> "The great dog on the Treasury Bench has said 'bow,' and all the little dogs above him, behind him, and below him are ordered to say nothing else but 'bow.'"

The Liberal Party had undergone a sudden transformation. They were Liberals no longer; they had been transformed into "bow-wows." Surely it must be bad enough to be a "bow-wow;" but to be a muzzled "bow-wow," belonging to a muzzled "bow-wow" Party, must really be something beyond human patience and endurance. With great respect he offered his sincere condolence to the Members of the "bow-wow" Party. Amid all their tribulations, it would be some consolation to know that that Party would always in the future be known as the great "bow-wow" Party. Truly there must be a Providence in Heaven, and at last the Jingoes were avenged. So far he had discussed the Resolution on its merits. ["Oh, oh!"] He thought hon. Gentlemen could hardly have made themselves really aware of what the effect of that Resolution was. It was a Resolution deprecating inquiry into the operation of the Land Act; and he had endeavoured to show that in two great cases, the case of the tenant on the one hand, and the case of the landlord on the other hand, an inquiry was absolutely needed. He wished now to consider it in connection with the circumstances in which it was brought forward. He might be permitted to allude to a matter personal to himself. In the course of this debate allusions had been repeatedly made to half-a-dozen sentences which fell from him during the opening night of the present debate with reference to the Motion of the House of Lords. These sentences had been spoken of as foreshadowing a foregone conclusion on the part of the House of Lords. Nothing could be more ridiculous, more unjust to their Lordships or unfair to himself. The statement he had made was simply an expression of personal opinion, for which it was impossible that any other person or persons could be held responsible; and, moreover, it was an opinion, as he begged the House in fairness to remember, based upon the only reason which, up to that time, had been given by the Prime Minister for his opposition to the inquiry. The only reason which the Prime Minister had then given for his opposition to the Committee of the Lords was this—that it must inevitably shake to its foundation the confidence which he had been happily able to engender in the Land Act in the minds of the Irish people. If hon. Members would refer to the speeches that were made, they would find that what he had stated was the fact. He himself never believed for one moment that any confidence in the Land Act existed except in the imagination of the Prime Minister. Where did it prevail? In what quarter did it exist? In Ulster he had heard nothing but proposals to amend the Act. They had nothing but such proposals from hon. Gentlemen who represented Ulster in that House. Was this extraordinary confidence in the Land Act felt by the landlords? Why, even the Prime Minister himself would not venture to hazard that assertion; and he (Mr. Chaplin) still adhered to the opinion he expressed the other night, that hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on this side of the House did represent the opinions of the majority of the tenant farmers in Ireland, when they told them that neither was that confidence in the Land Act to be found in them. He certainly was under the impression that the tenant farmers in the County Meath could at any time command the representation of that county, and he was also under the impression that not very many days ago Mr. Michael Davitt was returned Member for that county—a gentleman entirely in accord with hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway in their views with regard to the Irish policy of the Government. In the face of facts like those, it was of no use to throw ridicule on assertions such as he had made. Both Houses of Parliament had good ground for complaining of the conduct of the Government in these transactions. They had begun by declaring that it was their intention firmly to oppose this Committee, and that they could hold out no hope of compromise; and it was only in the closing words of his third and final speech on the opening night of this debate that the Prime Minister, after various stages of concession, at last disclosed the real objection of the Government to the proposals of the House of Lords. What was that objection? It was this, that Ministers would not be responsible for the government of Ireland for a single hour without they had free use of the weapon which Parliament had placed at their disposal—in other words, that if the Committee was to proceed as at first intended, they would not be responsible for the consequences in Ireland. He was not at all surprised that their Lordships immediately after this announcement should consent to accept the limitations for which the right hon. Gentleman had stipulated. No opposition, in his humble opinion, in the face of an announcement so critical and so alarming as that of the right hon. Gentleman, could have been justified for a moment in refusing the limitations to which the right hon. Gentleman had offered to agree. But, what an admission for this Government to make! What a damning admission for the Government to make! They had been in Office now for two years. Their crowning boast, their great glory, had been this—"That they had everywhere and in everything reversed the policy of Lord Beaconsfield." They had, indeed, reversed it with a vengeance, not only in this country, but in every quarter of the globe. He did not stop now to ask how it was and in what way. The clouds appeared to be gathering upon them everywhere abroad. They had, unhappily, enough upon their hands at home; and at home it had literally come to this—that an ordinary Parliamentary inquiry into an ordinary or an extraordinary Act of Parliament, whichever they chose to call it, could not take place without hon. Members being assured by the Prime Minister that it could not be entertained without the fear of rebellion in Ireland. They might well ask what had become of the state of comfort and general satisfaction of which they had heard so lately in Mid Lothian? He had never doubted for a moment that the statements of the Prime Minister in Mid Lothian with reference to Ireland were as great exaggerations as all the other statements that he had made there, and by which he so utterly deluded and cajoled the people of this country. No one could deny that the state of Ireland to-day was immeasurably worse than when the Prime Minister took the reins of Office, and before he had embarked on his career of ruinous and futile legislation. Who was responsible for this disastrous change? How had it been brought about? These were questions which were being daily asked by every constituency in the Kingdom, and to which ere long an answer would be sternly required; and though they might seek by every desperate expedient to avert it, and though, in order to do so, they might even bring the two Houses of Parliament into conflict, yet he felt convinced that the verdict of the people of this country was against them, and that it would read thus—"The condition of Ireland under your administration is literally intolerable; your Irish policy has everywhere and completely failed; in the public interest inquiry is absolutely needed, and, come what may, inquiry must and shall be made."

MR. P. J. SMYTH said, that the speech just delivered by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire had shown, at all events, that the landlords of Ireland were not wanting in eloquent defenders in that House. The hon. Member for Portarlington (Mr. Fitzpatrick), and the other Representatives of the Irish landlords, had also spoken not without eloquence, although at considerable length, in their defence, though their dominant idea seemed to be that their countrymen, the landlords, had no place in the thoughts of hon. Members on that side of the House. He, however, could afford to speak the truth on that subject. He had himself always regarded Irish landlords as his countrymen, and he had never paid any regard to the vulgar cry for their extermination. They should, however, think less about themselves, their property, and their mortgages, and should think more about their country. Before becoming so clamorous upon English platforms for impossible compensation, they should imitate the example of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and should go among their own people, take up the defence of their property, and stand or fall in the defence of social order and of the interests of society at large. It was natural that popular Irish Members should dislike the present coercion *régime* to which Ireland was subjected; but he failed to see any evidence of their patriotism or conscientiousness in their supporting an inquiry instituted by persons who were hostile to an Act that was destined to benefit the people of Ireland. In the presence of such a policy—if action so stupid could be called by that name—it was as well that the simple truth should be distinctly declared—that the real author of coercion in Ireland was the Land League itself. Cause and effect were not more clear and certain than that the Arms Act and the Peace Preservation Act owed their existence to the Land League. Equally certain was it that the action of the League, since the passing of the Land Act, was calculated to perpetuate coercion and to render it irremovable. In saying this, he alluded particularly to the "no rent" manifesto. He dismissed as altogether unworthy of notice and frivolous the pretext that that manifesto, which was the key of the situation in Ireland, was issued as an act of revenge for the arrest of two or three Members of Parliament. He held it to be the expression of a matured and deliberate policy; for no rent at all was but the logical development of a doctrine equally false and immoral—"Pay only such rents as you yourselves think proper." It was impossible to dissociate the League as a body from the manifesto as an act; the upholder of the one necessarily sanctioned the other, and was morally responsible for the disastrous consequences that had followed—for the evictions rendered necessary by intimidation, and the spirit of outrage it had intensified. All the agrarian outrages of the last four months were "no rent" outrages directly traceable to the manifesto. Seeing all this, had any one of the signatories had the moral courage —for true courage it would be—to withdraw his signature? [Mr. SEXTON: No; and we never will.] The authors and propagandists of "no rent," in order to induce the tenants to adopt that suicidal policy, told them they would be sustained by Land League funds. Surely they must have known in their hearts they were making promises which would not and could not be fulfilled. Many thriving tenants unfortunately believed in these promises, and carried out, or were forced to carry out, the policy of the League; and what was their fate to-day? They had seen their homes and their farms pass to Emergency men, they themselves shuddering in wooden shanties, and their families consigned to the tender mercies of out-door relief or of the workhouse. He knew that that was the state of the case in 10 counties in Ireland. The Land Act of 1881 did for the tenants what the Relief Act of 1829 did for the Catholics. Why was not the Land Act received in the same spirit? The Relief Act, as possibly the Land Act, contained provisions which would have justified the prolongation, in a modified form, of the agitation; but the great men of that day—the O'Connells and the Sheils—considered they would not be justified in prolonging a day longer than was absolutely necessary a sectarian movement, and, accordingly, they frankly accepted the Act and dissolved. In like manner, with the passage of the Land Act, the social war should have closed. The League should have dissolved and handed over its funds to a tenants' committee to be applied to the assistance of small tenants seeking the Land Court. [Mr. REDMOND: Or to the payment of arrears.] Had this been done, the leaders would have given proofs of having been actuated from the beginning by a sincere regard for the Irish tenant, and previous errors might have been overlooked. But a very different course was pursued, and subsequent events established conclusively that the object aimed at was not the just settlement of the Land Question, but agitation for the sake of agitation. ["No, no!"] It was agitation for the sake of agitation, the perpetuation of a state of aimless unrest. ["No, no!"] If not, then assuredly it was much meaner—it was agitation for the sake of money. The League as a body was broken; but the baneful influence of its operation was all too manifest in the state of the country and in the unsettlement of fundamental principles, and the substitution of a vague, sickly, and godless internationalism for the manly patriotism of a better age.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he was rather struck by one observation of the hon. Member for Tipperary (Mr. P. J. Smyth), to the effect that Members of the Opposition would be better employed if, instead of addressing the House upon the wrongs of landlords, they would speak from public platforms in Ireland in imitation of the example of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, whom he was glad to see in his place. He (Mr. J. Lowther) always listened with great pleasure to speeches in that House from the hon. Member for Tipperary, and, what was more, generally gave himself the pleasure of reading the speeches made by the hon. Gentleman elsewhere; but unless the ordinary channels of information to which he (Mr. J. Lowther) had recourse had been more than usually untrustworthy, and he had been misled, and had passed over the speeches from public platforms in Ireland of the hon. Gentleman, he confessed that throughout the whole of the extra-Parliamentary utterances which it had been his lot to peruse during the past many months, he had failed to see one single speech delivered by the hon. Gentleman in the county which he represented. [Mr. O'DONNELL: His constituents would not listen to him.] He (Mr. J. Lowther) would like to ask what were the causes which had led to the occupation of so much public time, at the instigation of the Government, by the initiation of this debate? The Prime Minister addressed a solemn warning to both Houses when he said that so grave was the state of public affairs that he could not hold himself responsible for the consequences if inquiry were instituted by the other House into the operation of the Land Act. [Mr. GLADSTONE: No.] He was glad to hear that the right hon. Gentleman had been misunderstood; but he had been under the impression that the right hon. Gentleman had said that inquiry such as that contemplated by the House of Lords would render the task of maintaining the government of the country beyond his capacity. [MR. GLADSTONE: Unless we were supported by the House of Commons.] With that important modification, the right hon. Gentleman considered that a free and independent inquiry by one House of Parliament would be dangerous to the good government of the country unless it was counteracted by a hostile demonstration in the other branch of the Legislature. And the right hon. Gentleman considered the occasion a fitting one, the state of affairs being, in his opinion, so grave, to invite a discussion upon so important and Constitutional a theme as the existence of the co-ordinate branch of the Legislature; for he could not conceal from himself the fact that every word of his was carefully weighed throughout the country, and the invitation he had offered to the most thoughtless elements of the body politic to institute an outcry against one branch of the Legislature was not unlikely to be taken up in quarters where such questions were apt to be freely entertained. They need not, however, feel alarm upon this part of the subject. The other House enjoyed public confidence on grounds far stronger than the approval of their acts by the right hon. Gentleman or his Government; and the House of Lords, which promised soon to become the only repository of freedom of speech in this country, would continue to exercise those beneficent functions which it now discharged long after the right hon. Gentleman and the Government he led had been consigned, he did not say to oblivion—he feared that was impossible—but, at any rate, into places other than those they now occupied. The right hon. Gentleman said that the Committee appointed by the other House was a prejudiced body. He took exception to the composition of the Committee, on which he appeared to think there was too large a preponderance of one section of political opinion. Assuming that that were so, with whom did the fault lie? The composition of Parliamentary tribunals was, according to well-known usage, divided in fairly equal proportions between the two contending Parties in the State. But the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends deprived the other House of Parliament of that co-operation which, Constitutionally, they had a right to demand at the hands of the Executive Government. Notwithstanding that fact, the composition of the Committee would bear criticism, and, indeed, it could scarcely be improved, even if the Colleagues of the right hon. Gentleman had placed their services at the disposal of the other House. On that Committee was a former Cabinet Colleague of the right hon. Gentleman, with respect to whom it was no disparagement to any of his existing Colleagues to say that they did not surpass him in capacity on that subject, or generally on any subject which he chose to take up as his own. And without going through the names of that Committee, he said that the composition of that body was one of which its framers need not feel ashamed. The right hon. Gentleman talked about one-sided Committees, and, to use his own neat phraseology, of Committees "not distinguished by the absence of prejudice." Would the House allow him to draw its attention to the *quasi*-judicial bodies which were constituted under the auspices of the right hon. Gentleman himself? Let him turn to the Bessborough Commission. What was its composition? The right hon. Gentleman talked of a body that was not distinguished by the absence of prejudice. Why, out of its five Members, four had been, during their career in one or other House of Parliament, thick-and-thin supporters of the right hon. Gentleman. The Bessborough Commission proceeded to discharge its duties in a manner which showed unmistakably the composition of that body. Against its Members he had not a word to say, any more than he believed that the right hon. Gentleman wished to say one word against any single Member of the Committee in "another place." But what did that Commission do? It proceeded at a time when it was notorious that terror prevailed—he did not now say by whose fault—through the length and breadth of Ireland to take so-called evidence. And what did the Commission do with that evidence, one-sided as it was? It was proved incontestably that the majority of the Commissioners signed their Report without having even heard the rebutting evidence on the other side. The Bessborough Commission, notwithstanding the inherent respectability of its component elements, would go down to posterity as one of the most prejudiced bodies ever charged with *quasi*-judicial functions. The right hon. Gentleman had another opportunity of showing how he could form a body not distinguished by the absence of prejudice. What about the Land Court? They had heard a great deal in the course of that debate of the inferior tribunals which, he was told, were popularly known in Ireland by the name of the "Sub-Confiscators." They had heard in that discussion of glaring cases of gross and scandalous injustice at the hands of those tribunals; but they had heard but little of that other body which, as the right hon. Gentleman would say, was "not presumably distinguished by the absence of prejudice or bias"—the Land Court. It was entirely composed of opponents of the Party who sat on that (the Opposition) side of the House, and of supporters of the right hon. Gentleman. [Mr. GLADSTONE: No, no!] All three Members were Liberals. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Not Mr. Vernon.] Let him be contradicted if he was incorrect; but his right hon. and learned Friend beside him (Mr. Gibson), from personal knowledge, said that Mr. Vernon himself told him he was a Liberal in politics. The right hon. Gentleman, then, who, in the two instances he had given, had clearly shown that his idea of an impartial tribunal was one that was singularly one-sided, was certainly not the person to throw stones from the very thin glass-house in which he resided. They had heard during the debate that the Land Act was universally admitted from all sides to be a lamentable and complete failure; they had heard that from the tenants' point of view the Act was a signal and conspicuous failure; they had heard that from the landlords' point of view the Act was what he had always contended was also the case with its predecessor passed 11 years before—an Act of scandalous spoliation and injustice. Why was it that the Land Act was regarded both by the landlords and the tenants to be a signal failure? Because it ignored the real difficulty of the situation, and proceeded upon entirely wrong ground. If the Land Act was to be a success, it ought to be an immediate success—by which he meant that its effects, to have the appearance of success, must be quick in showing themselves; because in the long run the seeds of that measure were sure to bear the fruit of disastrous failure. What did the right hon. Gentleman's own Commission and other authorities state had been the real cause of the land difficulty in Ireland? Why, land hunger; and how did the Land Act propose to deal with that overpowering land hunger? It allowed land hunger still to rule the roast. Under the principle of free sale, so-called, it enabled the out-going tenant to appropriate the landlord's property and sell it to somebody else. The land hunger, they were told, formerly enabled the landlord to exact a rack rent. That had not been satisfactorily proved. But the new legislation had encouraged a system of rack premiums; and who was it that profited by them? Not the person to whom the land belonged; not the occupier of the land in perpetuity; not the person who was to till the soil; but the out-going tenant, or, more properly speaking, the gombeen man, or the money-lender. The occupier in the future would still be ground down; but it would no longer be by rack rent, but by what was far worse—by the interest he had to pay on a rack premium. Assuming, for the sake of argument only—what he did not admit—that the landlord had in the past unduly taken advantage of circumstances, the landlord had had a permanent interest in the soil; if he exacted an undue rent he was always there to be taken to account and dealt with, perhaps in the somewhat rough-and-ready fashion in which he had been of late; but, at any rate, he was there. The man who exacted the rack premium would not be there; he would not be amenable even to the arguments of "Captain Moonlight;" and the rack premiums would weigh on the poor tenantry far more heavily than the rack rent. They had been told, in the course of a recent debate, that there was a marked improvement in the state of Ireland. His faith was not so robust as that of some who sat near him. He believed he stood alone in challenging that statement. He said, from sources of information which he had, that that was too optimist a view. He found, from the ordinary sources of information, that atrocities and outrages, even if they had numerically diminished, had in gravity increased. No one knew that better than the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland. The Judges'

Charges entirely refuted the optimist allegations of the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the Prime Minister. What did Mr. Justice Barry, formerly a Law Officer of the Crown in a Liberal Government, say? He said, addressing the Grand Jury of the county of Clare, he regretted very much that he was far from being in a position to congratulate them on the condition of the county. Unfortunately, it was impossible not to see that there was a general spirit of insubordination and of lawlessness. And Mr. Justice Barry went on to say—

> "Your labours will be light, and, under possible circumstances, this might be a matter for congratulation; but, under existing circumstances, it is not so, for, as a member of the Bar yesterday expressed it, there is no absence of crime, but there is an absence of criminals being made amenable."

The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland remarked that he had often said that before. Well, they had not had the advantage of the presence of the right hon. Gentleman in the House for some time; and he must say, if anything was required to prove that the state of the country was far worse than it was at the time that that optimist paragraph was inserted in the Queen's Speech, he would point to the absence from his place in Parliament of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman would not have been guilty of the discourtesy of being absent during an important debate affecting his own Department, had it not been for grave reasons of State. He need not detain the House, for the right hon. Gentleman admitted it.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Admitted what?

MR. J. LOWTHER: That the state of Ireland was far graver than the Government was aware of when the Queen's Speech was framed.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: No; I have not admitted that.

MR. J. LOWTHER: What, then, did the right hon. Gentleman admit? He stated why it was that the right hon. Gentleman was absent from his place during an important debate, and the right hon. Gentleman nodded acquiescence. He said it was because grave reasons of State compelled the right hon. Gentleman to be absent. He declined to recur to the alternative, which he dismissed out of courtesy to the right hon. Gentleman—namely, that he deliberately absented himself without sufficient excuse. ["Oh, oh!"] He quite acquitted the right hon. Gentleman of that. [*Cries of* "Divide!" "Order!" *and* "Adjourn!"] He would like to give the House very briefly another piece of evidence. He saw that, no later than Sunday last, a man was brutally assaulted upon the high road. The description was given in *The Freeman's Journal*, and the case was of sufficient importance to entitle him to ask hon. Gentlemen anxious to contract the debate to be so good as to listen. Lawrence O'Hara, a farmer and poor-rate collector, residing near Boyle, while proceeding to Mass, accompanied by 50 others, was met by three persons with guns, who fired at O'Hara, and shattered his body with shot. That was a matter in which the Prime Minister, in his capacity of Chancellor of the Exchequer, might feel some interest, because the wounded man was stated to have incurred animosity by endeavouring to collect the seed rate, and had lately been afforded police protection. His object was to show, not only the serious demoralization of the people in that neighbourhood, but that those who sought to remedy the wrongs of Ireland by advances from the funds must be cautious in what they did. The demoralization to which he referred was really attributable to the system of legislation which had been begun 11 years ago by Her Majesty's Government. That was, a system of paying hush money to the people of Ireland—that hush money consisting of other people's money. They knew very well what was the invariable result of having recourse to hush money. Those who studied the criminal statistics were perfectly aware of what it was. What had been the result of giving the tenants of Ireland, in 1870, a slice of their landlord's property? It was what might have been anticipated—the appetite for so palatable a morsel increased; and that would continue to be the case. The Prime Minister took him to task for repeating in the House a statement he had made elsewhere, that the numerical majority of the people of Ireland were always ready to support candidates who represented to the greatest available extent hostility to the British connection. The right hon. Gentleman had more than once turned round and pointed to the hon. Member for the County of

Cork (Mr. Shaw) as a representative of a large and important section of opinion in Ireland. If the right hon. Gentleman relied upon the hon. Member for the County of Cork as a representative of the popular opinion in Ireland he rested upon a bruised reed. He had great respect for the hon. Member, and therefore he would not say, in the slang phrase of America, that he was played out. What he said was this, that whenever an opportunity presented itself in the South or West of Ireland of trying conclusions between the policy of the Prime Minister and that of those who more explicitly stated their desire for a legislative separation of Ireland from Great Britain, the balance invariably inclined in favour of the more extreme view. Where, for example, was the Ministerial candidate for Meath? But it was hardly worth while to pursue that topic further. The Prime Minister had within the last few weeks opened up a new chapter in our history. On a former occasion, he pointed out to the people of Ireland the proper method by which Irish reforms could be obtained. The outrage at Manchester, and the outrage at Clerkenwell had, he said, been the indirect cause of Irish reforms. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] What did the right hon. Gentleman say at Edinburgh, in that speech which his noble Friend the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton) quoted the other night in the third person, but of which he was happy to say he had procured a report in the first person? He said—

> "Lord Grey, in relation to the past gives two glaring instances to show how dangerous a man this Mr. Gladstone is—the abolition of the Irish Church and the reform of the Irish Land Law. I do not agree with Lord Grey as to the enormity of this danger. There is a great deal of difficulty still to contend with in the state of Ireland; but that the people of Ireland want to be detached from the people of this country, I say frankly, I do not believe. It is an old woman's apprehension. Lord Grey misrepresents me in saying I said that the murder of a policeman made the people of England see that the Irish Church must be abolished. I never said anything approaching that. What I said was that two great crimes committed in England led the people to consider the state of Ireland."

Those were the words of the Prime Minister, and he would leave the House to discriminate between Tweedledum and Tweedledee. As he was anxious to save the time of the House, he would not pursue that question further. He should like, in conclusion, to refer to one very stock argument of the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues—namely, that an Act once passed, there could be no criticism upon it. In fact, he (Mr. J. Lowther) had frequently been taken to task for having spoken disparagingly of Land Acts which happened to be the law of the land. Now the truth was, he had invariably said, with perhaps wearisome iteration, that when once an Act had obtained the Royal sanction, he for one clearly recognized that vested rights and interests sprang up under it, and he would not be a party to its abolition or to the curtailment of its advantages to those who profited by them without compensation. The right hon. Gentleman, in talking to him in that fashion, seemed to forget that there was not an Act upon the Statute Book which had not at some time or other been assailed by him or his Colleagues. Nay, there was not an institution of the Realm which had not been assailed by them. Was that Motion they were now discussing calculated to increase the respect of the people for an integral portion of the institutions of the country? And there was an institution even higher than the House of Lords which had not escaped the criticism, and he regretted to say more than the criticism, of some of those who occupied the Treasury Bench. And what were the thanks that they on the Opposition side of the House received, if they accepted as a necessity any Act of Parliament passed by the large majority of the the right hon. Gentleman? Why, only the other night, the right hon. Gentleman told him that his mouth was closed against the Land Act of 1881, because that measure had been reluctantly accepted by the House of Lords. That was encouraging, he must say, to the Opposition side of the House, to make the best of the situation when they found themselves in a minority. It was not calculated to deter him from the course he had always adopted of opposing to the utmost of his power any measure to which he objected. The Acts which he had from time to time taken the liberty to take exception to were quoted afterwards as a precedent, not only for their extension in Ireland, but for their adaptation to this portion of the United Kingdom; and he hoped, in these circumstances, the right hon. Gentleman would not expect Members on the Opposition side of the House to accept any measure without opposition for the sake of obviating any embarrassments to the Government. He thanked the House for the attention with which they had listened to him, and he trusted that the result of this debate would be to mark the sense, even if it were not that of a majority, still that of a commanding and a respectable minority in that House, that there were grave dangers in the course which the right hon. Gentleman invited the House to pursue, and would show that, at any rate, a large section of popular opinion in this country was opposed to that course, and that one Party in the State was not prepared to follow it.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said: It cannot be denied that a great deal of this debate has been singularly irrelevant to the question before the House, and I do not think that the speech which has just been delivered can be considered to be an exception to the rule. The question of the condition of Ireland, interesting and important as it is, is not the question before the House. We discussed the condition of Ireland at the commencement of the Session, on the Address in reply to Her Majesty's Gracious Speech, for the space of nine days, and I think we may be excused if we do not refer again on this totally different issue to the question of the condition of Ireland. I will not follow the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Lowther) in his discursive remarks upon the present condition of Ireland and the absence of my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary. I will only say, with regard to his observations in reference to the Seed Act, and the demoralization of the people, which he thinks resulted from that Act——

MR. J. LOWTHER: I never said the Seed Act demoralized the people of Ireland. I myself promoted it. What I did say was, that an assault committed on a rate-collector, engaged in collecting rates under the Seed Act, showed that the demoralization of the country was of very great extent.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I understood the right hon. Gentleman to refer to the outrage which took place in connection with the collection of rates under the Seed Act as proving that the demoralization of the people was not checked, if it was not, indeed, encouraged, by lavish grants out of the public Exchequer. If I misunderstood the right hon. Gentleman I am very sorry, but certainly I understood the right hon. Gentleman to refer to the Seed Act and the demoralization of the people in connection with lavish grants. I was very glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman declaim against the demoralization of the people of Ireland by the lavish grants which have been made to them, because I find we may now hope to have the support of the right hon. Gentleman in resisting further demoralization of the people from the same source; for I have heard that side of the House urge, more frequently certainly than this side of the House, proposals involving subventions from the Exchequer for public works, for emigration purposes, for the promotion of fisheries, and grants for other purposes which in this country are considered to be a proper field for private enterprize, but which, in the opinion of some hon. Members opposite, appear to be in Ireland proper subjects for subvention from the Imperial Exchequer. Well, Sir, if the condition of Ireland is not the question before the House, neither are the principles nor the policy of the Land Act of 1881. That Act is the law of the land, for good or for evil. [*Cheers.*] It is the law; and I am not going to be drawn, by the cheers of hon. Gentlemen opposite, into a discussion whether it is for good or for evil. The question was discussed during almost the whole of last Session; and I will freely admit there is more excuse for the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down than for many other hon. Gentlemen to give us his opinion of the Land Act of 1881, because, on account of circumstances over which he had no control, he was not in a position to favour us last Session with that opinion. Sir, there is no proposal before us for the amendment of the Land Act of 1881; and I think it will be admitted, even by hon. Gentlemen opposite, that if the inquiry which is now taking place by the Committee of the House of Lords, or any other inquiry which could be instituted, should result in fresh legislation on the subject of the Land Law, that legislation must be based upon principles not widely differing from those which were accepted and acted upon by

Parliament last Session. Notwithstanding this, a large part, I think I may say the greater part, of this debate has dealt with the principles and the policy of the Land Act of last year. The hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) devoted a good half of his speech to commenting upon the principles and the policy of that Act, which I understand him to say he voted for, but which he now appears to sincerely regret having voted for. Another portion of his speech was devoted to an attack upon my hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General for Ireland, and not more than a quarter of his speech was directed to the only question I know to be now before the House—namely, the mode in which the Irish Land Act has been administered. Certainly there is one Party in the House which I can understand, and which I believe really does desire fresh legislation on this subject; but such fresh legislation as they would desire would be in exactly the contrary direction from that which the great bulk of hon. Members opposite would wish to see it carried. No doubt, hon. Members representing extreme opinions in Ireland do desire legislation based upon fresh principles, and, naturally, they would approve of a proposal for inquiry into the working of the Land Act coming from any quarter, because such a proposal would tend to show that the Land Question in Ireland was still an open question. But I can well conceive that any legislation which would be favoured by those hon. Members to whom I am referring would not very well be in the interests of those represented by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. The only issues before the House now are some such as these. Is the Act passed by Parliament last year being fairly and honestly administered? Is any inquiry at this time, within six months of the passing of that Act, likely to have a beneficial effect on its operation? Will not such an inquiry rather impair its beneficial operation? And, lastly, is there any cause, founded either on Constitutional practice or reasonable policy, why this House should not declare its opinion upon the action which has been taken in regard to an inquiry by the House of Lords? If time permitted, I should like to refer to a few remarkable incidents in the long debate which has taken place which were once fresh in the recollection of the House, but which have, no doubt, now somewhat faded from its memory. I should like to remind the House how, on last Monday week, the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition rose amid the cheers of his Followers, and, after due Notice given, stood forward as the champion of the House of Lords. Not only was he prepared to defend the House of Lords when attacked, but he would also prevent its being attacked at all. The House will remember how the cheers which greeted the right hon. Gentleman when he rose faded away when it turned out that the right hon. Gentleman had re-considered the Notice he had given, and how he rose only to ask for an explanation of the action of the Government, and how at last he sat down without informing the House whether he intended to resist the Motion for the postponement of the Orders of the Day or not. The House will also recollect the vigorous attack which was made by the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin) in that short debate on the Land Act, in which he pointed out and showed, as he has endeavoured to show again to-night, that in his opinion an inquiry into its operation was a foregone conclusion. The hon. Gentleman, with that modesty for which he is so eminently distinguished, has to-night disclaimed the mild and soft impeachment that he was on that occasion representing the House of Lords. The House of Lords might hesitate before they intrusted even so able a Member with their representation in this House. An hon. Member from Ireland stated in his speech what he believed to be the aim and object of the inquiry which it is now proposed to institute into the operation of the Land Act. I cannot help thinking that that speech, able and eloquent as it was, somewhat spoilt the strategic movement contemplated by the Leader of the Opposition, and the division which took place seemed to me to take place under somewhat disastrous circumstances. The hon. and gallant Member for Sussex (Sir Walter B. Bartellot) almost complained of the conduct of Mr. Speaker in calling upon two Members representing Irish constituencies below the Gangway to act as Tellers in that Division. I must say, Sir, that I shared the hon. and gallant Member's regret. I wish your eyes had rested on the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), as I think it would have been still more edifying, as showing the nature of a certain alliance—the singular alliance—which exists between the Conservative Party and the extreme Irish Party in its true light. I am not sure that the Party opposite was not doomed to further disappointment in the course of that evening. When the right hon. Gentleman the junior Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) rose to oppose the Motion of my right hon. Friend, he did not meet the Resolution either with a direct negative or with an Amendment. He declined to ask the House to contradict the assertion contained in the Resolution—he declined to ask the House to say that Parliamentary inquiry at the present time into the working of the Land Act would not tend to defeat the operation of the Act, or be injurious to the permanent peace and good government of Ireland. I must say that although, until towards the close of his speech, he never alluded to the "Previous Question," which he was about to move, the whole speech was eminently adapted to an Amendment of that description. He referred to some of the precedents—especially to the precedent of 1839—but he wisely declined to follow the example which was set by Sir Robert Peel in 1839. In 1839, a Resolution somewhat resembling that which has now been moved by my right hon. Friend was met by Sir Robert Peel. But how? It was met by an Amendment which was prefaced by a Preamble containing a statement of facts and a recital of reasons why the Resolution should not be agreed to. The right hon. Gentleman would have found himself somewhat embarrassed if he had attempted to draw up a Resolution based upon these lines. In 1839, Sir Robert Peel was able to say—

> "It is not fit that this House should adopt a proceeding which has the appearance of calling in question the undoubted right of the House of Lords to inquire into the state of Ireland, in respect to crime and outrage, more especially when the exercise of that right by the House of Lords does not interfere with any previous proceeding or resolution of the House of Commons, nor with the progress of any legislative measure assented to by the House of Commons, or at present under its consideration." —[3 *Hansard*, xlvii. 76-77.]

If the right hon. Gentleman could have repeated the latter part of that allegation, as perhaps he might have done, with literal accuracy, he would have raised an awkward question whether the present proceeding of the House of Lords did not interfere with a measure not now under the consideration of the House of Commons, but which was lately under the consideration of Parliament, which was passed by both Houses of Parliament, and which has not yet had time to develop itself. He urged that the House of Lords had had insufficient warning, and none of these consequences were foretold in the debate in the House of Lords. I shall not refer in detail to the speeches made in the House of Lords; but the House will allow me the same latitude as was allowed to the right hon. Gentleman. I have read the whole of that debate in the House of Lords, and it appears to me that the Members of the Government in the House of Lords gave strong and adequate reasons to show why an inquiry into the action of the Land Court at the present time must paralyze its operation; and if they were unable to see that the paralysis of the Land Act would exercise a prejudicial and baneful effect on the cause of law and order in Ireland, I think the Conservative Party in the House of Lords is not so intelligent as Members of this House give them credit for. I can only say that Members of the Government in the other House opposed the Motion with all their strength, and they used those arguments which they thought most likely to convince and prevail upon the House of Lords; and I can hardly think that the right hon. Gentleman was serious when he alleged the other day that the consequences of that Motion were not adequately presented to the House of Lords. Then the right hon. Gentleman said those consequences, if they existed, might have been met in another way. He said the Prime Minister could have got a question asked in the House of Commons, to which he could have given an answer as long and as full as he liked, and he could have disclaimed all responsibility for the inquiry instituted by the House of Lords. I think the proceeding that we have taken is more respectful to the House of Lords than that recommended by the right hon. Gentleman. I do not think that the consequences of a formal proceeding such as that we were invited to take could or ought to be neutralized by any explanation from a Minister in another House. The right hon. Gentleman did not attempt to defend inquiry into the judicial operation of the Act. I admit that he said he could not approve of an inquiry which would favour of interference with the judicial administration of the Act or lessen the independence of the Court.

Mr. GIBSON: That was quoted against me, and I at once rejected the accuracy of the report, and said that I had used the words "the independence of its judicial administration." The noble Lord will find in some of the reports that correction of mine on the same night.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON:

> "He would not be favourable to an inquiry which would be an interference with the judicial administration of the Act, or lessen the independence of the Commission."

The sense appears to me to be the same. On what ground has the inquiry been justified? Why, the only ground on which it was defended and justified by the House of Lords was the ground that a review of the judicial administration of the Act by the Land Court, and especially by the Sub-Commissioners, was necessary and urgent. That was the ground, and the only ground, upon which the inquiry was demanded in the other House. The right hon. Gentleman intimated various points which he said might properly, and without harm, form the subject of inquiry. But the subjects were never referred to or mentioned in the other House—or only for the purpose of being set aside. The speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the senior Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket), the speech of the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton), the speech of the hon. Member for Leitrim (Mr. Tottenham), and that of the hon. Member for Portarlington (Mr. Fitzpatrick) have all defended the inquiry upon grounds based solely on the necessity of a review of the judicial decisions which have been pronounced. The noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Lord Claud Hamilton) even made it a matter of accusation against my right hon. Friend at the head of the Government, that he allowed the Sub-Commissioners to proceed in their Courts as they had done—as if my right hon. Friend had power to control the action of the Land Court and that of the Sub-Commissioners, who were appointed under the authority of the Government, but not under the authority of an Act of Parliament. Well, then, Sir, the charge which has been made against the Commissioners is that they have made indiscriminate reductions of rent—made reductions upon false principles. I shall have a word to say upon that by-and-bye. Those were the grounds upon which the inquiry was defended in the House of Lords, and the grounds upon which the inquiry has been justified in this House; and it is in vain for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) to attempt to prove that this inquiry will be innocuous, because it will be limited to topics to which it was not the object or desire of the Committee to limit the inquiry—namely, to the opera- of the Purchase Clauses, the Reclamation Clauses, and the Emigration Clauses. It is perfectly easy to understand why those clauses cannot yet have had their full operation. To the Purchase Clauses I still attach as much importance as I have ever attached to them, and I believe that in them will be found ultimately the most useful portion of the Act. It is perfectly natural, in the state of uncertainty which now prevails, to expect that until some certain knowledge is arrived at as to the basis upon which future rents are to be fixed, until a larger number of decisions as to fair rents have been given, and until the country has resumed a greater state of tranquillity, to expect that the tenants will come forward to buy their holdings. They will desire, in the first instance, to have some certainty as to the terms upon which they will be allowed to enjoy them. There is another portion of the Act of which we have heard a little, and to which some importance is attached. That is the Free Sale Clause. That clause was considered, especially in Ulster, to be as important as any other in the Act. That clause has as yet had but little operation, but I think that hereafter it will have considerable operation. The same causes which have prevented the Purchase Clauses of the Act from having any extended operation have also retarded the operation of this clause. Well, then, I think Sir, we are justified in asking, at all events, that the House ought to decide before it goes to a division upon which basis this inquiry—if there is to be an inquiry—is to be held.

Is it to be an inquiry into the judicial operation of the rent-fixing clauses of the Act? Or is it to be an inquiry into those matters which were indicated by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson)? If into the latter, I say the time is too soon; the inquiry is premature; there are no materials for entering upon the inquiry. If the former, I say that the inquiry cannot but be injurious at the present time, inasmuch as it must interfere with the freedom and independence of the Land Courts, and of the Sub-Commissioners. Then Sir, we are told that concessions have been made by the House of Lords which might form the basis of a compromise. I might reply to any such allegation, that a formal reference to the Act by one branch of the Legislature cannot be qualified by any such informal invitations as have been received from the Chairman of the Committee of the House of Lords, and that any such proposal can only produce misunderstanding, and cannot form a sufficiently definite basis for a compromise. It has been publicly intimated that the Committee does not consider it within the scope of the reference made to them by the House to inquire into the correctness of any judicial decisions which the Land Commissioners or the Sub-Commissioners, in the exercise of their judicial functions, may have arrived at. If an informal assurance of that sort, could, under any circumstances, be accepted as the basis of a compromise, I say that intimation is utterly insufficient. No one ever supposed that the Committee of the House of Lords was appointed to review the decisions which have actually been made and to endeavour to correct those decisions. What is still supposed is that they will review the grounds of those decisions with the view of altering the future operations of the Courts. Under that explanation, it remains open to the Committee to summon before them the Commissioners themselves and the Sub-Commissioners, to examine them as tc their opinions, their antecedents, their character, their associations, and the principles upon which they have proceeded. In fact, the proposal which is made is to endeavour to force them to do that which the House of Commons itself attempted to do last year, and which it found itself unable to do—namely, to endeavour to frame a definition of the basis of a fair rent. The House will recollect that last year the Bill contained a definition of fair rent. After long discussions, that definition was omitted, with the consent of both sides of the House, and mainly at the instance of hon. Gentleman on the other side. The hon. and learned Member for Antrim (Mr. Macnaghten), in his speech on the second reading, said—

> "I believe that nothing more is required than to direct the Court to determine what is a fair rent under all the circumstances of the case. If the Court cannot find out what a fair rent is in any particular case, the Judges certainly will not be worth their salary; they will only be fit for the lunatic asylum with which the hon. Member for Cork County (Mr. Shaw) threatened Judges who fail to understand this Bill."—[3 *Hansard*, cclxi. 312-3.]

That was the opinion of the hon. and learned Member for Antrim. That was the opinion unanimously accepted by the House of Commons; and the House of Commons having deliberately abstained from inserting in the Bill a definition of a fair rent, on what principle of fairness or of policy is it now endeavoured to force the Land Commissioners and the Sub-Commissioners to give a definition which the House of Commons was unable to frame for itself? Then the appointment of the Sub-Commissioners has been attacked, and one of the grounds on which this inquiry is advocated has been that an investigation of the grounds of their appointment is desirable. My right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland is mainly responsible for the appointment of the Sub-Commissioners. My right hon. Friend is prepared to justify those appointments; but he maintains, and the Government maintain, that if those appointments are attacked they ought to be attacked in this House, where he will be able to meet any charges which are brought against the Sub-Commissioners, and to state the grounds on which they were appointed. If these appointments are to be challenged, why cannot a Vote of Censure be brought forward, either upon the Government or upon my right hon. Friend? If improper appointments have been made, it does not require a Committee to prove them. The unfitness of the Commissioners for the post can be proved in this House, where my right hon. Friend would have an opportunity of meeting the vague charges brought against the Sub-Commissioners. The character of those charges has been shown by the attack made by the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) this evening on my hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General for Ireland. The hon. Member directly imputed to the Government that the Sub-Commissioners had been appointed as a reward —for political services to my hon. and learned Friend. But my hon. and learned Friend has shown that two, at all events, of these gentlemen had nothing to do with the Derry Election. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members who laugh were not in the House when my hon. and learned Friend answered this charge. While I am referring to the speech of the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), let me just allude to another portion of it. He imputed to my hon. and learned Friend that he and his supporters had deliberately corrupted the electors of Derry, by holding out to them promises of advantage from the operation of the Land Act. Sir, the Land Act was a great political question, which occupied the attention of Parliament and of the country during the whole of the previous year. It was still, and, as the present debate shows, it is still, a political question, and do hon. Members suppose that it was possible to exclude a question like the operation of the Land Act from a county election in Ireland? Why, Sir, it was absolutely necessary and inevitable—I will not say that it was not legitimate—that both sides should discuss the operation of the Land Act. Both sides did discuss it, and they discussed it with the utmost freedom. But what is this imputation? It is that my hon. and learned Friend and his supporters did endeavour to pervert and influence the electors of the county of Derry in the discharge of their political duty, by the hope of personal advantage. ["Hear, hear!"] I think hon. Members are somewhat premature in cheering, for the electors of the county of Derry are not the only persons personally interested in the operation of the Act. I should like to know how many Peers who voted for the inquiry in "another place," or how many hon. Members in this House, who have supported this inquiry, are personally interested? I suppose, and I hope, that the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), and his Friends who cheered, would resent any imputation that any of those noble Lords or hon. Members in this House are actuated in their votes, with regard to this measure, by any idea of its effects upon themselves personally. But, Sir, if they are ready, as I trust they are, to disclaim any such imputation, what right have they to impute to the electors of the county of Londonderry that they are influenced in the discharge of their political duty, by the hope of personal advantage, any more than they are themselves? I maintain that the concessions which have been offered by the Committee of the House of Lords are no concessions at all. I say that the clear original intentions of the House of Lords are still maintained; not that they are going to review individual cases, which we never apprehended they would do, but that they intend to review the principles upon which the Commissioners have acted, to impeach those principles, and, if possible, to reverse them. And how is that to be done? It is to be effected, if possible, by a process of intimidation by the Committee, and if it cannot be done by a process of intimidation, then it is to be done by fresh legislation. The question was put to the majority in "another place," and it was answered by the cheers of that majority, that fresh legislation was to be brought in. It is precisely on that ground that the hon. Member opposite says there must be fresh legislation. I say it is precisely on that ground, also, that we deprecate this inquiry, which is a reopening of the Land Question, an impediment to the operation of the Act of last year, and an inducement to further agitation. The speech delivered by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) has been referred to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), who asked us whether we did not think that speech had done as much to injure the Land Act as any inquiry could do? I cannot help feeling that occasions would have been found for delivering that speech even if this Motion had not been made; but I should think it might have occurred to the right hon. Gentleman that it offered some grounds for conjecture as to the nature of the questions that would be raised by the reopening of any subject dealt with by the Land Act. I should have thought that speech might have suggested to the right hon. Gentleman and his Friends some reflections as to the cause of this strange and unnatural alliance and combination between hon. Members opposite and those sitting below the Gangway. Whether they will vote together against this Motion I cannot tell; but they have been united throughout the debate which has taken place upon it. They have been united in the endeavour to discredit the operation of the Land Act; they have been united in the endeavour to institute an inquiry, hostile in its character, to the Land Act, and they have been united in endeavouring to institute an inquiry which will be the prelude to fresh legislation. Does the right hon. Gentleman suppose that the objects which the hon. Member for Sligo has in view are in the interest of Irish landlords, and such as hon. Gentlemen opposite would desire to promote? The hon. Member for Sligo has referred to poor tenants in the West of Ireland, who paid rents of from £10 to £15 a-year, and he asks—"What is the use of a reduction of £2 or £3 rent to tenants of this character, burdened as they are with arrears?" To what, then, did the speech of the hon. Member for Sligo point? Why, to a much greater reduction in the rents of these poor tenants; it pointed to placing them in possession of their farms rent free, either by a total confiscation of the property of the landlords, or by fresh legislation. Such are the doctrines which hon. Members opposite seem to be desirous of promoting, by means of this inquiry, and that, too, at a time when Ireland requires rest from agitation, and breathing time, in order that the effects of the Land Act may develop. It seems to be their desire, when this repose is so much needed, to add a Parliamentary agitation to the agitation which already exists. Can it be denied that such a re-opening of the Irish Land Question is injurious to the interest of good government in Ireland? In my opinion it is fatal to it, and it is also fatal to the good faith of Parliament, which, on the solicitation of those responsible for the government of Ireland, conferred on us powers of an exceptional character, for the preservation of peace in that country. Those powers, as the House is aware, have been largely used. They have been used to defend the rights of landlords. They were asked, and granted on the faith of the pledge, that, at the same time, we would also apply to Parliament for a measure relating to the Land Laws of Ireland. That pledge was redeemed, and Parliament did pass the measure, which was the supplement to our Coercion Bill. But, Sir, within six months of the passing of that Act, the question is to be reopened, and as hon. Members opposite seem to think, new legislation is to be introduced, which shall have the effect of taking away something that the Land Act has given to the tenants in Ireland. If that result is to follow, then I venture to say that these coercive powers, which we are now using in defence of the landlords, have been obtained under false pretences. Before I conclude, let me say a few words as to the expediency of the censure which, it is said, we propose to pass on the other House of Parliament. I do not deny, and I am perfectly willing to admit, that the difference of opinion between the two Houses is unfortunate, or it may be unwise; but I do not admit that a difference of opinion, frankly proclaimed, necessarily constitutes censure. What has happened? One House of Parliament, in the perfect exercise of its right and discretion, has selected an Act from the Statute Book, and has ordered an inquiry into that Statute to be made. In the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, and in the opinion of the majority of this House, that inquiry is inexpedient. We do not propose to prevent it; we cannot prevent it; but we propose to do what we can legitimately do, and that is to ask this House to express its opinion as to the inexpediency of that inquiry, as clearly as the opinion of the other House of Parliament has been expressed to the contrary. We ask this House to do what it can to neutralize what we believe to be the bad effects of the action taken by the House of Lords. We did not provoke this debate. It did not proceed from a desire on the part of the Government to obtain a Vote of Confidence, either in its policy, or in the operation of the Land Act. But the Land Act has been attacked by the House of Lords; and, for the purpose of restoring the confidence of the people of Ireland in the Act, we express our opinion that the proposed inquiry is inexpedient, and injurious to the interests of good government in Ireland. On this question Parliament is not unanimous. We admit that the want of unanimity is a misfortune; but we are also of opinion that in this case unanimity between the two Houses of Parliament would be a still greater misfortune. On what grounds is it asserted that this inquiry will be inexpedient? No one denies that this House has a perfect right to canvass the proceedings of the other House, which are formally and officially brought to its notice. The objections which are raised to the present Motion seem to proceed on one or two assumptions, both of which are, in my opinion, inconsistent with the dignity and power of the other House. Those assumptions are, that the other House is something too sacred to be touched, or that it is something too fragile to be touched. Irresponsible power is not good for anyone to exercise, and the House of Lords is no exception to that principle. We cannot make the House of Lords responsible for the government of Ireland. We cannot fasten upon them the whole burden of that responsibility. We say that in this instance they have interposed a grave and serious obstacle and difficulty in the task of governing Ireland, and we think it our duty to cast upon them the responsibility for their action. Such a proceeding is no censure. It is no menace, no attack upon the House of Lords, and does not tend in any way to weaken its authority, its dignity, or its power. In my opinion, the real danger to the authority and dignity of the House of Lords would be that any Government should suppose that its action was so unreasonable or so insignificant that it was not deserving of serious notice. For the reasons I have given, I hope the House will pass the Resolution which has been proposed by my right hon. Friend.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India has been pleased to find fault with a considerable number of those hon. Gentlemen who have taken part in the debate on this Motion for having gone beyond the subject immediately before them, and for having entered into discussions as to the merits or demerits of the Land Act, and into other matters which he considers to be entirely beside the question. Now, if there is any inconvenience—and I am not prepared to say that there may not have been some—in such a discussion as that in which we have been engaged during the last two weeks, I say that the responsibility for having entered upon that discussion rests entirely with the Government. It was of their own option, and in spite of the protest which we put in against it, that they called upon the House to enter upon a discussion which, as they were warned from the first, would necessarily run into a variety of subjects. The matter goes even beyond that, because not only was there a certainty that when once we began to discuss such a question as this, we should be led into a general discussion upon the merits or demerits of some portions of the Land Act and the condition of Ireland; but the actual form which the Government chose for the Resolution, which they ask us to adopt, challenges such an inquiry. What, after all, has taken place? The House of Lords, some time ago, in the exercise of its undoubted and unquestioned right, determined to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into "the working of recent legislation with reference to land in Ireland;" and what is the way in which the Government take notice of that Resolution? They bring forward a Motion that Parliamentary inquiry—that is by either House—into the working of the Land Act tends to defeat the operation of that Act, and must be injurious to the interests of good government in Ireland. I will not say that these two propositions are not true; but, at all events, they are not self-evident. They are propositions which required discussion; and it was absolutely necessary that, in connection with the first of them, we should so far discuss the character and the working of the Land Act as to say whether a Parliamentary inquiry would necessarily defeat its operation; and, further, it was necessary that we should go into the proofs which might be adduced of the second proposition, that a Parliamentary inquiry would be "injurious to the interests of good government in Ireland." Whatever the noble Marquess may have made out of the report of the debate in the House of Lords, we cannot help seeing that neither of those two propositions—at any rate the second proposition—was not put forward by the Government with the same distinctness as in the debate on the Select Committee. We could not but see that these propositions, if they could be supported, were very strong ones; but they were not demonstrated, even in that eloquent speech to which we listened at the beginning of this debate. In that speech we had strong assertion, but, I venture to say, very little indeed in the way of argument. We could not but feel that the step which was taken by the Government, in challenging the decision of the House of Lords, was one which was open to many minor objections. I call it a minor objection that we were obliged to lay aside other Business of importance; and another such objection is, that we ran the risk of producing something like a collision between the two branches of the Legislature. I do not think that a difference of opinion, even strongly expressed, between the two branches of the Legislature does necessarily lead to that; but I say that when affairs in Ireland are in the condition in which they are represented to be, and as, no doubt, they are, it ought to be a matter for serious consideration whether even the semblance of collision might not do harm by weakening the cause of good government in that country. This House has been exposed to a difficulty to which, I think, we ought not to be exposed. Supposing you pass this Resolution by a most overwhelming majority, you do not stop the action of the House of Lords; and the result is that you place this House in the somewhat undignified and difficult position of having expended a great amount of what is commonly called *brutum fulmen*, and of having laid down the proposition that something that you cannot stop is having the effect of defeating the operation of the Land Act, and injuring the interests of good government in Ireland. Moreover, there is the further objection, to which I have alluded—namely, that, by their action, the Government have brought about the discussion of the very subject they wished to exclude. But so strong is the feeling of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister that he cannot forego his objections to the inquiry. The noble Marquess says there was something stated as to communications between the Representatives of the House of Lords and the Government in this matter, and that such communications could not possibly have taken place, because, when once the House of Lords had appointed its Committee, it would have been undignified and impossible to enter into anything in the nature of agreement or contract. But the Prime Minister, in this House, on the very day he brought forward this Motion, stated that if the House of Lords would so limit its inquiries as suggested then he would be prepared to pause in bringing forward his Resolution. I cannot help thinking that if such was the condition of the mind of the Government, they might have answered a little more respectfully the communication addressed to them by the Chairman of the Committee of the House of Lords on the subject of confining the Order of Reference.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I said that the communication did not form any basis of compromise.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I quite agree that the noble Marquess took that objection; but he also suggested that communications of the kind indicated could not have been made with the House of Lords. However, I do not think it worth while to say anything further upon that point. What is the objection of the right hon. Gentleman to the proceeding of the House of Lords? His objection is—and it has been repeated over and over again—that it will interfere with the judicial administration of the Land Act. Now, that is a consideration which has been distinctly imported into this discussion. Those words having reference to interference with the judicial administration of the Land Act do not occur in the Resolution of the House of Lords, nor in the Motion offered to the acceptance of the House of Commons. They have been introduced by the Prime Minister himself, and we are, therefore, bound to inquire into their force and meaning. *Primâ facie* there was nothing wrong, at the beginning of the operation of so important a piece of legislation, in the wish to see how it was working. Confessedly, the Land Act was a piece of legislation of a bold and original character, overriding, to a great extent, the acknowledged principles of politics and political economy on which we have hitherto acted; it dealt with questions of the gravest importance and difficulty; and I say it was not unnatural, as soon as it got fairly into operation, that we should desire to see what that operation was like—not exactly on paper, but how it was actually working. The inquiry was obviously one which would show where there were defects in the Act, and where there were points to be supplied—not necessarily such as would alter the Act or destroy it, but points that would supplement it and have the effect of removing obstacles to its working; and, amongst the matters which suggest themselves for inquiry, I may instance the great block of business in the Land Courts and the question of arrears. But we are not allowed to look into the working of the Act. The noble Marquess opposite suggested that the House of Lords was either too sacred to be touched or too fragile to be touched. I think the House of Lords can bear that operation pretty well; but the question seems to me to be whether your Land Act is not too sacred or too fragile to be touched? Sir, the Land Act is not a piece of conjuring machinery, the effect of which will be altogether destroyed if you allow people to look at it and see what is going on. It is an important piece of legislation, which is actually affecting the relations between different classes in Ireland, and affecting them in the most serious manner. I should have thought, if you want to produce peace and confidence, as well as good feeling and a general acceptance of the Act, that it would be of the highest importance to get it thoroughly understood by all the parties concerned with its operation. There are some difficulties in the position which are alarming to the landlords, others to the tenants, and others, again, which, as far as I can see, are alarming to the Government itself. Undoubtedly, whatever else may be said of it, there is danger of friction; and that friction it seems desirable to remove, if it can be removed, before it becomes intolerable. I do not suppose there is any Member of this House who would deny the proposition that, whether the Land Act is working well or ill, it is working unexpectedly. You did not expect to find this immense block of business, this mass of arrears, and the dissatisfaction which prevails in many quarters. You did not expect, within six months of the passing of the Act, to have 600 men in gaol; neither did you expect to be told that the Land Act would be followed by terrorism and outrages upon that portion of the farming class which was endeavouring to live honestly and straightforwardly; nor, after the time which has elapsed, did you expect to find that there was so little appearance of life in some important parts of the Act which are altogether distinct in their character. Then, surely, it was right to begin to inquire prudently and cautiously into the real state of things; and what can be more prudent and cautious than an inquiry by a Select Committee of the House of Lords, whose proceedings would be conducted with closed doors? That inquiry would create no agitation, such as would follow the appointment of a Committee of this House. From an investigation by a Committee of the other House of Parliament, presided over by a man greatly experienced in the law, and including, as it ought to have done, Members representing Her Majesty's Government, I venture to say we might have expected the maximum of usefulness with the minimum of danger. But, as it is, I very much fear that we are likely to be exposed to the worse alternative. Something has been said about inquiry into the character and position of the Sub-Commissioners; but we are told that it is too early to institute an inquiry into that subject. I remember, when the Land Bill was passing through the House last year, the Prime Minister told us that immediately on the appointment of the Commissioners, or within an approximate time, Parliament would be made acquainted with the names and other particulars relating to the proposed Assistant Commissioners; and, he added, if they could not trust the Commissioners to give all information of interest connected with their proceedings, then he was afraid it would not be a very satisfactory omen for the success of the Bill. It is not a good omen for the success of the Act when we see this kind of reticence and fear lest there should be any kind of inquiry into the operations which are going on. The right hon. Gentleman, after his declaration—his strong declaration—of the danger that he expected, went on in his speech the other day to quote certain precedents; and I do not think myself that the precedents he quoted were altogether applicable to the present case, except so far as they showed that there was no difficulty at all, and nothing novel in the one House dissenting from the opinion of the other. But I must say that, reading some of the debates in which these precedents occurred, I was very much struck by a reference I found in a discussion of the year 1839 to a previous case, a much older case—a case of the year 1703. There is something so remarkable in that, that I would venture to trouble the House with a very few words on the subject. In the year 1703, the position of the two Houses, politically speaking, was the converse of what it is now. There was a strong Tory House of Commons, with a Tory Ministry, and a strong Whig House of Lords. A question arose with regard to some case of treasonable practices. Some persons who were accused of being concerned in a Jacobite plot were taken into custody, and their examination was commenced by the Government of the day. The House of Lords thought that the Government of the day were likely to deal too tenderly with these persons; and they, therefore, desired—in fact determined—to institute an inquiry of their own. The House of Commons altogether took exception to such conduct on the part of the House of Lords, and remonstrated against the House of Lords undertaking such an examination. What was the communication that was made by the House of Lords to the House of Commons, and by whom, let me ask, was that communication brought down? It was brought down by no less a man than the great Lord Somers, and it contained these words—

> "No House of Commons till now has given countenance to this dangerous opinion, which does so directly tend to the rendering ill Ministers safe from the examination of Parliaments, and we are persuaded no House of Commons hereafter will assert such a notion, because they are not wont easily to part with a power they have assumed; and it is certain that they have several times taken upon themselves to exercise authority like that they have so severely reflected on in their Address."—[*Parl. Hist.*, 6. 183.]

That was a case in which the Ministry and the House of Commons, being together, the House of Lords claimed to exercise its right of inquiry, because, otherwise, the act of the Ministry would be safe from the examination of Parliament. We are told now that if there is to be any inquiry into the working of the Land Act, not only it must not be in the House of Lords, but it must be in the House of Commons, and for the very good reason, apparently, that the House of Commons sympathizes with and supports the Ministers of the day. Now, Sir, I must say that I was surprised when I heard the right hon. Gentleman say that the effect of this inquiry, which he dreaded, would be to shake to its foundation the confidence which they had succeeded in engendering in the people of Ireland. I am very glad to hear of that confidence. I confess I did not expect to hear it put quite so broadly; let us hope that it is so. But surely, if that is the case, we need not be so very much afraid of asking a few questions which will elucidate how far the Act deserves the confidence it is said to have inspired. I will not, however, go now into all these questions affecting the working of the Act, for I feel we are approaching the time when it will be necessary to come to a decision. The discussion, if it has not been wholly without inconvenience, has not been altogether without profit. I think I may say that there has been inconvenience in some of the statements made, and made on behalf of the Government. I cannot say that I listened with entire satisfaction to the statement of the Prime Minister that the Land Act and the Land League were the only two living forces in Ireland. The Land Act itself, I suppose, is not a living force. It is only an instrument in the hands of those who are working it—namely, the Commissioners. It comes to this, then—that the Land Courts and the Land League are the sole powers exercising authority and influence in Ireland. It is a serious thing to hear the Executive declare that it gives place to these important powers. I do not see how the Land Courts are to exercise this great influence in resisting the Land League. Is it by underbidding the Land League, or in what other way? I should have thought that the great object was that the Government of the day should exercise their influence—as I am bound to say the Chief Secretary seems to show that he, at least, is determined to exercise his influence and his power—to maintain peace and order, and in speaking the truth to the people, and that more could be done in that way than by any other course of action. But if the debate, as I have said, has not been without its disadvantages, it has not been without some advantages. It has directed attention rather more closely to the real position of the questions, and the real questions, which have to be solved in connection with the Land Act. They are not merely questions as to the Land Tenure Clauses of the Act, though, with regard to those clauses, questions have been opened which I hope Parliament and the Ministry will be prepared to follow up and examine. Other still more important topics have been entered upon. How will the Government deal with this great question of the block of business in the Courts and of arrears, to say nothing of many minor points connected with the working of the Act? If you want to inspire confidence you must deal with these questions, and deal with them in a way that will put an end as quickly as possible to that state of suspense in which the country finds itself. You talk of "confidence." I say the present condition of the people is one of suspense, and not of confidence. The worst possible suspense prevails. The landlords are in a state of suspense; they are alarmed, for they do not know what is coming out of all this. They see that the action of the Land Courts is a great deal more stringent than they were ever led to believe, and than the Government itself last year believed it would be. The tenants, on their side, are alarmed, because they see arrears accumulating against them, and because they see they are subjected to eviction, and because they do not know what will come. All parties are alarmed at the state of terrorism that exists, and that is likely to continue undiminished, for aught I can see. How soon can you put an end to that state of things, and substitute for it a state of things more hopeful and more likely to give contentment? Speeches have been made—I refer particularly to that by my right hon. Friend the Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach); but there are others who have spoken in the same sense—as to the mode in which you can best supplement the working of the Act by giving effect to those parts of it—such as the Purchase Clauses—which now seem to be crippled and kept from their full action. You will do more by developing your Act fully, and giving full play to those limbs of it that are crippled and unable to act, than you will by attempting to stifle an inquiry which, after all, you are unable to stifle. I will not say anything as to the observations of the noble Marquess on the course the debate has taken. It seems to amuse him and some hon. Members near him to see the questions which have been asked, but which have not been answered. All I can say is, that the Government must take the responsibility for the course they have adopted. We have endeavoured to avoid raising questions that we thought would place both this House and the other House in a false position; but if the Government perseveres in its present course, we are not prepared, and we do not desire, to elevate the matter into a great Constitutional question. We consider that, upon the whole, the matter is very much in the nature of a tempest in a tea-cup. What you are threatening really comes to nothing at all; what you will do comes to nothing at all. The House of Lords will proceed just as it proceeded before, and I do not think will be very much the worse for either your Resolution or the speeches by which it has been supported. The House will now come to its decision; and I trust, whatever may be the result of the vote to-night, that the result of the inquiry into the Land Act, fairly, honestly, and properly conducted, will be for the benefit, and not for the disadvantage, of the Sister Country.

Previous Question put, "That the Original Question be now put."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 303; Noes 219: Majority 84.—(Div. List, No. 41.)

Original Question put.

The House *divided*: — Ayes 303; Noes 235: Majority 68.

AYES.

Acland, Sir T. D.
Agnew, W.
Ainsworth, D.
Allen, H. G.
Amory, Sir J. H.
Anderson, G.
Armitage, B.
Armitstead, G.
Arnold, A.
Asher, A.
Ashley, hon. E. M.
Baldwin, E.
Balfour, Sir G.
Balfour, J. B.
Balfour, J. S.
Barclay, J. W.
Baring, Viscount
Barnes, A.
Barran, J.
Bass, A.
Bass, H.
Biddulph, M.
Blennerhassett, Sir R.
Blennerhassett, R. P.
Bolton, J. C.
Borlase, W. C.
Brand, H. R.
Brassey, H. A.
Brassey, Sir T.
Brett, R. B.
Briggs, W. E.
Bright, J. (Manchester)
Bright, rt. hon. J.
Brinton, J.
Broadhurst, H.
Brooks, M.
Brown, A. H.
Bruce, rt. hon. Lord C.
Bruce, hon. R. P.
Bryce, J.
Buchanan, T. R.
Burt, T.
Buszard, M. C.
Butt, C. P.
Buxton, F. W.
Caine, W. S.
Cameron, C.
Campbell, Lord C.
Campbell, Sir G.
Campbell, R. F. F.
Campbell-Bannerman, H.

Carbutt, E. H.
Carington, hon. R.
Carington, hon. Col. W. H. P.
Cartwright, W. C.
Causton, R. K.
Cavendish, Lord E.
Cavendish, Lord F. C.
Chamberlain, rt. hn. J.
Chambers, Sir T.
Cheetham, J. F.
Childers, rt. hn. H.C.E.
Clarke, J. C.
Clifford, C. C.
Cohen, A.
Colebrooke, Sir T. E.
Collings, J.
Collins, E.
Colman, J. J.
Colthurst, Col. D. La T.
Corbett, J.
Cotes, C. C.
Courtauld, G.
Courtney, L. H.
Cowan, J.
Cowen, J.
Cowper, hon. H. F.
Craig, W. Y.
Creyke, R.
Cropper, J.
Cross, J. K.
Crum, A.
Cunliffe, Sir R. A.
Currie, Sir D.
Davey, H.
Davies, D.
Davies, R.
Davies, W.
De Ferrieres, Baron
Dickson, J.
Dilke, A. W.
Dilke, Sir C. W.
Dillwyn, L. L.
Dodds, J.
Dodson, rt. hon. J. G.
Duckham, T.
Duff, R. W.
Earp, T.
Edwards, H.
Edwards, P.
Egerton, Adm. hon. F.
Elliot, hon. A. R. D.
Evans, T. W.
Farquharson, Dr. R.
Fawcett, rt. hon. H.
Fay, C. J.
Ferguson, R.
Ffolkes, Sir W. H. B.
Findlater, W.
Firth, J. F. B.
Fitzmaurice, Lord E.
Fitzwilliam, hon. H. W.
Flower, C.
Foljambe, C. G. S.
Foljambe, F. J. S.
Forster, Sir C.
Forster, rt. hon. W. E.
Fort, R.
Fowler, H. H.
Fowler, W.
Fry, L.
Fry, T.
Gabbett, D. F.
Givan, J.
Gladstone, rt. hn. W. E.
Gladstone, H. J.
Gladstone, W. H.
Glyn, hon. S. C.
Gordon, Sir A.
Gordon, Lord D.
Goschen, rt. hon. G. J.
Gourley, E. T.
Gower, hon. E. F. L.
Grafton, F. W.
Grant, A.
Grant, D.
Grant, Sir G. M.
Grenfell, W. H.
Grey, A. H. G.
Guest, M. J.
Gurdon, R. T.
Hamilton, J. G. C.
Harcourt, rt. hon. Sir W. G. V. V.
Hardcastle, J. A.
Hartington, Marq. of
Hastings, G. W.
Hayter, Sir A. D.
Henderson, F.
Heneage, E.
Henry, M.
Herschell, Sir F.
Hibbert, J. T.
Hill, T. R.
Holland, S.
Hollond, J. R.
Holms, J.
Holms, W.
Hopwood, C. H.
Howard, G. J.
Howard, J.
Hutchinson, J. D.
Illingworth, A.
Inderwick, F. A.
James, C.
James, Sir H.
James, W. H.
Jardine, R.
Jenkins, D. J.
Jenkins, J. J.
Jerningham, H. E. H.
Johnson, rt. hon. W. M.
Kingscote, Col. R. N. F.
Kinnear, J.
Labouchere, H.
Laing, S.
Lambton, hon. F. W.
Lawrence, Sir J. C.
Lawrence, W.
Lawson, Sir W.
Lea, T.
Leake, R.
Leatham, E. A.
Leatham, W. H.
Lee, H.
Leeman, J. J.
Lefevre, right hon. G. J. S.
Leigh, hon. G. H. C.
Lloyd, M.
Lubbock, Sir J.
Lusk, Sir A.
Lymington, Viscount
Lyons, R. D.
Mackie, R. B.
Mackintosh, C. F.
Macliver, P. S.
M‘Arthur, A.
M‘Arthur, W.
M‘Clure, Sir T.
M‘Coan, J. C.
M‘Intyre, Æneas J.
M‘Lagan, P.
M‘Laren, C. B. B.
M‘Minnies, J. G.
Maitland, W. F.
Mappin, F. T.
Marjoribanks, E.
Martin, R. B.
Maskelyne, M. H. Story-
Mason, H.
Mellor, J. W.
Milbank, F. A.
Monk, C. J.
Moore, A.
Moreton, Lord
Morgan, rt. hn. G. O.
Morley, A.
Morley, S.
Mundella, rt. hon. A. J.
Noel, E.
O'Brien, Sir P.
O'Gorman Mahon, Col. The
O'Shaughnessy, R.
O'Shea, W. H.
Otway, Sir A.
Paget, T. T.
Palmer, C. M.
Palmer, G.
Palmer, J. H.
Parker, C. S.
Pease, A.
Pease, J. W.
Peddie, J. D.
Peel, A. W.
Pender, J.
Pennington, F.
Philips, R. N.
Playfair, rt. hon. L.
Porter, A. M.
Potter, T. B.
Pulley, J.
Ralli, P.
Ramsden, Sir J.
Rathbone, W.
Reed, Sir E. J.
Reid, R. T.
Rendel, S.
Richard, H.
Richardson, J. N.
Richardson, T.
Roberts, J.
Robertson, H.
Rogers, J. E. T.
Rothschild, Sir N. M. de
Roundell, C. S.
Russell, C.
Russell, G. W. E.
Russell, Lord A.
Rylands, P.
St. Aubyn, Sir J.
Samuelson, B.
Samuelson, H.
Seely, C. (Lincoln)
Seely, C. (Nottingham)
Shaw, W.
Sheridan, H. B.
Shield, H.
Simon, Serjeant J.
Slagg, J.
Smith, E.
Smyth, P. J.
Spencer, hon. C. R.
Stanley, hon. E. L.
Stanton, W. J.
Stewart, J.
Summers, W.
Tavistock, Marquess of
Taylor, P. A.
Tennant, C.
Thomasson, J. P.
Thompson, T. C.
Tillett, J. H.
Torrens, W. T. M‘C.
Tracy, hon. F. S. A. Hanbury-
Trevelyan, G. O.
Verney, Sir H.
Vivian, A. P.
Vivian, H. H.
Walter, J.
Waugh, E.
Webster, J.
Whitbread, S.
Whitworth, B.
Williams, S. C. E.
Williamson, S.
Willis, W.
Wills, W. H.
Willyams, E. W. B.
Wilson, C. H.
Wilson, I.
Wilson, Sir M.
Wodehouse, E. R.
Woodall, W.
Woolf, S.

TELLERS.

Grosvenor, Lord R.
Kensington, Lord

NOES.

Alexander, Colonel
Allsopp, C.
Amherst, W. A. T.
Ashmead-Bartlett, E.
Aylmer, J. E. F.
Bailey, Sir J. R.
Balfour, A. J.
Baring, T. C.
Barttelot, Sir W. B.
Bateson, Sir T.
Beach, rt. hn. Sir M. H.
Beach, W. W. B.
Bective, Earl of
Bentinck, rt. hn. G. C.
Beresford, G. de la P.
Biddell, W.
Biggar, J. G.
Birkbeck, E.
Blackburne, Col. J. I.
Boord, T. W.
Bourke, rt. hon. R.
Brise, Colonel R.

Broadley, W. H. H.
Brodrick, hon. W. St. J. F.
Brooke, Lord
Bruce, Sir H. H.
Bruce, hon. T.
Brymer, W. E.
Bulwer, J. R.
Burghley, Lord
Burnaby, General E. S.
Burrell, Sir W. W.
Buxton, Sir R. J.
Byrne, G. M.
Callan, P.
Cameron, D.
Campbell, J. A.
Carden, Sir R. W.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cecil, Lord E. H. B. G.
Chaine, J.
Chaplin, H.
Clarke, E.
Clive, Col. hon. G. W.
Coddington, W.
Cole, Viscount
Collins, T.
Commins, A.
Compton, F.
Coope, O. E.
Corbet, W. J.
Corry, J. P.
Cross, rt. hon. Sir R. A.
Cubitt, rt. hon. G.
Dalrymple, C.
Davenport, H. T.
Davenport, W. B.
Dawnay, Col. hon. L. P.
Dawnay, hon. G. C.
De Worms, Baron H.
Dickson, Major A. G.
Digby, Col. hon. E.
Dixon-Hartland, F. D.
Donaldson-Hudson, C.
Douglas, A. Akers-
Dyke, rt. hn. Sir W. H.
Eaton, H. W.
Ecroyd, W. F.
Elcho, Lord
Elliot, G. W.
Elliot, Sir G.
Emlyn, Viscount
Ennis, Sir J.
Estcourt, G. S.
Ewart, W.
Ewing, A. O.
Feilden, Maj.-Gen. R. J.
Fellowes, W. H.
Fenwick-Bisset, M.
Filmer, Sir E.
Finch, G. H.
Finigan, J. L.
Fitzpatrick, hn. B. E. B.
Floyer, J.
Folkestone, Viscount
Forester, C. T. W.
Foster, W. H.
Fowler, R. N.
Fremantle, hon. T. F.
Freshfield, C. K.
Galway, Viscount
Gardner, R. Richardson-
Garnier, J. C.
Gibson, rt. hon. E.
Giffard, Sir H. S.
Gill, H. J.
Goldney, Sir G.
Gooch, Sir D.
Gore-Langton, W. S.
Gorst, J. E.
Grantham, W.
Greene, E.
Greer, T.
Gregory, G. B.
Halsey, T. F.
Hamilton, Lord C. J.
Hamilton, I. T.
Hamilton, right hon. Lord G.
Harcourt, E. W.
Harvey, Sir R. B.
Hay, rt. hon. Admiral Sir J. C. D.
Healy, T. M.
Herbert, hon. S.
Hicks, E.
Hildyard, T. B. T.
Hill, Lord A. W.
Hinchingbrook, Visc.
Holland, Sir H. T.
Home, Lt.-Col. D. M.
Hope, rt. hn. A. J. B. B.
Jackson, W. L.
Johnstone, Sir F.
Kennard, Col. E. H.
Kennaway, Sir J. H.
Knight, F. W.
Knightley, Sir R.
Knowles, T.
Lacon, Sir E. H. K.
Lawrance, J. C.
Lawrence, Sir T.
Leamy, E.
Lechmere, Sir E. A. H.
Legh, W. J.
Leigh, R.
Leighton, Sir B.
Leighton, S.
Lennox, Lord H. G.
Lever, J. O.
Levett, T. J.
Lewis, C. E.
Lewisham, Viscount
Lindsay, Sir R. L.
Loder, R.
Long, W. H.
Lopes, Sir M.
Lowther, rt. hon. J.
Lowther, hon. W.
Macartney, J. W. E.
M'Carthy, J.
M'Garel-Hogg, Sir J.
Mac Iver, D.
Makins, Colonel W. T.
Manners, rt. hn. Lord J.
March, Earl of
Master, T. W. C.
Maxwell, Sir H. E.
Miles, C. W.
Miles, Sir P. J. W.
Mills, Sir C. H.
Molloy, B. C.
Monckton, F.
Moss, R.
Mowbray, rt. hn. Sir J. R.
Mulholland, J.
Murray, C. J.
Newdegate, C. N.
Newport, Viscount
Nicholson, W. N.
Noel, rt. hon. G. J.
Northcote, H. S.
Northcote, rt. hn. Sir S. H.
O'Connor, A.
O'Donnell, F. H.
Onslow, D.
Paget, R. H.
Patrick, R. W. C.
Peek, Sir H. W.
Pell, A.
Pemberton, E. L.
Percy, Earl
Percy, Lord A.
Phipps, C. N. P.
Plunket, rt. hon. D. R.
Price, Captain G. E.
Raikes, rt. hon. H. C.
Rankin, J.
Redmond, J. E.
Rendlesham, Lord
Repton, G. W.
Ridley, Sir M. W.
Ritchie, C. T.
Rolls, J. A.
Ross, A. H.
Ross, C. C.
Round, J.
St. Aubyn, W. M.
Salt, T.
Sandon, Viscount
Schreiber, C.
Sclater-Booth, rt. hon. G.
Scott, M. D.
Selwin-Ibbetson, Sir H. J.
Severne, J. E.
Sexton, T.
Smith, A.
Smith, rt. hon. W. H.
Stanhope, hon. E.
Stanley, rt. hn. Col. F.
Storer, G.
Sullivan, T. D.
Sykes, C.
Talbot, J. G.
Taylor, rt. hn. Col. T. E.
Thornhill, T.
Thynne, Lord H. F.
Tollemache, H. J.
Tollemache, hn. W. F.
Tottenham, A. L.
Tyler, Sir H. W.
Wallace, Sir R.
Walpole, rt. hon. S.
Walrond, Col. W. H.
Warburton, P. E.
Warton, C. N.
Watney, J.
Whitley, E.
Williams, Colonel O.
Wilmot, Sir H.
Wilmot, Sir J. E.
Wolff, Sir H. D.
Wortley, C. B. Stuart-
Wroughton, P.
Wyndham, hon. P.
Wynn, Sir W. W.
Yorke, J. R.

TELLERS.
Crichton, Viscount
Winn, R.

Resolved, That Parliamentary inquiry, at the present time, into the working of the Irish Land Act tends to defeat the operation of that Act, and must be injurious to the interests of good government in Ireland.

QUESTIONS.

PARLIAMENT—ARRANGEMENT OF PUBLIC BUSINESS.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I wish to ask the Government whether they intend to resume the debate on the Business of the House on Monday; or, if not, what Business they propose to take next week?

Mr. GLADSTONE: We should have been glad to renew that Business had it been possible; but the necessities of Supply press upon us. We therefore propose to take the Army Estimates on Monday, and the Navy Estimates on Thursday.

Mr. PELL said, perhaps the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would be able to inform the House whether there was any probability whatever of the Rivers

Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill being taken to-morrow, at a time, of course, which would admit of its being adequately discussed?

Mr. DODSON, in reply, said, the Bill would be put down for to-morrow, and he hoped to bring it on at a reasonable hour.

Mr. THOMAS COLLINS asked what the right hon. Gentleman considered a reasonable hour? Ten, or half-past?

Mr. DODSON said, he would not take the Bill later than half-past 10.

ARMY—THE REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR RECRUITING.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether there was any probability of the Report of the Inspector General for Recruiting being laid on the Table by Monday?

Mr. CHILDERS said, he had already said he would answer the Question to-morrow.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

BOILER EXPLOSIONS BILL.—[Bill 4.]

(*Mr. Hugh Mason, Mr. Burt, Mr. Henry Lee, Mr. Broadhurst.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 3rd March.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

On the Motion of Mr. Chamberlain, the following Clause read a first and second time, and *agreed to*:—

(As to costs and expenses of inquiry.)

"The Court may make such order as they think fit respecting the costs and expenses of the inquiry, and such order shall, on the application of any party entitled to the benefit of the same, be enforced by any Court of Summary Jurisdiction as if such costs and expenses were a penalty imposed by such Court.

"The Board of Trade may, if they think fit, pay to the members of the Court of Inquiry, including any assessors, such remuneration as they may, with the consent of the Treasury, appoint.

"Any costs and expenses ordered by the Court to be paid by the Board of Trade, and any remuneration paid under this section not otherwise provided for, shall be paid out of moneys provided by Parliament."

Captain AYLMER, in moving the following Clause:—

(Person in charge of boiler to hold Board of Trade certificate.)

"From and after one year from this Act becoming law, every engineer or other person having charge of the working of any boiler shall be in possession of a certificate from the Board of Trade certifying his competency, and, for the purpose of this section, the Board of Trade shall arrange for the examination of candidates, in such manner as regards time and place as may be considered suitable, and may employ the services of railway or other competent mechanical engineers as examiners, and shall provide them with rules for such examinations, defining therein the standard of qualification required, and fixing the fee payable by each candidate,"

said, he should like to call the attention of the Committee to the fact that the Bill, as it stood, simply provided for the taking note of an accident by the Commission appointed by the Board of Trade, but in no way attempted to prevent the accidents by providing for a periodical examination of the boilers, or of the men in charge of them. The object of the clause he now proposed was that the men who had charge of these dangerous machines should have some technical knowledge, and ought not to be common workmen, entirely ignorant of the management of boilers. The necessity for boilermen to be required to pass an examination had been clearly proved in many cases. The Bill itself only provided for an examination of a boiler, when it had exploded, in order to find out the cause of the explosion. That the Bill was entirely deficient was proved by the fact that the Board of Trade had the power to enforce examination if they thought fit to use it. Reports had been made in this direction; but no good had come of them. The Report of the Commission that sat by order of the Board of Trade in January, 1881, on a boiler explosion was of great interest. It recited that one of the recommendations of a Coroner's Jury which inquired into a death resulting from that boiler explosion was—

"That the drivers of traction engines should pass an examination as to their capabilities, and that they should be provided with certificates which they should be compelled to produce when asked to do so."

Further on in the Report it was said—

"Shortly before the adjourned inquest was held, the manager of an engine works in Kent —entirely unconnected with this case—wrote to the Board of Trade on the subject of the qualifications of the engine drivers of agricultural engines as follows:—'The great bulk of the engine drivers can neither write or read sufficiently to understand the pressure, and most of them are totally ignorant of the nature of steam when beyond a certain pressure. Screwing down the safety valves to get from 100 to

140 lbs. of steam, when required, is the rule, not the exception, and a great many never think of easing the valves to see if they will work.' "

Thus it was authoritatively stated that a great number of the men going about the country in charge of engines could neither read nor write, and were totally ignorant of the nature of steam, beyond a certain pressure. The time had certainly come when the Board of Trade should take care that engine drivers and men in charge of boilers should know something about what they were in charge of. In another part of the Report, and in reference to another question, it was stated—

> "The ignorance of the proper management of steam boilers, indicated in this case, and also in the case of the boiler which exploded—which is the subject of this Report—is very great. It may possibly be found that when engine drivers of agricultural locomotives are better qualified, sounder views respecting boiler management than would appear to exist by the examples referred to, may be dissiminated amongst the proprietors."

He could make many other apt quotations from the Report; but he had no wish to weary the Committee. It was, he thought, plain, that in many cases the men placed in charge of boilers were quite ignorant of their management; indeed, it was a well-known fact that one man let out on hire a large number of engines, and that the men in charge of them, as a rule, could neither read nor write. Under such circumstances, he thought the clause which he had asked the Committee to add to the Bill might very well be inserted. The trouble it would entail upon the Board of Trade would not be great. It might be urged by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade that there would be a difficulty in finding Examiners; but he (Captain Aylmer) maintained that to find Examiners would not be anything like so difficult as the appointment of impartial men as Commissioners for which the Bill provided. Taking all the circumstances into consideration, and remembering the old proverb, that "prevention is better than cure," he begged to move the clause standing in his name.

New Clause (*Captain Aylmer*) *brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be now read a second time."

Captain Aylmer

MR. BROADHURST, in supporting the Motion, said, he was indebted to the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer) for bringing the matter forward. This was a subject which was discussed by the House, three or four years ago, on the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt), and which he believed it was the intention of the hon. Gentleman to reintroduce on the discussion of the present Bill; but, after consultation with some of his friends, it was thought rather out of place. However, if the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone could succeed, with the consent of the Mover of the Bill, in obtaining the adoption of his clause, many hon. Members would be extremely glad. As to the necessity for the examination of the men in charge of engines and boilers there could be no question whatever. An examination into the fitness of enginemen and boilermen in the Mercantile Marine was already enforced; no man in that Marine was allowed to take charge of an engine or boiler without undergoing and passing the Board of Trade examination. That examination was not so easy and simple as some hon. Members imagined; it was a very severe one, and very properly severe. He held that if it was necessary for engineers on board ship to pass an examination, it was equally necessary for men who were in charge of engines in crowded neighbourhoods and in the highways of the country. He did not know whether he was too sanguine in hoping that his hon. Friend in charge of the Bill (Mr. Mason) would consent to the clause. If, however, the clause could not be adopted that night, he hoped they would receive some assurance from his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade that he would, at least, on an early day, lend a willing ear to a Motion on the subject having for its object the adoption of some means of securing the end aimed at by the clause of the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite.

MR. HUGH MASON said, he felt called upon to give the most decided opposition to the clause which had been moved by the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer). He regretted that the hon. and gallant Member should have cast any aspersion upon a very useful and very intelligent class of servants. It was not the fact that the persons who were in charge of steam boilers were not able to read the figures on the gauge.

Captain AYLMER said, he had only given the statement of the Commissioners appointed by the Board of Trade. The statement was theirs, and not his.

Mr. HUGH MASON remarked, that he was a member of the Manchester Steam Users' Association, and that Association had by its officers made inquiry into more than 1,000 cases of boiler explosions. It was recorded in their Reports, over and over again, that five explosions out of every six which had happened during the past 25 years, and been investigated by the engineers of the Association, were due to imperfect construction, and to the use of bad material on the part of the boiler makers, and to selfishness and indifference on the part of the boiler owners. The boiler owner worked his boiler much too long, and when it had become dangerous the poor boiler tender, who was the first to suffer from an explosion, was generally killed, and accordingly was not there to speak for himself. It was quite true that five out of six explosions were due to the causes he had mentioned; and he was unable to accept the clause of the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he was glad to hear from the hon. Member for Ashton-under-Lyne (Mr. Hugh Mason) that he did not intend to accept the proposal of his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer). It was a well-intended proposal, no doubt; but his hon. and gallant Friend could not be aware of the injurious effect it would have throughout the country. He would ask his hon. and gallant Friend to bear in mind the vast amount of agricultural machinery that was employed at the present day, and the large number of boilers which the agriculturists had to deal with. They employed the best and most respectable men they could find; but where would they be able to find the men they wanted if it was necessary, in the first instance, that every man who was to have charge of a boiler should pass an examination? They took care that the boiler tenders should be instructed upon all matters connected with the engines with which they were intrusted, and it was not the fact that the men who were employed were generally unable to read and write. They were men who were found, after a little practice, quite capable of tending these boilers; and it would be a serious hindrance to agriculture to require them to pass a scientific examination.

Mr. CRAIG wished to say a few words before the Motion was disposed of. He gathered that the object of the Bill, as it stood, was to prevent boiler explosions, as far as possible. His hon. Friend the Member for Ashton-under-Lyne (Mr. Hugh Mason) stated that a large number of the explosions which had occurred had been investigated by the Association which he represented; but he had not stated, nor did he state on the second reading of the Bill, what the causes of those boiler explosions were. The object of the Bill, as he (Mr. Craig) understood it, was to investigate the cause after the event, in order to acquire knowledge that might lead to subsequent legislation. Now, he (Mr. Craig) would venture to say that all this knowledge had already been obtained from previous investigations. If the hon. Member would direct his attention to the causes of boiler explosions, as ascertained by investigation, he would find that they were four in number. One was, that the boiler was constructed to bear a less pressure than that which it was made to bear; the second cause was, corrosion by contact with wet brick work; the third, bad water, incrusting the inner part of the boiler and causing superheating; and, lastly, and perhaps the most fruitful of all, the accidental stoppage of the passages, causing an excessive pressure, which brought about an explosion. He believed it would be found that no boiler explosion ever took place which was not attributable to one or other of those causes. What, then, was the palpable remedy? Surely it was to have competent men in charge of the boilers—men able, first of all, to examine the interior of the boiler, in order to ascertain if it was becoming corroded, or being rendered incapable of bearing the pressure at which it was customary to work it, and to see whether incrustation was taking place, so as to remove it, before it became dangerous. The driver should also be competent to examine the gauges, and see that the various passages were kept open. He was of opinion that if the clause submitted by the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone were adopted, it would meet everything that was necessary in order to prevent boiler explosions in future. It required that the men who were to be employed should be competent to examine the boiler. He had been of opinion all along that the Bill of his hon. Friend the Member for Ashton-under-Lyne was exceedingly defective, because it failed to lay down such a requirement. It would lead to no practical result. He quite agreed that boilers should be inspected by suitable engineers, and that insurance which required inspection would be of great service. He had had his boilers inspected for 17 years; and in the reports which were sent in to him quarterly, he had on several occasions noticed that defects were pointed out which, if they had not been remedied, he had no hesitation in saying would have brought about an explosion. This satisfactorily proved the urgent necessity for having the engineers employed duly certificated as competent persons, in order that they might be able themselves to detect defects, without the supervision of an extraneous Inspector. He intended to support the clause moved by the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone; and he hoped the Committee would give to it their serious consideration.

Mr. JAMES HOWARD said, the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer) had given no information as to the number of boilers and engines in use, nor in regard to the accidents which had actually happened; and he (Mr. J. Howard) thought if the hon. and gallant Member had done so it was still necessary to show what proportion of the accidents which had happened had been occasioned in consequence of want of skill on the part of the drivers. Surely it was to the interest of all persons who owned these valuable boilers and engines to employ competent men to take charge of them. But the inconvenience of requiring none but certificated drivers to be employed would be very great in agriculture, as had already been pointed out by the hon. and gallant Baronet the Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot). No necessity had been shown for the employment of certificated drivers. He (Mr. J. Howard) had been a Member of the Select Committee on road locomotives; and, if he remembered rightly, that Committee refused to report in favour of compelling the drivers of road locomotives to obtain a certificate from the Board of Trade. On those grounds he must oppose the Motion of the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone, because he believed that it would entail very considerable inconvenience upon the thousands of agriculturists in the Kingdom who used locomotive and other engines, and because no necessity had been shown for it.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH thought that his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer) had been hardly used by the promoters of the Bill. The hon. Member for Ashton-under-Lyne (Mr. Hugh Mason) had made an attack upon him which was entirely unjustifiable and uncalled for. The proposal of his hon. and gallant Friend was quite in accordance with the spirit of modern legislation. It was the custom of Parliament now-a-days to require that all persons in charge of important and expensive machinery should have certificates, in order to show that they were competent to manage it. But it might be inconvenient and expensive suddenly to require every person who was making use of a boiler to employ persons who were capable of passing a scientific examination. He would further point out to his hon. and gallant Friend that the clause now proposed was exceptionable in this respect, that no penalty was attached to it. He (Mr. Sclater-Booth) thought that any provision in this direction, if ever it was adopted, must assume a negative form, and require that no man should be in charge of a boiler who did not possess some sort of certificate of competency. He thought the time would come when these certificates would be held and easily obtained by persons who were to take charge of boilers and machinery as such boilers and machinery came more generally into use. It was most important, he thought, that all machinery should be in the charge of competent engineers; and it was only a question of time and degree how far this principle would be required by the Legislature to be acted upon. He did not know what the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade might say upon the point; but he did not think, as the clause stood, the Board of Trade could undertake to work it without further amendment. He would therefore advise his hon. and gallant Friend to withdraw the clause for the present, to reconsider the matter before the Report was brought up, and, if possible, to get the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade to assist him in preparing a more satisfactory clause.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sclater-Booth) commenced his remarks by saying that my hon. Friend the Member for Ashton-under-Lyne (Mr. Hugh Mason) made an attack upon the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer). I think he could not have followed very closely the speech of my hon. Friend. My hon. Friend made no attack whatever on the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone. All he said was that the hon. and gallant Member had cast an unmerited stigma on the body of men who were employed to take charge of these engines. There was nothing in the remarks of my hon. Friend which could possibly be offensive to the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone. With regard to the clause itself, I hope the hon. and gallant Member will not press it, because it would extend the scope of the Bill most tremendously. There can be no doubt that the subject to which he calls attention is of very great importance. My hon. Friend the Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt), two or three years ago, endeavoured to deal with the subject, and it is one that is worthy of the most careful consideration. But we must understand what it is that we should undertake to do if we were to accept the suggestion of the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone. My hon. Friend the Member for Bedfordshire (Mr. James Howard) has pointed out that we have no information before the House as to the number of these boilers or persons in charge of them; and if we take into account not only the boilers employed in factories and mines, but the boilers employed in agriculture, the locomotive boilers, the boilers employed in conjunction with tramcars and road cars, I think we shall find that they will altogether add up to a sum of probably tens of thousands; indeed, I have heard the calculation put at some hundreds of thousands. Under such circumstances, it would be a very large matter indeed to say that the State should undertake to examine some hundreds of thousands of men who are to take charge of these boilers. Of course, it may be contended that it is desirable that competent persons should be appointed where human life is in their charge; but that argument would go much further than in regard to persons in attendance upon boilers. I am not certain that the strongest case of all would not be made out for the certificated examination of nursemaids, from whose negligence there can be no doubt that a great loss of life does result. If these questions are to be considered at all, they must be considered more thoroughly than it is possible for them to be in a clause brought up in connection with a Bill which really has a very different object in view. Under these circumstances, I hope that the hon. and gallant Member will withdraw the clause.

Captain AYLMER said, that after what had passed, and the promise of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, or, rather, his statement, that the matter was one that deserved consideration, which statement he (Captain Aylmer) hoped might be regarded as a promise that the right hon. Gentleman would take it into consideration at some future period, he would not press the clause. He did not know how it was possible for a private Member to obtain information as to the number of boilers that existed in the country; and he thought it was most desirable, in regard to all dangerous employments, that some provision should be made for providing that technical education of which they heard so much.

Motion and Clause, by leave, *withdrawn.*

On the Motion of Mr. Chamberlain, the following was *inserted* in page 3:—

"Schedule.

"Report of Explosion of a Steam Boiler to be sent to the Board of Trade within twenty-four hours after the occurrence of an Explosion.

"See Section 5.

"1. Name of premises or works on which the boiler exploded.

"2. Address by the Post.

"3. Day and hour of explosion.

"4. Number of persons killed.

"5. Number of persons injured.

"6. General description of the boiler.

"7. Purposes for which the boiler was used.

"8. Part of the boiler which failed, and the extent of failure generally.

"9. Pressure at which the boiler was worked.

"10. Name and address of any Society or Association by whom the boiler was last inspected or insured, "Signature of person responsible for the accuracy of the particulars contained in this form.

"Address

"Date ."

Captain AYLMER moved, as an Amendment to Mr. Chamberlain's proposed Schedule, in line 4, after "1," to leave out "Name of premises or works on which," and insert "precise locality where." He proposed the Amendment for the simple reason that the word "premises" did not deal with every case. For instance, it did not include roads; but the words he proposed to substitute—namely, "the precise locality where," would include everything.

Amendment proposed,

In Schedule, line 4, after "1." leave out "Name of premises or works on which," and insert "precise locality where." — (*Captain Aylmer.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Schedule."

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, he did not think that the Amendment would effect any improvement; and he would point out in reference to this and certain other proposals which the hon. and gallant Member had placed upon the Paper, and which he (Mr. Chamberlain) should feel bound to oppose, that if it was found from experience that the form of Schedule given in the Bill or the notice was not satisfactory, power was taken in Clause 5 to alter it.

Captain AYLMER said, he would not persist in pressing the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed, in Schedule, sub-section 4, to leave out the words, "number of persons killed."—(*Captain Aylmer.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Schedule."

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN said, the information required to be given by this sub-section was of the most important kind; and he was quite unable to conceive on what grounds the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone moved the omission of this portion of the Schedule.

Captain AYLMER said, he objected to the sub-section because of its unreasonable effect of making the owner or other person liable to a penalty for not furnishing particulars of deaths resulting, or that might result from an explosion, when it was out of his power to do so. The number of persons killed was required to be stated to the Board of Trade within 24 hours after the boiler exploded, by the owner or user, or by the person acting on behalf of the owner or user, and in default of complying with this provision of the Bill the person in default was liable to a penalty of £20. He (Captain Aylmer) would point out to the Committee that cases would frequently occur in which it was almost impossible that the particular information required by the Schedule could be supplied within the time named. The owner might be many miles away from the means of communication; the actual results of the explosion might not reach him, and he would probably have to visit all the hospitals in the district to find out how many persons had been killed or injured. Under such circumstances, it appeared to him a monstrous thing that a penalty of £20 should be imposed for not returning the number of killed or injured within 24 hours.

Mr. HUGH MASON said, he could assure the hon. and gallant Member opposite (Captain Aylmer) that this sub-section was both usual and necessary, the principle having been adopted in former legislation. He had taken the words of the sub-section from the Coal Mines Regulation Act and Metalliferous Mines Act, in both of which the period of 24 hours was specifically stated as the time within which notice had to be given. There could be no doubt prompt communication of the results of an explosion was most desirable; and on re-consideration he hoped the hon. and gallant Gentleman would agree with him that the sooner the notice of explosion was sent to the Board of Trade the better it would be for both the owner of the boiler and those who were the sufferers from the accident. He held that it was to the interest of all parties that the period of 24 hours specified in the sub-section should not be exceeded, and trusted the Amendment would not be pressed.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN pointed out that the provision of the sub-section, which the hon. and gallant Member for

Maidstone (Captain Aylmer) wished to strike out of the Schedule, had already been sanctioned by the Committee. Besides requiring that the notice to the Board of Trade should state the precise locality, as well as the day and hour of the explosion, Clause 5, which had been passed, provided that the number of persons killed or injured should be given. It also, in sub-section 3, provided that if default was made in complying with the requirements of this section, the person in default should, on summary conviction, be liable to a fine not exceeding £20. The hon. and gallant Member had alluded to the case of an owner of a boiler, or person responsible in his behalf, being absent from the scene of the explosion, and said it was a monstrous thing that he should be liable to a penalty for not returning the particulars of an occurrence of which he knew nothing; but surely hon. Members would understand that, if a person so situated proved that he had no knowledge of the event, the fine imposed would be merely a nominal one.

MR. J. W. BARCLAY was understood to say that the Bill, as it stood, presented some difficulty; because, assuming that the person in charge of the boiler had been injured, the owner might not be communicated with.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, the next Amendment standing in his name was only formal in its character; but it would have the effect of indicating the use made of the boiler at the time of the explosion.

Amendment proposed, in Schedule, sub-section 7, after the word "used," to insert "being."—(*Captain Aylmer.*)

Question proposed, "That that word be there inserted."

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, he was not able to agree to the Amendment of the hon. and gallant Member to the sub-section. He did not think there was any distinction between the words of the Schedule and those proposed; but, if so, he should give the preference to the words as they stood on the Paper, because, if the boiler had been used at any time for different purposes than was the case at the time of the explosion, he thought it better that the fact should be stated.

Question put, and *negatived.*

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, the Amendment he was about to move was of more importance than those which had been previously submitted to the consideration of hon. Members; and he trusted it would meet with the approval of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. By the terms of the Schedule, the owner or user, or the person acting in their behalf, would, under a penalty of £20, be obliged to state the part of the boiler which failed, and the extent of failure generally. No doubt, the engineer who had to make the preliminary inquiry and report upon the circumstances of the explosion to the Board of Trade would be assisted in the investigation by this information being supplied. But he (Captain Aylmer) thought there were many valid reasons why the person concerned in sending the prescribed notice to the Board of Trade should not be forced to answer the questions put to him, in effect, by this and the following sub-section, which latter would compel him to state, also under penalty, the pressure at which the boiler was worked. In the first place, with regard to sub-section 8, it was difficult to understand how a man was to ascertain the part of the boiler which had failed, after the boiler itself had been blown to pieces. The owner, or the person responsible, was, in fact, required to state within the very short space of 24 hours that which could only be ascertained by scientific and, perhaps, lengthened inquiry, if it could be ascertained at all. The effect, therefore, of the sub-section would be to put those concerned to a great amount of unnecessary inconvenience. With regard to the requirement of sub-section 9, that the owner or user should state the pressure at which the boiler was worked, he would point out that the person in charge might be killed, or he might not be able to state the pressure; but if he could do so, it should be remembered that he was not bound to criminate himself. For the reasons he had given, he should move that sub-section 8 be omitted.

Amendment proposed, in Schedule, to leave out sub-section 8.—(*Captain Aylmer.*)

Question proposed, "That sub-section 8 stand part of the Schedule."

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, his answer to the arguments of the hon. and gallant Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer), in support of the Amendment which he had just moved, was the same as he had given to his former proposal to leave out sub-section 4. It was, in the first place, that a clause had been already passed by the Committee which provided that the Report of the explosion should contain information generally as to the part of the boiler which failed, as well as the extent of the failure. Secondly, his reply to the hon. and gallant Member, with reference to the fine to which the person concerned in making the return was liable, was that if the party in question had not got the information required, he could prove the fact before the Court, and then it was quite certain that the fine would not be inflicted.

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, after the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, he would ask leave to withdraw the Amendment before the Committee.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, the next Amendment he had to propose was the omission of sub-section 9, which required the pressure at which the boiler was worked to be stated by the person called upon to make the return. It appeared to him that this sub-section was not open to the interpretation which had been placed upon the previous sub-section by the right hon. Gentleman; and therefore he trusted that his proposal to strike it out would be agreed to by the Committee.

Amendment proposed, in Schedule, to leave out sub-section 9.—(*Captain Aylmer.*)

Question proposed, "That sub-section 9 stand part of the Schedule."

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, the information sought to be obtained by the sub-section in question was of a very important character; and it was desirable that it should be given on the authority of the person in charge of the boiler or of the person to whom it belonged. He failed to see that there was anything in the information asked to be given which necessarily criminated the person who gave it.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Preamble read a first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the said Preamble stand part of the Bill."

MR. J. W. PEASE pointed out that whereas the Bill made all owners of coal mines and mines under the Metalliferous Mines Act report accidents which occurred to the Board of Trade, they were already bound to report such accidents, when attended with personal injury or loss of life, to the Home Office. The question was, whether it was necessary that they should be compelled to report to both Departments, and whether a double inquiry should be held in the cases already provided for. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would take the point into consideration, in order that a double notice and inquiry might, if possible, be avoided.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, the hon. Member for South Durham (Mr. J. W. Pease) was aware that under the Acts to which reference had been made owners of mines were only required to report those accidents which resulted in injury or loss of life. But the present Bill provided that inquiry should take place, whether or not persons were injured or lost their lives by boiler explosions. He would consider, between the present stage of the Bill and the Report, whether arrangements could be made to meet the suggestion of his hon. Friend.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

House *resumed.*

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered *To-morrow.*

PARISH CHURCHES BILL.

On Motion of Mr. ALBERT GREY, Bill to declare and enact the Law as to the Rights of Parishioners in respect of their Parish Churches; and for other purposes relating thereto, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. ALBERT GREY, Mr. BUXTON, Mr. COURTAULD, Mr. CROPPER, Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON, and Mr. WILLIAM HENRY GLADSTONE.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 99.]

House adjourned at a quarter
after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 10*th March*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—Industrial Schools * (34).
Second Reading—Slate Mines (Gunpowder) * (28).
Third Reading—Consolidated Fund (No. 1) *, and *passed.*

ATTEMPT UPON THE LIFE OF HER MAJESTY.

THE QUEEN'S ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS.

The Queen's Answer to the Address of both Houses of Parliament of Monday last reported by The Lord Steward (The Earl Sydney) as follows:—

My Lords and Gentlemen,

I receive with heartfelt satisfaction the loyal and dutiful Address from My two Houses of Parliament.

I am thankful to the Almighty whose merciful care has protected Me and My beloved child from danger.

In My sincere desire to promote the welfare of My people, I am comforted and supported by the continued assurance of your attachment to My person and My throne.

Ordered that the Address and Answer be *printed* and *published.* (No. 36.)

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL.

OBSERVATIONS. QUESTION.

The Earl of **CARNARVON** wished to ask his noble Friend the Secretary of State for the Colonies a Question, of which he had given him private Notice, in reference to a report which had appeared in the morning papers that some fighting had occurred between the Boers and the Natives in the North-West of the Transvaal, which, it would seem, had almost assumed the dimensions of a war. The hostilities, so far, had been very disastrous to the Boers; and he should be glad to know whether his noble Friend could give their Lordships any definite information upon the subject? He would further ask whether his noble Friend could state the cause of the disturbance and the progress of events? Their Lordships would recollect that, by the Convention concluded last year with the Transvaal, the control of Native affairs was reserved to this country; the English Sovereign was created, so to speak, Suzerain of the country; and a British Resident was appointed, who was to give his sanction and consent on behalf of this country, before the undertaking by the Boer Government of any important measures, such as a war might be presumed to be. He should like to ask his noble Friend whether the sanction of the British Resident had been asked or obtained with reference to this Native war? At the present stage he did not wish to make any comment on the matter, except to say this much—first, that, as far as he understood, the Chief Montsioa, with whom these hostilities had been carried on, had been, until now, much attached to this country, and a protected Chief; and, secondly, that these disturbances were like a prairie fire and spread all around, unless they were subdued at the outset. He could only say that the hostilities reported this morning, if they were correct, were a very bad augury indeed for the success of the Convention established last year.

The Earl of **KIMBERLEY**, in reply, said, that he had no official information with regard to the telegrams which appeared in that morning's papers, and was possessed of no further information as to what was contained in those telegrams. The Government had, however, received previous intelligence of what was going on on the Frontier, and these events were, no doubt, the sequel to that, so far as he understood the telegram. The precise origin of these difficulties he did not know that he could explain; but he could inform their Lordships that they were in the nature of those disputes on the Frontier which, as his noble Friend was aware, repeatedly occurred on the Western Frontier of the Transvaal with the Bechuana Tribes. In this particular case he believed that the hostilities arose between a Chief called Moshette, whose territory lay almost entirely within the Frontier-line of the Transvaal, and the Chief Montsioa, whose territory lay outside the new line. There had also been disturbances between two other Chiefs, and in all these disputes it appeared that a certain number of the Boers had taken part. There was considerable fighting about the 20th or 21st of January, which was officially reported to the Home Government. He had communicated with the British Resident at Pretoria, and desired him to call upon the Transvaal Government to take such measures as might be necessary on their part to maintain the neutrality of the Frontier. The Transvaal Government, they found, had already taken steps by sending down Commandant Joubert and a certain number of police to the Frontier to maintain order, and had also issued a Proclamation of neutrality. So far as Her Majesty's Government knew, the Transvaal Government had acted in good faith, and were taking such measures as were required to preserve neutrality. He had no more recent official information; but he thought it would be found that those who had taken part in these disturbances were individuals on the Frontier who were always ready, he was afraid, to embark in any quarrel which might promise profit to themselves, and that such disturbances as were going on were not sanctioned by the Transvaal Government. With reference to the remark of his noble Friend as to the evil augury of these disturbances for the success of the Convention, he could only say that, whatever might be the efforts of the Transvaal Government to maintain order on the Frontier, such disturbances were likely from time to time to occur. His noble Friend had referred to Montsioa as a protected Chief. So far as he knew, that Chief never was protected by the British Government, though he had been always on very good terms with it. He had no further information to give his noble Friend; but any that came into his possession he would lose no time in communicating to the House.

PUBLIC WORKS (INDIA).

ADDRESS FOR PAPERS.

The Earl of LYTTON, in rising to move—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for copies of extracts of all correspondence between the Secretary of State for India and the Governor General in Council, from the 1st of January 1878 to the present time, respecting the prosecution, firstly, of productive public works by means of borrowed funds; secondly, of works designed for protection against famine and commonly described as protective works; and thirdly, of the measures taken for the purpose of famine insurance,"

said, he understood that the Motion would be unopposed; but perhaps his noble Friend the Under Secretary of State for India would allow him to take this opportunity of asking him when the Returns would be laid upon the Table. It had been announced in the Gracious Speech from the Throne that, in consequence of the cessation of hostilities upon North-West Frontier, and other favourable circumstances, Her Majesty's Government in India had been able to resume works of public utility, which had been suspended, and to take other measures for the further improvement of the people. The prosecution of public works, and provision for the protection of the country against the calamities of recurrent famine, were matters of vital importance to the welfare of India; and it would doubtless be gratifying to their Lordships to learn from the Correspondence on this subject what were the works of public utility which, having been suspended, were now resumed; what were the measures now being taken for the further improvement of the people, and what the instructions addressed by the Secretary of State for India to the Governor General in Council on these matters. This information would also greatly enhance the interest attaching to the Budget just published in India, which appeared to be of a highly satisfactory character, both as regards the normal growth of the Revenue, the practical results of the measures taken some years ago for its improvement, and with the sagacity and judgment with which these results were now being utilized for the emancipation of trade and the reduction of burdens on consumption. He hoped Her Majesty's Government had no objection to the Motion of which he had given Notice.

Viscount ENFIELD, in reply, said, there would be no objection on the part of Her Majesty's Government to give his noble Friend the Returns he had moved for. His noble Friend was quite right in saying that these Returns would contain information of a most interesting and important character. He could assure his noble Friend, on the part of the Secretary of State for India, and of the Government generally, that there would be no unnecessary delay in presenting and publishing the Papers; but some time must elapse before that could be done. They knew the interest which his noble Friend took in this subject, and he knew the character of the

Returns, and that they would require time to prepare; but there should be no unnecessary delay. The Motion, he might say, partook of no Party character whatever.

Motion *agreed to*.

Address for,

"Copies or extracts of all correspondence between the Secretary of State for India and the Governor General in Council, from the 1st of January 1878 to the present time, respecting the prosecution, firstly, of productive public works by means of borrowed funds; secondly, of works designed for protection against famine and commonly described as protective works; and thirdly, of measures taken for the purpose of famine insurance."—(*The Earl of Lytton.*)

ARMY—MILITIA ADJUTANTS.

QUESTION.

The Earl of GALLOWAY asked the Under Secretary of State for War, Whether there is any probability of terms being offered to the thirty remaining adjutants of militia appointed before the introduction of the new system in 1871-72 as inducement to retire from the service, similar to those offered in the Royal Warrant of 1875 to adjutants of militia seeking retirement before 1877?

The Earl of MORLEY: It is not the intention of the Secretary of State for War to offer the adjutants of Militia appointed before 1871 the special terms of retirement offered to them for six months in the year 1875. As, however, it has been determined to retire these officers compulsorily at the age of 55, to compensate them the Royal Warrant provides a more liberal retiring pension for officers so retired—namely, after seven years' service, 6*s*. a-day; after 10 years' service, 7*s*. a-day; after 15 years' service, 8*s*. a-day; after 20 years' service, 10*s*. a-day—the maximum rate being the same as the maximum rate offered in 1875. Officers who retire voluntarily, before reaching the age of 55, will receive the rates of pension already fixed—namely, after seven years' service, 5*s*. a-day; after 10 years' service, 6*s*. a-day; after 15 years' service, 7*s*. a-day; after 20 years' service, 8*s*. a-day. And it is not the intention of the Secretary of State to alter or vary these rates. They all had the option of retiring on the exceptionally favourable pensions offered to them in 1875.

The Earl of GALLOWAY expressed a hope that as soon as possible the Secretary of State for War would find his way to dealing more favourably towards men on whom great extra duties had been imposed.

INDUSTRIAL SCHOOLS BILL [H.L.]

A Bill to consolidate and amend the enactments relating to Industrial Schools and Reformatories in England and Wales—Was *presented* by The Earl Stanhope; read 1ª. (No. 34.)

House adjourned at half past Five
o'clock, to Monday next,
Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 10*th March*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—Supply—*considered in Committee*—Civil Service Supplementary Estimates, 1881-2 — Class III. — Law and Justice—£7,772, County Court Officers, &c., Motion withdrawn; Class IV.—Education, Science, and Art—£636, Royal University, Ireland; Navy Estimates—£50,000, Army Department (Conveyance of Troops).

Postponed Resolution [March 3] *further considered* and *agreed to*.

Private Bills (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Glasgow Corporation Gas (Railways, &c.)*; London and South Western Spring Water*; London Southern Tramways*; Metropolis Management, Building, and Floods Prevention Acts (Amendment).

Public Bills—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Turnpike Roads (South Wales)* [101].

Second Reading—Metropolitan Commons Supplemental* [92]; Roads Provisional Order (Edinburgh)* [93].

Considered as amended—Boiler Explosions* [4-100].

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT, BUILDING, AND FLOODS PREVENTION ACTS (AMENDMENT) BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, he thought it would be convenient to the House, and to those hon. Members who took an interest in this Bill, that he should shortly state the course which, on behalf of the Metropolitan Board of Works, he proposed to take in regard to it. A great number of hon. Members took an interest in it, and a few local Bodies were opposed to it. He therefore wished to state that if the House agreed to read the Bill a second time, he proposed in Committee to withdraw all the clauses except Clauses 11, 12, 13, and 14. Clause 11 related to the better regulation of theatres; Clauses 12, 13, and 14 dealt with the prevention of floods. Clause 18, which dealt with timber stacks, and Clause 19, which related to the cubical contents of buildings, had been much objected to, and it was not intended to proceed with them at all. He wished the House to understand that that step was only taken because the officers of the House had said that it was not proper for a Private Bill to deal with matters which had previously been dealt with by Public Bills. Therefore, these clauses would be withdrawn; but should the House accord him that which he now asked—the second reading of the Bill—he proposed, at a convenient opportunity, to bring in a Public Bill, embodying, with the exception of Clauses 18 and 19, the clauses now withdrawn. Under these circumstances, he begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Bill be now read a second time,"—(*Sir James M'Garel-Hogg*,)—put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed.*

QUESTIONS.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — MR. TOMAN.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the police are authorised (in proclaimed districts or otherwise) to search the persons of individuals for copies of the "No Rent" manifesto; upon what authority they so searched Mr. Michael Toman, of Hilltown, county Down, as he was going from his own house on the night of the 1st ultimo; and, whether, as this gentleman has now been committed for trial, without bail, for having been found possessed of copies of the manifesto, it is the fact that he is kept in solitary confinement in Down Gaol for eighteen hours out of the twenty-four?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that it was true that Mr. Michael Toman had been committed for trial; but while legal proceedings were pending in the case it was impossible for him to make any reply on the subject.

Mr. HEALY asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman could not give any information as the solitary confinement of the accused, and as to the authority on which the persons of individuals were searched for copies of the "no rent" manifesto?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that with regard to confinement the accused was in exactly the same position as persons generally were who were in prison awaiting their trial.

SPAIN—IMPRISONMENT OF MR. J. C. YOUNG.

Dr. CAMERON asked the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Whether any decision has as yet been come to by Government as to the claim of Mr. Jas. C. Young, for compensation from the Spanish Government in respect of his having been imprisoned in Fernando Po, for two years and and nine months, while awaiting the confirmation of a sentence pronounced in a local court condemning him to a fine (which was at once paid) or a few months imprisonment?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Her Majesty's Government have represented this case to the Spanish Government, with a view to some compensation being awarded to Mr. Young for the sufferings he has endured owing to the defects of the administration of justice in Fernando Po. The reply of the Spanish Government to these representations has not yet been received; and Her Majesty's Minister at Madrid has been instructed to again call their attention to the hardship of the case, and strongly to commend the application of Mr. Young to their favourable consideration.

HIGHWAY RATES—LEGISLATION.

Mr. HICKS asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he is now prepared to inform the House what steps he intends to take, in accordance with his statement of 12th August

1881, to place the owners of small tenements in the same position as regards highway rates as they now are as regards poor rates, and in which they were as regards highway rates before the repeal of the Act 13 and 14 Vic. c. 99, by the Act 38 and 39 Vic. c. 66?

MR. DODSON: I had hoped to be able to deal with the question of the making and the collection of rates generally during the present Session; but, looking at the state of the Business before the House, I doubt whether I shall be able to do so. But if I should find later on that I cannot carry the larger object into effect, I shall not object to introduce a shorter Bill for the purpose mentioned in the Question.

ARMY (INDIA)—MILITARY DRAFTS.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, now that all regiments are double battalion, it might not be arranged that boys in training for musicians and tailors should be taught in the battalion at home, till they are of mature age, instead of being sent prematurely to India?

MR. CHILDERS: In reply to my hon. Friend, I have to state that the Duke of Cambridge consulted the Medical Director General on this subject some months ago, and that he advised, and I decided, that boys might safely go to India, if of proper age and medically fit. The objection to sending men under 20 to perform, in the climate of India, the ordinary duty of privates does not apply to boys employed as musicians or tailors, whose duties are much lighter, and it would be most inconvenient to dispense with them in India. The subject is, however, one of which I will not lose sight.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—LETTERS TO MR. PARNELL AND MR. DILLON.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he has observed in the public Press a report of a speech delivered on Monday last, by Mr. W. B. Smith, one of the Vice Presidents of the Birmingham Reform League, in which that gentleman charged the Government with endeavouring to prevent the nomination of Mr. John Dillon for the Parliamentary representation of Birmingham at the next General Election, and in which Mr. Smith stated that he had written to Mr. Dillon, and had received no reply; and, further, that he had written to the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, inquiring if such letters as that which he had addressed to Mr. Dillon were prohibited, and, also, whether he would be permitted to visit Mr. Dillon, and had received no answer to either question; and, whether he has any statement to make in reference to the charges of Mr. Smith?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had not seen any report on the matter in the public Press; but he was informed that there had been one letter, and one only, addressed to Mr. Dillon, and also one addressed to Mr. Parnell; that the letters referred to a proposed demonstration at Birmingham on their release; and that the Governor of the Prison did stop the delivery of those letters. Mr. Smith wrote to the Governor requesting to be informed if the letter had been received. The Governor did not reply, as he considered he was not bound to do more than inform the prisoners that letters addressed to them had been detained. With regard to Mr. Smith visiting either Mr. Dillon or Mr. Parnell, of course he could do so in accordance with the rules of the prison. He must say, in explanation of the course taken by the Governor, that a rule had to be laid down that there should be no political correspondence and no political conversation with the prisoners at Kilmainham.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—CHARGE OF POSTING UP A NOTICE.

DR. COMMINS asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether he has seen a paragraph in the "Times" of Wednesday, stating that

> "A young man named Carroll, servant to a Roman Catholic clergyman at Coachford, has been committed for trial on the charge of posting up a notice, calling on the farmers to attend at the farm of a suspect named O'Leary and till his land;"

and, whether such statement is true; and, if so, under what statute has this man been so charged and committed?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON), in reply, said he had not seen the paragraph in *The Times;* but in consequence of the Question he had made inquiries, and found that Carroll had been arrested under the Conspiracy and Protection of Property Act, 1875.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—CASE OF MR. W. F. MOLONEY.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it was a fact that Mr. W. F. Moloney has been imprisoned under the Coercion Act, in Dundalk Gaol, since last November; whether application was made for his removal to Kilmainham, so that he might have reasonable facilities for carrying on his business, and was refused; and, whether his detention in Dundalk is essential for his safe custody, or is simply intended as punishment?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that Mr. Moloney was arrested on the 25th of November, and since his confinement in Dundalk Gaol application had been made for his transfer to Kilmainham; but it had been refused, the Irish Government feeling that it could not be acceded to consistently with the public interest.

Mr. REDMOND said, the right hon. Gentleman had not answered the last part of his Question.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, it had been found necessary to select the prison to which "suspects" were sent. That had become necessary from the fact that, with all the precautions which could be taken, correspondence to some extent had been kept up by some of the prisoners in some directions on the very matters for which they had been arrested. The Government must use their discretion with a view to prevent that; and it was in order to prevent it that Mr. Moloney was sent to Dundalk Gaol.

Mr. LEAMY asked, whether the right hon. Gentleman meant that communications of the kind which he said came out of prison came from Kilmainham only, and from no other prison?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I did not say that. I only said I believed they did come out of Kilmainham.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—ARMAGH GAOL.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, in view of the prevalence of smallpox of a very virulent type in the district of Armagh, he will order the removal of the suspects from Armagh Gaol?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that a medical officer had been sent to inquire whether the prevalence of smallpox rendered the removal of prisoners under the Protection of Person and Property Act from Armagh Gaol necessary. Following upon that medical officer's Report, an order had been issued to the effect that no person from the county of Armagh be admitted into the prison until further orders, this precaution being all that was deemed necessary.

LAW AND JUSTICE—THE FOUR ASSIZES.

Mr. HICKS asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether he has now come to a decision as to the way in which he will deal with the present waste of judicial power, and the great inconvenience caused to jurors and others by the present system of holding four Assizes?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James), in reply, said, the Question, strictly speaking, referred to a matter which was not under his jurisdiction; but he might say that there was no prospect whatever of any alteration being made in the system introduced by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross) for holding four Assizes in the year, in order that no person should be left untried for more than three months. But it was under the careful consideration of the Government how far arrangements could be made that would relieve the Judicial Bench and others from some of the burdens consequent on attending at these four Assizes.

THE PARKS (METROPOLIS)—RICHMOND PARK.

Mr HANBURY-TRACY asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether his attention has been called to the complaints as to the condition of Richmond Park; whether it is the fact that the Park is in many parts covered with ant-hills and mole-heaps, and, in consequence of its being insufficiently drained, the turf has in many places become full of small bogs, especially in those parts frequented by riders; and, if so, whether he will take steps to have the Park put into a proper state; and, whether it is the fact that the proprietors of the private road in the Clarence Lane leading to Roehampton Gate has erected a barrier close outside that gate, and has fastened this barrier with a lock, to which only the proprietor's tenants are allowed to have a key; and whether, in that case, he will consider the propriety of closing altogether Roehampton Gate until such time as the public in general are allowed to use it?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: With respect to the last part of my hon. Friend's Question, he has correctly stated the facts of the case. The owner of the private road leading to Roehampton Gate has for many years past barred the access of horses and vehicles to it by a gate. So long as this is the case Roehampton Gate cannot be used by the general public. The Gate is not under my jurisdiction; but I will consult with the Ranger as to the expediency of closing it entirely, so long as the owner of the land prevents access to it. With respect to the first part of his Question. I have received no complaints of the condition of Richmond Park. The Park is, I am informed, thoroughly drained. Owing to the exceptionally open weather, there have been more mole hills than usual, and the ground is much cut by riders; but in the drier weather this is being now remedied.

THE KINGDOM OF SERVIA—RECOGNITION OF KING MILAN.

MR. BUCHANAN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether Her Majesty's Government has recognised the Kingdom of Servia; and, if not, whether it proposes to do so at an early date?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Her Majesty's Minister at Belgrade has been instructed to convey the congratulations of Her Majesty's Government to King Milan on his assumption of the Royal title.

TUNIS—THE CAPTURE OF SFAX.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Why the inquiry into losses suffered by British subjects on the occasion of the capture of Sfax was broken off?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The proceedings of the Sfax Commission were brought to a close by the French Chairman, on the ground that the British Commissioners had recalled a witness who had been already examined, and whose second deposition differed from that previously given. The Italian Government were also represented on the Commission.

MR. O'DONNELL: Do I understand that the inquiry is terminated?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The inquiry in the form of a Commission is terminated; but there is correspondence going on with regard to the claims.

MR. O'DONNELL gave Notice that he would call attention to the matter on going into Committee of Supply.

SOUTH AFRICA—BASUTOLAND.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is true that the Cape Government is authorised to pay its levies against the Basuto people on confiscated lands and cattle; and, whether, considering such licence has tended to prolong the war as long as land and cattle remained to confiscate, he will authorise such payments?

MR. COURTNEY: Basutoland is an integral part of the Cape Colony, which possesses responsible Government, and it is for the Cape Parliament to provide the means of paying Cape levies. The hon. Member, perhaps, means to ask whether Her Majesty will be advised to exercise her prerogative by vetoing any Bill that may be passed by the Cape Parliament confiscating in any degree, and under whatever circumstances it may be passed, any lands held by any Basutos. The hon. Member will see, by referring to the Blue Book issued this week, that the Government can give no such pledge.

SOUTH AFRICA (NATAL)—INDABEZIMBI.

MR. R. N. FOWLER asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the British Resident at Pretoria has brought under the notice of the Transvaal Government the circumstances of an outrage committed in August last, by a party of Boers, on the person and property of a Kaffir named Indabezimbi, who was at that time residing in Natal; and, whether any steps have been taken by the authorities of the Transvaal, either to institute a judicial inquiry into the matter, or to surrender the offenders to the Government of Natal?

Mr. COURTNEY: On the 13th of October the British Resident reported that, according to promise, the Government had caused an investigation to be made at Utrecht, and informed him that the result was somewhat to invalidate the statement of Indabezimbi; but that the documents connected with the investigation at Utrecht would speedily be forwarded to him, with a view to correspondence through him with the Natal Government. No further communication has been received. It must be observed that, in the absence of any extradition Convention, a judicial inquiry in this case is practically impossible, the outrage, whatever it was, having been committed in Natal, and the offenders being in the Transvaal. Her Majesty's Government are taking active steps to re-establish a system of extradition in pursuance of Article 29 of the Convention. The despatches on this subject will be given to Parliament when the Correspondence is completed.

REMOVAL OF THE ELEPHANT "JUMBO."

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the Secretary to the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been called to the evidence of the secretary and the other officials of the Royal Zoological Gardens, in regard to the uncertain temper of the elephant "Jumbo," and also to the statement that this (alleged) fierce and dangerous animal is to be removed to the United States on the 19th instant upon one of a line of steamers which usually carries emigrants; and, whether he will take steps to secure emigrants taking berths upon the steamer, on which a passage for "Jumbo" has been secured, from the danger which it is stated by the secretary and other officials of the Royal Zoological Gardens they may incur; and whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a Copy of the Charter incorporating the Royal Zoological Gardens?

Mr. GILL asked, whether the hon. Gentleman was aware that an elephant which had been brought over from India by the Prince of Wales, and which afterwards died in the Zoological Gardens, Dublin, had killed two or three men on his passage over?

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY: Of course, the Board of Trade cannot possibly have any control over what my hon. Friend calls the "uncertain temper of the elephant Jumbo." But the Surveyors of the Board have been instructed to be present at the embarkation of the animal, and to take every care that no danger to the ship or passengers results from its presence on board. They are specially charged to see that the cage in which the animal is placed is sufficiently strong to prevent it getting adrift; and, above all, that the elephant shall not be able to step on to the light awning deck from his own cage. They have further been instructed to take care that the presence of the animal does not interfere with the ventilation of the ship, and the health, comfort, or safety of the passengers. As to the Question about the Zoological Society's Charter, I must ask for Notice of it.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. MAHONEY.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Mahoney, clerk of the Castlecomer Union, who was arrested under the Coercion Act, held his appointment under the same law as that under which Dr. Kenny held office in the North Dublin Union; whether upon Mr. Mahoney's arrest the Local Government Board immediately issued a sealed order dismissing him, as was done in Dr. Kenny's case; if not, will he state upon what principle the Local Government Board dismissed Dr. Kenny by sealed order; and, whether it is the fact that upon Mr. Mahoney's release he was at once allowed to resume his position by the Castlecomer Board, without any such application as the Dublin guardians are asked to make to the Local Government Board?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that Mr. Mahoney held his appointment under the same law as Dr. Kenny; but the Local Government Board, on the application of Mr. Mahoney, forbore taking action in his case for some time. On quitting the prison he resumed his duties.

MR. HEALY inquired whether the right hon. Gentleman would have any objection to lay on the Table the Correspondence which had taken place on the subject?

MR. W. E. FORSTER asked for Notice of the Question.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. N. J. BARRETT.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Postmaster General, Whether Mr. N. J. Barrett, a regularly appointed postal official (July 1875), who has been arrested at Loughrea under the Coercion Act, will be allowed to resume his post upon release, or will receive an equivalent appointment?

MR. FAWCETT, in reply, said, that the position held by Mr. Barrett in the Loughrea Post Office had been filled up; and, under the circumstances, he could not be restored to the service of the Post Office.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. LYNE.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether police protection was withdrawn from John Lyne, Ardnatrush, Bantry, county Cork, and whether Mr. Lyne himself was arrested by the police; and, if he would state why police protection was withdrawn?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that personal police protection was withdrawn from Mr. Lyne at his own request. There was no foundation for the statement that he had been arrested by the police. On one occasion last autumn the Constabulary thought it prudent to shelter him for the night in the barracks, for which he expressed his thanks.

POST OFFICE—THE "IRISH WORLD" NEWSPAPER.

MR. HEALY asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is true that, at various times since December last, the "Irish World" newspaper has been stopped in the Dublin General Post Office; if so, by whose instructions, and upon what grounds, this was done; whether the Department will compensate subscribers for the copies seized; whether any advice was sent to the addressees as to how their property had been disposed of; whether, during the same period, the "Irish World" was allowed to be delivered as usual through English Post Offices; and, if so, why a distinction was made; if it is correct that, under Article 6 of the Postal Convention, signed at Paris in June 1878, Great Britain binds herself to pay an indemnity of 50 francs to the sender of certain registered articles, including newspapers, "sauf le cas de force majeure;" whether the senders of undelivered registered packets of the "Irish World" will be entitled to receive the indemnity; and, whether any representations have been made by the Government of the United States as to the seizure of American newspapers in Irish Post Offices?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that as this was a political matter he might be allowed to answer the Question. It was true that *The Irish World* newspaper since December had been stopped in the Dublin General Post Office by the warrant of the Lord Lieutenant, who deemed it necessary for the good government of Ireland that that step should be taken. That was the only answer he could make to the first four Questions. If the action of the Irish Government were disputed in a Court of Law, it must be defended. With regard to the last Question, whether any representations had been made by the Government of the United States, he had to say that no representation, as far as he was aware, had been made by that Government. An inquiry had, in the course of business, been made of the Post Office; and the reply given by the Post Office was that the paper had been stopped by direction of the Lord Lieutenant.

MR. HEALY said, that no answer had been given as to an engagement to pay 50 francs to the sender of certain registered articles, including newspapers, "sauf le cas de force majeure."

MR. W. E. FORSTER: That is a legal Question, to which I am not able to give an answer.

MR. HEALY: Notice has been given for a week.

MR. LEWIS asked under what Act of Parliament the Lord Lieutenant had proceeded?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: That is a legal Question, and Notice ought to be given of it in proper form.

MR. REDMOND asked whether the papers had been destroyed in the Post Office?

[No reply was given to the Question.]

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARREST OF MR. JOHN RORKE.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is true that Mr. John Rorke of Dublin has been arrested under the Coercion Act, and of what crime he is suspected?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: It is the case that Mr. Rorke has been arrested under the Protection of Person and Property Act; and I believe the ground is that he is reasonably suspected of intimidation to prevent the payment of rent.

MR. HEALY said, that the answer of the right hon. Gentleman was so unsatisfactory that he felt it his duty to make a few remarks upon it, and with that view he would conclude with a Motion. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that Mr. Rorke had been arrested because he was reasonably suspected of intimidating persons not to pay rent; but the real reason he was arrested was because he was reasonably suspected of being the partner of Mr. Patrick Egan, the Treasurer of the Irish Land League. Mr. Rorke had never taken any part in politics—he had never made a speech in the whole course of his life—but he had business relations with Mr. Patrick Egan. Accordingly a heavy fine, in the shape of imprisonment, was to be imposed upon Mr. Rorke for his business connection with that unfortunate individual, the Treasurer of the Irish Land League. The right hon. Gentleman, in his recent speech at Tullamore, stated that the only people he had put into prison were broken-down men and reckless boys. Was Mr. Rorke either a broken-down man or a reckless boy? His commercial standing in the City of Dublin was superior to that of the right hon. Gentleman at Bradford. ["Oh!"] At all events, his name on the back of a bill would have much more potency than that of a certain official at Dublin Castle, whose signature was only valuable when attached to a warrant. Because Mr. Rorke had the misfortune to be connected with Mr. Egan he was put in gaol. And to what gaol was he sent? Not to Kilmainham, where he would have an opportunity of conducting his business, according to the promises of the right hon. Gentleman; but he was sent down to Naas, 40 or 50 miles from the place where he could conduct his business. The Chief Secretary had stated that he would release the prisoners when outrages were discontinued. He would tell the right hon. Gentleman that the arrest of men like Mr. Rorke were only calculated to increase outrages. At the same time, such was the feeling of nationality that had been created in Ireland—such a feeling of solidity amongst the tenant farmers—that, were it not for the personal ruin the Chief Secretary wished to inflict, he would regard the Coercion Act in Ireland as a blessing rather than a curse. That would be his opinion, if he could merely view the matter apart from the personal destruction which he knew the right hon. Gentleman was desirous to bring upon individuals. The 800 men who were now in prison must be released some day; and when they did regain their liberty it would be seen that the Government, by their coercive policy, had only created so many drill-sergeants and picquets in the army of agitation. He begged to move the adjournment of the House.

MR. SEXTON, in seconding the Motion, said, he believed the arrest of Mr. Rorke to be one of the meanest the Government had yet made. He had the pleasure of making the acquaintance of that gentleman. He never was a politician. He never concerned himself, to any extent, in public life; and he (Mr. Sexton) was personally aware of the fact that during last year, owing to the representations of his friends, he had rigorously abstained altogether from politics. Mr. Rorke knew well, from the moment the Coercion Act came into force, that he was placed in a position of danger. He knew that the fact of his partnership with Mr. Egan would expose him to the attentions of the right hon. Gentleman. His friends advised him not to give the right hon. Gentleman any pretext for arresting him; and he had scrupulously abstained from anything of the kind, because he knew that one day he would be made the victim of the right hon. Gentleman's spleen. What was the crime of Mr. Rorke? They were told by the right hon. Gentleman that it was endeavouring to intimidate persons from the payment of rent. That was an accusation which no man who had the slightest knowledge of Rorke could credit for a moment. He was a man of courage and honour, willing to extend to other men the rights he claimed for himself; and if there was one man on Irish soil to-day, in gaol or out of it, who would be ashamed to practice intimidation, it was John Rorke. The moral murder inflicted under this Act was illustrated by the impunity with which a charge like this could be made up. The real charge against Mr. Rorke was that he was a partner in the commercial firm of Egan and Rorke in Dublin. The Government knew that Mr. Patrick Egan was one of their most dangerous enemies. They knew that he was the enemy of social and political tyranny in Ireland; they knew that he had devoted very rare abilities to the service of the people; and they knew the energy and skill he had brought to bear on the interests of the people; but the warrant of the Chief Secretary did not run in Paris—and therefore, to enable them to withdraw Mr. Egan from the service of the cause of the people, they had had recourse to the mean expedient of seizing on his partner, an innocent man, not at all engaged in politics, and who had studiously avoided doing anything to commit himself. The Government had done this with no other hope, and for no other reason, than that of dislocating the commercial business of Mr. Egan. The arrest of Mr. Rorke was particularly mean at the present time, when Mr. Egan's name was mentioned in connection with the representation of Meath. They had been informed by lawyers in the House that Mr. Egan was legally entitled to sit as Member of Parliament for Meath. Whether that was so or not, they knew that the Bishop and people of Meath would be very glad to-morrow to elect Mr. Patrick Egan to represent their county. Yet the Government, which had resorted to extreme and extraordinary measures to allow one of the Members for Northampton to take his seat, now arrested an honest, decent Irishman, incapable of crime, incapable of criminal thought, for the purpose of embarrassing another patriotic Irishman who was beyond their reach, hoping, by the dislocation of his business, to prevent Mr. Patrick Egan from again presenting himself before the electors of Meath. Such were the means to which the Irish Coercion Act was turned; such were the intents with which it was being employed. The right hon. Gentleman, in his recent extraordinary tour through Ireland, which procured for him a round of cheers when he returned to that House, told the crowd of people, whom he took by surprise in the streets of Tullamore, that outrages were committed, not exactly as his hon. Friend the Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) had quoted, but by broken-down men and by violent and reckless boys. Did Mr. Rorke belong to either of these two categories? Was he a violent and reckless boy? He had long since reached the years of maturity, which had taught him prudence; and he was one of the last men in the world likely to lay himself open to the charge the right hon. Gentleman had made against him. Was he a "broken-down man?" The House had heard the comparison drawn by the hon. Member for Wexford between this "broken-down man" and the Chief Secretary, from the aspect of that commercial life to which they both belonged. He told the House that Mr. Rorke, so far from being a broken-down man, was one of the most substantial and respected traders in the City of Dublin. The right hon. Gentleman told the people of Tullomore that if outrages ceased or became fewer, the "suspects" would be let out; but he immediately followed up that speech in which he, for reasons of his own, gave hopes to the hearts of some poor people in Ireland, leading them to suppose that some of the "suspects" would be released by imprisoning a man who could not be supposed to have any connection with outrages. He should not comment now on the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, beyond remarking that it was exceedingly easy for a man who had thrown into gaol every person that could answer him, who had put his fingers upon the throat of the country and a gag into its mouth, to appear at a hotel window, surrounded by his bailiffs and detectives, and to deliver to a crowd of people assembled in the market place a speech beginning with a dull jest, proceeding with a mean threat, and finishing up, in true English fashion, with a good round text of Scripture. It was exceedingly easy for the right hon. Gentleman to do these things, because he well knew that any man in that crowd who dared to say a syllable while he was delivering his studied eloquence would find himself, after a day or two, in Kilmainham or some other gaol. It had come to a sad time with Irish politics when no respectability, no prudence, no self-respect, could save a man from arrest; and when the politics of the country, and the direction of its interests, were confided to the care of a man who was capable of such a contemptible piece of comic acting as that seen the other day in the streets of Tullamore.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Healy.*)

Mr. GRAY remarked, that he had had a somewhat intimate acquaintance with Mr. Rorke, and he was perfectly convinced that Mr. Rorke had done nothing whatever to deserve arrest. Still, he could not say that the news of his arrest had caused him any great surprise. It was now two or three months since he had a conversation with Mr. Rorke, and on that occasion he (Mr. Gray) remarked to him—"The probability is the Chief Secretary will arrest you." Mr. Rorke said—"I have done nothing whatever. I have been exceedingly careful. I never attended any meeting; I have taken no part in any of the meetings of the Land League." "Well," he (Mr. Gray) said —"You are Mr. Egan's partner, and you will be arrested; they will try to punish Egan through you." He replied —"I know how serious it would be if both of us should be away from business, and on that account I have been careful to give the Chief Secretary no excuse for arresting me." It turned out, however, that his (Mr. Gray's) anticipations were correct. Messrs. Egan and Rorke carried on in Dublin a very large business, requiring personal attention and supervision. Mr. Egan, of course, had taken a very active part in political affairs; and, according to the manner in which the Coercion Act was being administered, his arrest, perhaps, would be a matter about which there could not be a great complaint. But to arrest Mr. Rorke simply because he was Mr. Egan's partner was a step which was not calculated, using the words of the Resolution passed last night, "to promote good government in Ireland." It was calculated to do the very reverse. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had taken care to counteract any good which his personal inspection of parts of Ireland might have been likely to produce by the coup which he accomplished when leaving the country. Really the present course of government in Ireland was calculated to drive into despair men of moderate opinions, and men who, like himself, had always been anxious to keep within the spirit of every moral and legal obligation, and to press as strongly as possible what he considered morally right upon the people. He would take the liberty of very humbly and respectfully repeating the warning to the right hon. Gentleman which was given some time ago in a leading article of *The Times*, to the effect that a Government that was feared might continue to exist; but that the Government which was at once hated and despised must soon come to an end.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I have only one remark to make. I doubt very much whether the hon. Members—even hon. Members opposite—really believe that Mr. Rorke was arrested simply because he was Mr. Egan's partner. [Mr. Biggar: Yes, we do.] Lest those in Ireland who may read the speeches that have been just now made should be led to believe that there is any truth in the assertion, I rise simply for the purpose of stating most distinctly that the fact that Mr. Rorke was Mr. Egan's partner had nothing to do with his arrest.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he had not the honour and pleasure of knowing Mr. Rorke; but he should say that, from what he had heard from his hon. Friends around him, he believed that he was arrested mainly, if not altogether, because he was Mr. Egan's partner. Mr. Rorke had lately taken no part in politics, and had done nothing to justify his arrest, which appeared to be in keeping with the rest of the Government policy in Ireland. The Ministry had introduced a system in Ireland of government by accusation, by calumny, by bringing vague charges against persons which could not be proved, but which they asserted justified them in locking them up in Kilmainham Gaol. In this case especially he should like to appeal from the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Head of the Government himself. Did the Prime Minister, with all his honourable antecedents, with all his instincts in favour of liberty and fair government, approve of a transaction of this character; and was the arrest of men like Mr. Rorke consistent with the honourable and open government of the country? Up to the time of his arrest Mr. Rorke had not been much of a politician; but he should like to know whether he had not by this time been converted into a very strong politician indeed? Such treatment made not merely politicians, but conspirators.

Mr. O'DONNELL agreed with those who believed Mr. Rorke to have been all his life a quiet politician—a most earnest Nationalist; no doubt, as strong in his opinion as any man in the House, but a quiet business man. Some time ago he had a conversation with Mr. Rorke of the same nature as that narrated by the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray). He (Mr. O'Donnell) expressed his fear that Mr. Rorke would be arrested because he was Mr. Egan's partner; but to this Mr. Rorke replied that, bad as the English were, they were not so bad as that. It seemed, however, that Mr. Rorke had been mistaken. [Mr. Sexton: Hear, hear!] It was not, however, the work of the Englishmen; it was the work of these anti-Irish under-strappers in Ireland, who did the dirty work of the Government at Dublin. He was absolutely certain that Mr. Rorke had not taken any part in politics lately; because the argument would commend itself to the House, that if one partner in a large commercial firm like that of Egan and Rorke was avowedly playing a dangerous game, the other would be particularly careful to keep himself clear of politics for the sake of their business. He had it upon the best authority that Mr. Rorke had strictly confined himself to his business. He was a respectable Dublin merchant and trader, enjoying the respect of all classes of the community, a man who never said an injurious word of anyone, even though he might be opposed to him in politics, or any other matter of opinion. But Mr. Rorke had been arrested purely, and entirely, and conclusively because he was Mr. Egan's partner. This was a case which went on all fours with the miserable way in which Dr. Kenny was arrested, with the additional punishment put upon him by depriving him of his office as medical officer. Mr. Rorke had been taken up for the purpose of disarranging and destroying the commercial business of the firm of Messrs. Egan and Rorke. The Chief Secretary had, no doubt, believed the information on which he had acted; but he asked the Chief Secretary to communicate that information, not to the House, not to the public, but to choose from the Front Opposition Bench three or four of the Leaders of the Conservative Party—men who had no sympathy with intimidation or Irish nationality—and to communicate to them the information upon which he had acted, and if those Leaders agreed that there was any reasonable ground whatever for the arrest of Mr. Rorke, he would apologize for having called into question the accuracy of the information of the right hon. Gentleman. But he assured the Chief Secretary such information was always at hand when wanted, especially at a time when Circulars were flying about the country. Then informers could always be found to give any kind of evidence. The Chief Secretary had doubtless received information. In connection with Dublin Castle there was always an abundant supply of auxiliaries, ready at a moment's notice to give Judas Iscariot evidence for the thirtieth part of the thirty pieces of silver. That was the system of government which reigned in Ireland at the present day; but he would not hold the Chief Secretary entirely responsible for this. The man who was responsible for the Chief Secretary himself was the right hon. Gentleman sitting on his left-hand side (Mr. Gladstone). It was the policy of the Premier that was the cause of everything that was taking place in Ireland. The Chief Secretary and the Premier, he was sure, would refuse that test; but they, knowing, as they did, Mr. Rorke, knowing, as they did, that the arrangement was that Mr. Rorke attended purely to the commercial business of the firm, while Mr. Egan devoted himself exclusively to attending to the policy of the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government — knowing these circumstances, knowing the general repute in which Mr. Rorke stood, knowing the absolute worthlessness of the evidence upon which the Chief Secretary proceeded, they charged the Government to any kind of test they chose, and they were perfectly certain that they would prove to the satisfaction of the right hon. Baronet (Sir Stafford Northcote), and to the satisfaction of the two right hon. and learned Gentlemen the Members for the University of Dublin, that there was not one rag of evidence against Mr. Rorke—that the only object of punishing Mr. Rorke was to ruin the business of Mr. Egan, and that the arrest of Mr. Rorke was one of the most foul and cowardly outrages that had been perpetrated, and that had disgraced the whole administration of the right hon. Gentleman in Ireland. He (Mr. O'Donnell) was very sorry, for his part, to see that there was any apparent complaint made upon the Irish Benches of the action of the Chief Secretary in addressing the crowd gathered outside his hotel window in Tullamore. He sincerely wished that the Chief Secretary would do much more of that sort of thing. He wished that, instead of acting on the information of the Iscariots of Dublin Castle, he would go round and see the country for himself. He was sure there were hundreds of parish priests throughout the country, like Father M'Alroy, of Tullamore, prepared to guarantee the Chief Secretary a quiet hearing. If he went round to the parish priests and consulted them, and visited the convent schools, and said a few nice things to the children, and afterwards addressed a crowd outside his hotel window, he might have a few rough interruptions; but, on the whole, the people would decidedly like him in his new character of the friend of the fatherless and the lover of liberty. He sincerely hoped the Chief Secretary would pay a visit to Dungarvan next, and if he addressed a crowd from the window of his friend Mr. Flynn's hotel, he would get as good an audience, and go away after having done as little to procure support for the policy of the Liberal Government as he did in Tullamore.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY said, he could hardly gather from the speeches of hon. Gentlemen opposite whether they really wished to accomplish the object they professed to have in view—to obtain the release of Mr. Rorke, or simply to vent their spleen on the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He felt deeply humiliated, as did the House and thousands of people in this country, at repeated arrests of this kind. He confessed he did not know where it was going to end; but he was sure the Chief Secretary intended to make himself thoroughly acquainted with, and responsible for, every arrest that was made under this Act. He was sure, also, that of the 500 persons who were now suffering in prisons in Ireland there were many perfectly innocent. It was impossible that it could be otherwise; but he wanted to ask hon. Gentlemen opposite did they really wish to have a better state of things brought about, and were their speeches likely to accomplish the objects they had in view? Take the speech of the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy). What could be more coarse, more insulting, more absolutely without a shadow of foundation, than his insinuations against the commercial credit of his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland. There was not a name that stood higher in England in that respect. Why should the hon. Member make his insulting and stupid comparison between the Chief Secretary for Ireland, in his business capacity, and the names of those gentlemen who had been arrested? Was that likely to assist them? Then the hon. Member for Sligo turned into ridicule the well-intentioned efforts of the Chief Secretary to come in contact with the people of Ireland. He (Mr. Mitchell Henry) knew just as much about the people of Ireland as did the hon. Member for Sligo; and he knew very well that on receiving the observations of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, they returned to their native character of love of fair play and politeness. He believed the Chief Secretary could have gone, from the very first day of his visit, into any large town or amongst any community in Ireland in perfect safety; and if he had let it be known he wished to speak to the people, he would have been received, as he was where he made his recent address, with fair play and courtesy, and even with sympathy. Well, then, why did the hon. Member for Sligo turn this matter into a matter of ribald jest? Then the hon. Member for Dungarvon (Mr. O'Donnell)—he understood the first part of his remarks as expressive of sympathy with the object of the visit of the Chief Secretary to Ireland; but the latter part of his observations cut off all such hope. But he (Mr. Mitchell Henry) wanted to appeal to the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy), who was the Leader of the Party opposite. Why did he not exert his authority, and relieve the country from that terrible incubus—the "no rent" manifesto? Did he believe in it? [*Cheers from the Irish Members.*] He gathered from those cheers that he did.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY: Under the circumstances, most certainly I do.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY: Well, if the hon. Member approves of it, all I can say is that it explains something that has long been a mystery, and that is the difference between the man who wrote the historical works of which the hon. Gentleman is the author and the speeches and political actions which have lately distinguished him.

MR. CALLAN: I rise to Order. Is the hon. Gentleman in Order in referring to every subject that crops up in his mind?

MR. SPEAKER: When a substantive Motion for the adjournment of the House is made, I am at a loss to state what subject cannot be discussed. What has happened this evening shows how necessary it is that the House should restrain the abuse of the right of moving the adjournment of the House.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY could not help saying that when arbitrary arrests were made, no doubt with the best intentions on the part of the Government, there ought not to be a desire manifested by the House to prevent the question being brought forward and discussed. Most undoubtedly the "no rent" manifesto, which was now being circulated in Ireland, was the cause of half the crime and wickedness that they had to deplore.

MR. HEALY: No, no!

MR. MITCHELL HENRY said, there was hardly a Bishop or parish priest in Ireland who did not say the same thing.

MR. HEALY: They do not say so.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY said, that some of the most important Bishops in Ireland, including Archbishop Croke, publicly denounced the manifesto.

MR. SEXTON: What did Dr. Nulty say?

MR. MITCHELL HENRY said, he did not say all the Bishops had spoken; and if the hon. Member (Mr. Healy) would not obey the voice of anything but the united Episcopate he must be rather a difficult son of the Church to deal with. He was convinced that the hon. Members did not desire to see this Coercion Act modified; but they wished to see it put into operation in its most loathsome and offensive forms. They wished to see it empowered to arrest a great many more persons than it did now. If it did their object was likely to be accomplished. But such conduct was traitorous to the Irish cause, and cruel to the Irish people. Hon. Members were safe enough in their places in the House, and they knew it. There was the hon. Member for Sligo, (Mr. Sexton) who was released on the grounds of ill-health. ["Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. Member to address himself to the Chair, and not to hon. Members opposite.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY: The hon. Member for Sligo was released on the ground of ill-health, and he felt very much distressed on account of the hon. Member's condition; but he was happy to say that the hon. Member appeared to him to have improved. If the hon. Member were to go back to Ireland and address his constituents they would see whether he had the courage of his opinions sufficient to give the same advice there that he gave in that House. He could see no end to the discontent of the Irish people so long as hon. Members did not address themselves to the objects of the Act with the ordinary common sense, which should be dictated by a desire to achieve that which they asked for, and not merely to irritate those who had the administration of the Act.

MR. REDMOND remarked, that on all occasions of this kind insinuations which were most offensive, and statements which were most unfounded, against the Irish Members at that side of the House invariably came from hon. Members representing Irish constituencies on the other side of the House, Gentlemen who owed their position in Irish politics to the fact that they advocated extreme National and Home Rule views at one period of their political existence, and who now took a very different course in acting as the despised tail of one of the political Parties of this country. He should not be led by the offensive remarks of the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry) into anything in the shape of recrimination; but he could not help remarking that it was unworthy of any Member of that House to cast the imputations which he had attempted to cast upon his hon. Friend the Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton). He accused his hon. Friend of doing in that House what he dared not do in Ireland, when he knew that his hon. Friend had actually suffered the penalty in prison of the advice which he had the courage to give to the people of Ireland. The hon. Member challenged his hon. Friend to go back to Ireland now, and give the people the same advice which he gave in that House. He (Mr. Redmond) challenged the hon. Member to go back to Galway and to make to his constituents the same statement on Irish politics which he was willing to make to a hostile Assembly at this side of the Channel. The hon. Member had no more the courage of his convictions in meeting his constituents than those Members whom he wrongfully charged with not having the courage to "Walk into the parlour of the spider," in the shape of the Chief Secretary. He protested against the insinuation which was continually in the mouth of Members of the Government to Members on that side of the House—that the Irish Members had not the courage of their convictions. He spoke on behalf of men whom he knew, who gave the same advice publicly in Ireland that they gave in that House; and he spoke on his own behalf, and asserted that in his own county every man, woman, and child knew what his views were. He might remark that he was not the candidate of a Caucus. He was not a Representative whose connection with Ireland began when he entered Parliament, or whose connection with Ireland would close when he ceased to represent an Irish constituency. He represented a county where his family had been known for generations, and where his words, young man though he was, were listened to with respect. In that constituency he had given the same advice to the people which he was not afraid or ashamed to give in the House, and that advice had been identical with the statement just now made by his hon. Friend and Leader the Member for Longford (Mr. Justin M'Carthy)—namely, that when Ireland had been deprived of her Constitutional liberties, and when her leaders had been unjustly imprisoned, the "no rent" manifesto was not only a justifiable, but a necessary policy. He agreed with the hon. Member for Galway, by their action on this occasion, they would not succeed in obtaining the release of Mr. Rorke. That was not their object. They had too much respect for Mr. Rorke to come *in formâ pauperis* to the House, and beg his release, unjustly though he was suffering imprisonment; but their object was to expose the manner in which the Coercion Act was being administered. Their object was to show that it was carried out with direct malice and with a deliberate intention of striking, in the meanest way, at the private business and the private character of the men who had been imprisoned. They had the strongest evidence of that in the fact that Mr. Rorke, whose business was in Dublin, had not been sent to Kilmainham, where he would be able to manage his commercial affairs, to some extent, but had been sent to Naas, 50 miles off, where it would be impossible for him to take any part in the conduct of his business. He was glad that this Motion had been made for quite another reason. An answer had been given to a Question of his on a kindred subject that evening, which was of such a character that a few minutes after it had been given he felt a certain kind of remorse that he had not risen and at once taken the course which his hon. Friend had taken with reference to Mr. Rorke. His Question had reference to a matter of the gravest importance, which involved the utmost hardship and injustice to one of the leading merchants of Dublin, Mr. Moloney, who was at present in Dundalk Prison, and who had been there since last November, was a partner in one of the largest wholesale business establishments in Dublin. After being arrested he was sent to Dundalk, where it would be impossible for him to take any part in the conduct of his business. His partners, one of whom was a brother of the hon. Member for Cavan and a magistrate of the City of Dublin (Mr. M'Cabe Fay)—a gentleman who had no sympathy with his political opinions, and had never been associated in any way with the Land League—went to Dublin Castle without Mr. Moloney's knowledge, and, he dared say, without his approval, and represented to the Chief Secretary, or to his representative, that the removal of Mr. Moloney to Dundalk was entailing grave pecuniary loss upon his firm; and that in Kilmainham, where he would be able to take some part in the management of the business of the firm, his safe custody would be perfectly secured. The application for his removal was refused, and the firm in consequence has suffered seriously by his absence. Here, again, they had another instance of the contemptible petty feeling which ruled the Government in these matters. He could tell the reason why Mr. Moloney had been removed to Dundalk. His wife was a member of the Ladies' Land League. She resided in Dublin. The Government in this contemptible manner desired to punish her by keeping her husband in Dundalk, where he was almost out of the reach of his relatives, who might desire to see him frequently. As had already been pointed out, the Chief Secretary for Ireland suppressed freedom of discussion and freedom of speech in Ireland, and arrested every man who might be regarded as a leader of the people, and, having done so, he himself addressed a crowd of people from a hotel window at Tullamore; and on the subject he (Mr. Redmond) had been greatly inclined to put a question as to whether the right hon. Gentleman had any objection to say what proportion of policemen and detectives there were to every one of the inhabitants of Tullamore in the small crowd?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: To the best of my belief, not one.

MR. REDMOND said, he should be exceedingly glad if that statement were correct; and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman was better informed on that point than he usually was on other matters in regard to which he derived his information from the detectives. He should like to point out that the right hon. Gentleman, in going to Tullamore, had taken a course which it would have been better for him to have taken long ago. Let the right hon. Gentleman go to other places in Ireland in the same manner—and he was sure the right hon. Gentleman would be safe from injury or insult in doing so—and he would find that he and his Colleagues in the Cabinet, by their conduct in regard to Irish affairs, had encouraged that condemnation towards the Government which existed in the hearts and minds of nine-tenths of the people. He was glad that that Motion had been brought before the Government for the purpose of exposing the manner in which these arrests had been made, and trusted that it would be pressed to a division; and he sincerely hoped that when matters of that kind came forward in future they would not have a repetition by the Chief Secretary of the insinuations against the Irish Members that they had not the courage of their convictions. He hoped the Motion would be pressed to a division.

SIR PATRICK O'BRIEN said, he could not allow one remark made by the hon. Member who had just sat down to pass without a few words of comment. Tullamore was the capital of the county which he represented; and he believed that any crowd which could be assembled in that town would hold opposite views to those of the Chief Secretary, especially with reference to coercion in Ireland; but, at the same time, that they would express them in the most legitimate manner. In no part of Ireland were the people more actuated by that spirit of fairness which he wished to see manifested by men in high position in Ireland; and if the right hon. Gentleman came amongst them to express his own honest convictions, he believed they would be prepared to give him, as they had given him, a courteous and fair hearing. While differing from the course taken by the Government on the Coercion Act, he tendered his best thanks to the Chief Secretary for the bold and courageous manner in which he placed before the people of Tullamore the naked truth with respect to the gross and outrageous atrocities which had been committed in Clare and in other parts of Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman won their sympathies by a recital of the acts of violence which had been committed in the County Clare; and he (Sir Patrick O'Brien) was also there to express his regret that hon. Members opposite, who came from Ireland, on the many occasions they had for addressing their constituents, entirely omitted to use similar strong language in repudiating and expressing their abhorence of the outrages committed in Ireland; deeds which, under whatever Government—Whig or Tory or Ultra-National—must result in disgrace to that country.

MR. LEAMY said, he would not have joined in this debate but for the closing statement of the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken. In reply to it, he would point out that during the Recess there were in Ireland only three or four public meetings which were attended by Members of Parliament. His hon. Friend the Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell), the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond), and he himself on those occasions strongly condemned outrages, and a report of that condemnation was reported in the newspapers on only one occasion. He never stood upon a platform from which he did not hear outrage condemned. The fact was that the condemnation of outrages from Land League platforms became so much a part of every man's speech that the newspapers, in reporting those speeches, altogether omitted the part. [*Laughter.*] If hon. Members who laughed would wait, they would see there was nothing so very extraordinary in that statement. London papers, in reporting speeches delivered in that House, endeavoured only to give as much of a speech as could make pretence to some originality; they would not constantly report arguments which had been over and over again repeated. Perhaps hon. Members would now see that his explanation was not absurd. He repeated, that he never stood on a platform where he did not hear outrages condemned. In the County Tyrone he constantly, during the election, condemned outrages, and on the next day the paper did not contain any report of his speech. But hon. Members might like to know that a Government reporter was present; and any hon. Member who doubted his words could move for a Return of the shorthand-writer's report, and test the truth of his statement. The Land League meetings, furthermore, were generally attended by clergymen. Would anyone say that the Irish priest had not, over and over again, denounced outrages? If the Irish Members persistently denounced outrages, they would not be believed. [Mr. WARTON: Hear, hear!] It would be saying their denunciation was like "Don't nail his ears to the pump." So that, whatever course they adopted, a hostile construction was put upon their words and acts. With respect to Mr. Rorke, he only made his acquaintance a few months ago. He could not speak for anything Mr. Rorke did before the suppression of the Land League. But since that time he was aware Mr. Rorke had done nothing. The charge made against him in the warrant was absolutely false. Similar charges had been brought against other men. Though they might contest these charges, they could not deny the persons attended Land League meetings, and perhaps spoke at them. But with regard to Mr. Rorke, he knew of his own knowledge that that gentleman was not connected with the Land League since its suppression; and he could hardly suppose that the right hon. Gentleman was only now suspecting him of some intimidation committed four or five months ago. Was it fair that a man arrested on mere suspicion of a certain offence should be sent down to Naas Gaol, and thus prevented from affording any assistance in the carrying on of his business? He might have been kept as securely in Dublin. If it were not fair, had not the Chief Secretary broken the pledge he gave to Parliament that the Coercion Act would not be used for the purpose of punishment? He did not suppose there was any use appealing to hon. Gentlemen on the Liberal side of the House. [Mr. HEALY: Hear!] Nevertheless, it was their duty to point out how the Chief Secretary's pledges had been broken. Whether he was administering the Coercion Act as a means of punishment or not, its adminstration amounted to punishment which should not be meted.

DR. COMMINS considered that the insinuations thrown out against certain of the Irish Members were as entirely undeserved as they were unworthy of those who made them. He did not know that ever he attended a Land League meeting in the ordinary sense of the word; but during the Recess he had been present at meetings held in every part of the county he represented (Roscommon). Ever since this question of outrages came up he did not think he had ever stood on a platform without using the strongest language in denunciation of the outrages, and pointing out that those who committed outrages were the real friends of coercion and the Government policy, and were not the friends of the policy which would render the people contented and happy. But this advice given to the people was studiously left out of the reports in the newspapers which formed the usual source of information of the Chief Secretary, as it would not have been agreeable to English readers and to hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite, whose delight it was to level insinuations which were cowardly in the extreme against Members of that House. He appealed to the reports of his speeches by the Government shorthand writers, who, by the way, acted in the most insolent manner, elbowing their way on to the platforms by shoving others aside, and doing their best, by their conduct and language, to provoke occurrences which would suit the purposes of their reports. He appealed to their reports; and if they did their duty faithfully it would be found that he had done his best to prevent outrages occurring or recurring. But while he and his hon. Friends around him had done that, he missed any such address by the hon. Baronet the Member for King's County (Sir Patrick O'Brien) amongst his constituents, or by the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry). To whom did the reproaches levelled by those hon. Gentlemen against other Members most apply? Did they not most apply to themselves? Either those two hon. Gentlemen were utterly destitute of influence among their constituents, or, if they had influence, they were cowards, who dared not go among their constituents to deliver their speeches. ["Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is bound to withdraw that expression applied to a Member of this House.

Dr. COMMINS: I said "if."

Mr. SPEAKER: I must distinctly call on the hon. Member to withdraw that expression, and apologize to the House for using it.

Dr. COMMINS: I withdraw the expression, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. SPEAKER: Do I understand the hon. Gentleman distinctly to withdraw the expression?

Dr. COMMINS said, he had already withdrawn it. [An hon. Member: Apologize.] He was afraid he had been misunderstood. What he said was that if they had the courage of their convictions they would have delivered among their constituents the speeches which they actually addressed to the House of Commons. In short, he put the case hypothetically. He did not wish, however, to soften the withdrawal of anything that had been deemed objectionable. Nothing could have been found in the speeches of Mr. Rorke that would have justified his arrest. Why had Mr. O'Kelly, his Colleague in the representation of Roscommon, been arrested? He had never said anything objectionable in his speeches, except one pardonable slip, far less culpable than he (Dr. Commins) had just been reprimanded for. No one could have been more moderate in his tone or sensible in his remarks. He never attended a meeting but his voice was heard against outrage and in support of law and order—meaning by law and order not despotism and disorder. Undoubtedly, his hon. Friend was preparing test cases for the Land Court; but that, he believed, was not now considered a sufficient ground for arresting anybody. Why, then, was not his hon. Colleague released? Poor Law Guardians, traders, editors, and proprietors of newspapers had been arrested in the county of Roscommon, and, like the editor of *The Roscommon Messenger*, regarding whose offence he was completely in the dark, they were sent to distant prisons from which they could not manage their business. In this respect the cases of Mr. Rorke and Mr. Moloney were not peculiar; because he believed that it would be found in almost every case where such a proceeding must effect a man's commercial ruin, the course of sending them to distant prisons had been adopted. These were matters which the Irish Members would like to have explained; but no explanation was ever given. As one who desired to see the reign of disorder cease—and he believed disorder was not all on one side—desiring also to see the suspicion dissipated that the Coercion Act was being used, not so much for the suppression of crime as for the suppression of political association and agitation, he asked some explanation from the Government of the subjects he had noticed. He was not sorry the Chief Secretary had gone to Tullamore. Wherever he had gone he would have experienced the same immunity from obstruction and insult. He (Dr. Commins) promised that every Member of the Government who visited Ireland would experience the same courtesy, even though they spoke to the people in a way calculated to rouse angry passions, as he must say the Chief Secretary did at Tullamore, He himself, in all his travelling through Ireland, had only been insulted twice—once by a soldier, and another time by a policeman. He was glad that this question had been introduced, and he hoped the Government would consider the expression of opinion from Members on that side of the House as the expression of opinion of people outside.

COLONEL COLTHURST said, he would not have interfered, particularly in a case of this kind, but for the avowal of the hon. Member for Longford (Mr. M'Carthy) with reference to the "no rent" manifesto. No Member until that night, with the exception of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), had avowed his approval of that document in the House. [Mr. HEALY: They have.] Well, the hon. Member for Wexford might have done; but he much regretted that the hon. Member for Longford should have spoken in the way he had done. His hon. Friend below him (Mr. Mitchell Henry) had said that the Bishops in Ireland had denounced it, and the statement was received with incredulity. He (Colonel Colthurst) challenged them to mention any Bishop, or any but an infinitesimal number of priests, who had not denounced it. The Archbishop of Cashel (Dr. Croke), who went as far as anybody in his defence of the Land League, said it was immoral, wicked, and cowardly, and for that he had been denounced in *The Irish World* in much the same language as was used in that House towards the Chief Secretary. In an editorial letter in *The Irish World* on the 18th of December, the statement was made that "his name would be handed down to the execration of the Irish race for ever." That was simply because he had denounced the "no rent" manifesto. He challenged hon. Members opposite to give them the name of one Bishop who had even tolerated the "no rent" manifesto. He knew a mean and dishonest use had been made of an opinion expressed by Dr. Nulty, Bishop of Meath, and had been put in an abominable document issued from Paris, and signed by Patrick Egan, and retained there in spite of the reclamation of Dr. Nulty. He was sure his hon. Friend the Member for Longford would not have given the endorsement he did to the manifesto, if he had been fully acquainted with the facts of the case. In the County Kerry an unforunate man was visited by a party of "Moonlight" marauders a few nights ago. He was put on his knees, and when he said he had paid his rent, but had got 34 per cent reduction, the men rejoined that they "did not care a d—— what reduction he got; he should pay no rent while Parnell and Dillon were in prison." They then shot him, so that he was badly wounded. He was sure his hon. Friend would not tolerate, even by connivance, such action as that. He said distinctly that the "no rent" policy could never have succeeded except by means of the terrorism of "Captain Moonlight." He was glad to say that his constituents, the people of the County of Cork, were not responsible for these outrages; but that the signatories of the "no rent" manifesto were morally responsible. He would go further, and say that every member of the Executive of the Land League who had signed the "no rent" manifesto, or who, even not signing it, had not disowned it, was morally responsible for every outrage which had taken place. He had received the day before a letter from one of the most respected Bishops in the South of Ireland, and in regard to the Land Question he said—

> "On the whole, the prospect is more cheering than it was a short time since. I have learned from my priests that in a large number of parishes in their diocese the farmers and the landlords are amicably arranging their differences; but these unfortunate outrages—thank God! we have but few of them—are terrifying well-disposed men from paying their rents."

He had letters from America saying that the "no rent" manifesto was killing the agitation there. If it did, perhaps its authors might be forgiven some of the misery and some of the crime they had caused.

MR. MAC IVER said, he was one of those Members who, with entire personal respect for the Chief Secretary, were inclined to regard him as a Member of a Cabinet of divided counsels. They might respect the Chief Secretary personally; but they mistrusted his Government. He did not think he was the only Member who believed the Government had misused the Coercion Act. Their policy had been no better than a policy of imbecility. One day they were too lenient, and another too severe. No respect was due to them beyond that due to people who had good intentions, and they knew where good intentions paved the way to. Why were the hon. Members for Cork City (Mr. Parnell) and Tipperary (Mr. Dillon) arrested? At the time of their arrest they were not more guilty than they were months before; but many people properly believed that the reason why they were arrested was because they had replied—and effectively replied—to the speech of the Prime Minister at Leeds. There were many people who believed —and he confessed he was one of them —that those Gentlemen, who truly represented a large portion of the population of Ireland, were arrested for the cause he had mentioned, and not for the reasons stated in the warrants. In regard to the particular case now before the House, he did not think the Chief Secretary for Ireland appreciated the gravity of the charge that was brought against the Government. If the right hon. Gentleman were to say that he personally knew about this case—that, of his own knowledge, he knew that Mr. Rorke had been doing that which justified his arrest—he (Mr. Mac Iver) should believe him; but he distinctly thought that if the right hon. Gentleman had a good case, he should now get up in his place and take the House into his confidence.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I have no right to speak again; but, after the speech of the hon. Member who has just sat down, I must say this—that in no case have I satisfied myself more completely that there existed such reasonable suspicion as rendered an arrest necessary. But the hon. Member is, of course, aware that, in accordance with the conclusion come to after a long debate last Session, it is impossible for the Government to publish the grounds for the arrest.

Mr. CALLAN said, that at a meeting of his constituents, which he attended, he denounced outrages, and warned them that force was no remedy. At that meeting he also spoke in very contemptuous terms of the Chief Secretary, and reminded the farmers that, whether in power or out of power, he had never lost an opportunity of voting for coercion, and that when in power he had voted oftener for it. He need scarcely refer to the clinical lecture delivered by the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry), who appeared not to have forgotten his early habits. He believed that the last time he addressed his constituents, he was accompanied to the platform by Mr. Michael Davitt.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY said, he did not go to a meeting with Mr. Davitt; but Mr. Davitt, unexpectedly to him, attended one meeting where he spoke.

Mr. CALLAN said, he was not aware of the order of the procession, as to whether he followed Davitt or Davitt followed him. He remembered, however, when the hon. Member followed Mr. Butt and kicked out of the traces. He (Mr. Callan) happened to know both Mr. Egan and Mr. Rorke, and as far as he was personally concerned he could not believe that Mr. Rorke was guilty in any respect. The last time he knew Mr. Rorke to take part in politics was on behalf of a then supporter of the Government. The only occasion on which he knew of Mr. Rorke taking part in politics within the last three years was upon the occasion of the election for the City of Dublin, when he assisted in returning the two hon. Members who represented the City, and were supporters of Her Majesty's Government. Mr. Michael M'Donnell, of the County Louth, who, at the request of the Sub-Inspector, interfered with the tenantry of Mr. Tipping, a "Boycotted" landlord, with the view of getting them to pay their rent, wrote to Mr. Tipping that he would get his rent if he allowed a reduction of 15 per cent. Mr. Tipping sent the letter to the Chief Secretary, stating that he was "Boycotted," and within 24 hours Mr. M'Donnell was arrested under the Coercion Act. He was sent to Naas Prison, 100 miles away, and the result was that he and his family were ruined. In like manner the Chief Secretary was now doing all he could to ruin the firm of Rorke and Egan. Why was he sent to Naas, and not confined in Kilmainham? Was it not done deliberately and maliciously to destroy his business? If it was any comfort to the Chief Secretary, he had the satisfaction of knowing that he had ruined many young families in Ireland; but the time was coming when the Irish electors would teach the Government in English constituencies, and teach certain Irish Members in theirs, a lesson. There would be retribution for coercion.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN pointed out that while fair play had been shown to the Chief Secretary in his recent visit to Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman himself had displayed no fair play whatever. He could not see any fair play in descanting upon the merits of the Land Act—and he did not deny that there were merits in the Land Act—when those who could criticize the Land Act, and whose view of the matter differed somewhat from that of Her Majesty's Ministers, were locked up in prison. If the right hon. Gentleman wished to show fair play, let him bring down with him to Tullamore, or anywhere else in Ireland, Mr. Parnell or Mr. Dillon, and tell the people to judge between their arguments on both sides. Let him take with him the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sexton), and they would also allow him to bring with him to argue his side of the question the two Irish Law Officers, and as many right hon. Gentlemen on the Front Ministerial Bench as he chose. As to Mr. Rorke, he was a man who avoided politics, and devoted himself to his business. He scrupulously tried to avoid bringing himself within the scope of the reasonable suspicion of the right hon. Gentleman and his friends in Dublin Castle. He called such an arrest as this a stab in the back. If a man committed a garotte robbery, he was punished with the lash, and the political garroting of which the Chief Secretary was guilty was deserving of the same kind of punishment. He hoped the political garroters would soon receive the punishment they deserved, and he could wish with Shakespeare that he could

> "Put in every honest hand a whip
> To lash the rascals naked through the world."

He regretted to say that the worst actions of Her Majesty's Ministers were backed up and encouraged by Irish Members on the other side of the House; and he was ashamed to hear, as recently as last night, words that would create throughout Ireland a feeling of indignation. He was sorry that one of the two Members for Tipperary, who was allowed by the Government to sit and vote in the House, should give utterance to sentiments that were an outrage upon the feelings of the people of Ireland.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not in Order in referring to a past debate of the present Session.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN said, he would refrain from doing so; but he must say that when a Member stood up to make excuses for coercion, he libelled and outraged the feelings of the Irish people. When any man rose to fasten the chains and fast bolt the prison-door upon the high-minded John Dillon, the real and true Member for Tipperary, such action would not be forgotten by the people of Ireland, or, least of all, by the brave and patriotic people of Tipperary. The Government had been warned, again and again, that these arrests would do no service to the cause of good government in Ireland; that they would not prevent outrages in Ireland; and he declared that if the people now in prison were let out, they would have fewer outrages and fewer crimes, though they might have a more lively and pervading agitation in the country. If that were done, he was perfectly certain they should have a repudiation and condemnation from these gentlemen of everything in the way of crime and outrage, and anything that would bring shame upon a good cause. Instead of doing good, the Government were going deeper into this mistake. What was the result? Return after Return laid upon the Table of the House showed that, instead of producing the effects desired, the tendency was in the other direction, and he saw no hope for peace or prosperity until a different course was resolved upon by the Government—until they were prepared to open the prison-doors and prepared to fight their opponents openly upon Irish platforms and the benches of the House of Commons. Until the Government did that, he saw no chance of a restoration of peace and order in Ireland.

Mr. BIGGAR said, the hon. and gallant Member for the County of Cork (Colonel Colthurst) read them a lecture on the "no rent" manifesto with regard to the opinion of ecclesiastics upon the subject. He was not prepared himself to enter into the ecclesiastical part of the subject; but with regard to the question whether or not outrages arose from the "no rent" manifesto, or whether that manifesto was justified by the facts at the time of its issue, he clearly could not agree with the hon. and gallant

Gentleman. It was not issued until the Government had made it impossible for the Land League to assist the tenant farmers of Ireland of small means in having their cases properly laid before the Court. He was clearly of opinion that the manifesto had nothing to do with outrages, as the Government obtained the Coercion Act six months before the issue of the manifesto on a statement of alleged outrages. The senior Member for King's County (Sir Patrick O'Brien) said that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had acted boldly and courageously in addressing the people at Tullamore. He did not see what courage there was shown by a cock crowing on his own homestead, and the right hon. Gentleman took care to be surrounded by police spies, by bailiffs, and by people who were probably less reputable. Besides, he had the opportunity of putting in prison anyone who disagreed with him. He did not agree with the hon. Baronet as to the good effect of that portion of the right hon. Gentleman's conduct, for he believed it had entirely broken down. Some hon. Members on the other side of the House and the Irish people were exceedingly fond of fair play—he thought they were; but fair play was not exercised by the Government in Ireland. In one of his speeches the right hon. Gentleman denounced outrages, as he had a perfect right to do; but he blew his own trumpet loudly about his charity, and that sort of thing; whilst, at the same time, he was assisting those landlords who had been charging impossible rents to exterminate their unfortunate tenants. He had talked about what he had done in Ireland 30 years ago during the Famine. Some people like to see misery and suffering; and he strongly suspected that as to the motive that had actuated the right hon. Gentleman in going to Ireland at the time it was to gratify his love of personal suffering.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is attributing unworthy motives to the right hon. Gentleman. The motives attributed by the hon. Member are atrocious. I must distinctly call upon him to withdraw that observation.

MR. BIGGAR said, he would at once withdraw it. He would be very sorry to say anything un-Parliamentary—it was not his wish to do so. He denied the truth of the assertion made by the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Mitchell Henry) with regard to the state of health of his hon. Friend (Mr. Sexton) at the time of his arrest; and he thought the hon. Member for Galway should withdraw what he had said respecting that hon. Gentleman, as it was notorious that he was in a frightful state of debility, and perfectly incapable of moving from place to place when released from Kilmainham. He believed the Government ought to turn over a new leaf, and not put any more persons in prison under the Coercion Act unless there was some case made out against them; and he thought, also, they should redeem the pledges they made when that Act was passed, and when a person was arrested they should allow him to carry on his ordinary occupation, which was impossible in the case of Mr. Rorke, he having been taken to Naas instead of Kilmainham Gaol. In conclusion, he expressed his conviction of the futility of appealing to the sense of fair play of the Government, for he believed that, politically speaking, it was the most untrustworthy Government that it was his fortune to remember.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY, in reply to the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar), said, he did not deny that the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had been very ill—on the contrary, he firmly believed that at one time he was very ill, and he was very sorry for it—but what he said was that the hon. Member was now in excellent health, and he complained that the hon. Member was employing his health in giving atrocious advice to the Irish people. He challenged the hon. Member to go and give that advice in Ireland which would ensure what he thought would be a very great blessing—namely, his being prevented from continuing to give the "no rent" advice which was the cause of all the outrages.

MR. GILL corroborated what had been said by the hon. Member for Cavan respecting his hon. Friend's (Mr. Sexton's) state of health, and said, even though he looked strong now, he was not so, and it was very much against the advise of his friends and medical advisers that he was in that House at all. The right hon. Gentleman had said that he did not believe there was a Member, even amongst those on that side of the House, who really thought that Mr. Rorke was arrested simply for being Mr. Egan's partner. Nearly all of them had said they did believe it, and he believed it too. That, no doubt, was the real ground of the arrest; but there were plenty of hirelings in Dublin Castle who would furnish the right hon. Gentleman with some more convenient reason. He should like know what had become of the pledge given by the Government when the Coercion Act was passed, that every case of arrest would be investigated, for he could not suppose, if that promise had been kept, that 700 or 800 of the most respectable men in Ireland would now be in prison? He denied that the Irish Members had neglected to condemn outrages, and expressed a wish to divide the House as a protest against the tyrannical conduct of the Government.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 16; Noes 147: Majority 131.—(Div. List, No. 43.)

SOUTH AFRICA—BASUTOLAND AND THE TRANSVAAL.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any reply has been sent by Her Majesty's Government to the telegram on the subject of Basutoland, which was received on the 15th February, from the Cape Government; and, if so, whether he can state its terms; and, when any official information will be published as to the events that have occurred in the Transvaal and Natal since June last?

Mr. COURTNEY: No reply was sent to the telegram received on the 15th of February, as none appeared necessary, the telegram of the 9th of February from the Secretary of State having sufficiently explained the views of Her Majesty's Government. Papers relating to Natal and Zululand and to the Transvaal will be distributed next week.

CUSTOMS—THE NEW WAREHOUSING SCHEME.

Mr. SCHREIBER (for Colonel Makins) asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether, in introducing the new warehousing scheme for the Customs Establishment, the Government intend so to amalgamate the Clerical and Outdoor Departments as to prejudice the officers of the latter Department, by placing such Custom's clerks in a superior position to such officers, although younger and of shorter standing in service; and, if such scheme be carried out, if it will greatly reduce the present prospects of promotion of the class of examining officers and gaugers; whether it is intended to offer terms of retirement to the officers now composing the Outdoor Department; and, when the proposed scheme is to come into operation?

Mr. RITCHIE had given Notice of his intention to ask on Monday next, Whether it is the intention of the Treasury to appoint the clerks rendered unnecessary by the changes in the Customs warehousing system to the posts of examining and other superior officers in the new Outdoor Establishment of the Customs; and, if so, whether this is not contrary to the provisions of the Treasury Minute of the 25th April 1864, which conferred upon the subordinate officers of the Outdoor Department the sole right of appointment of all offices of the Outdoor Department not above the rank of examining officer; and, whether the Playfair scheme, in reference to duty, pay, &c. was intended to apply to members of the Outdoor Department as well as to the clerical staff?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: I will answer the Question which the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets has put down for Monday at the same time as that of the hon. and gallant Member for South Essex. I can only repeat what I have already stated—namely, that, speaking generally, the prospects of present members of the Customs Outdoor Department will not suffer by the changes proposed in the warehousing system. There is, therefore, nothing in the circumstances of the case to justify the offer of special terms of retirement to the outdoor officers. The new scheme will be brought into operation as soon as possible; but I cannot at present name the precise date. The Minute of 1864, referred to by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, related to vacancies in the ordinary course, and cannot reasonably be held to apply to new appointments arising out of an organic change in the Department. The Playfair scheme does not apply to the Outdoor Department; and so far as the salaries of the transferred clerks are affected by it, it could only be as matter of personal allowance to prevent individuals from suffering by the change. I must now respectfully ask hon. Members not to press me further at present with Questions upon this subject. I have repeatedly stated that it is our desire to introduce these changes so as to prejudice as little as possible the interests of anyone concerned. It will be impossible for the Executive Government to discharge its duty whenever administrative changes have to be made in the public interests if, before its measures are completed, it is called upon to answer for the effect of those changes on every individual interest.

ATTEMPT UPON THE LIFE OF HER MAJESTY.

HER MAJESTY'S ANSWER TO THE ADDRESS.

THE **COMPTROLLER** OF THE **HOUSEHOLD** (Lord KENSINGTON) *reported* Her Majesty's Answer to the Address as followeth:—

"My Lords and Gentlemen,

"*I receive with heartfelt satisfaction the loyal and dutiful Address from My two Houses of Parliament.*

"*I am thankful to the Almighty whose merciful care has protected Me and My beloved Child from danger.*

"*In My sincere desire to promote the welfare of My people, I am comforted and supported by the continued assurance of your attachment to My Person and My Throne.*"

ARMY — THE REPORT OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL FOR RECRUITING.

MR. **CHILDERS**: I promised yesterday, in reply to the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Alexander) whom I do not now see in his place, to state when the Inspector General's Report on Recruiting would be circulated. My first duty was to see that instructions should be given that it should be laid on the Table at the earliest possible moment. The Report has been revised and printed, but there were a good many mistakes in it; and I find that it would be impossible to have it circulated before Monday evening or Tuesday morning.

NAVY—THE BOARD OF ADMIRALTY—CONSTITUTION OF THE BOARD.

SIR **JOHN HAY** asked the Secretary to the Admiralty a Question of which he had given him private Notice—namely, Whether he will state to the House the changes that are contemplated in the Board of Admiralty or in the Office of the Admiralty?

MR. **TREVELYAN**: Sir, it is the case that, in view of the great and increasing bearing of mechanical science upon the construction and arming of our ships, Lord Northbrook and his Colleagues have determined to call into their council scientific assistance from both inside and outside the Navy. The Controller (Admiral Brandreth), who has done so well at Chatham, has been invited to join the Board; and a new office has been created, with a salary attached to it of £2,000 a-year, to be held by a practical man of science, who shall unite special mechanical and engineering knowledge to wide administrative experience. Such a man has been found in Mr. George Rendel, whose qualifications for the post cannot well be described within the limits of an answer to a Question, but I will venture to think are undisputed either in scientific or naval circles. In order to enable our Successors to have the advantage, if they choose, of Mr. Rendel's services, the new Lordship of the Admiralty cannot be held by anyone who has a seat in Parliament. On the retirement of Vice Admiral Hall, who has for 10 years held the post of Naval Secretary, it is proposed to revert to the old arrangement, which is, that besides the Parliamentary Secretary there should be one Permanent Secretary, who may be either a naval officer or a civilian. On Admiral Hall's retirement it is intended to appoint to the post of Secretary Mr. Hamilton, the present Accountant General, who is generally recognized as one of the most distinguished ornaments of the Civil Service.

SOUTH AFRICA — THE TRANSVAAL—REPORTED DEFEAT OF THE BOERS.

MR. **GORST** asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies a Question of which he had given private Notice—namely, Whether, in regard to the battles now going on on the Western Frontier of the Transvaal, he was yet satisfied that the attacks on the Chief Montsioa were by the Boers, and not by the Natives; whether any communication had been received on the subject of the attacks from the Transvaal Government, or the British Resident in the Transvaal; and what steps the Government proposed to take to protect that Chief from the vengeance of the Boers?

MR. COURTNEY: We have no intelligence beyond what has been received from Reuter's agency, and we can, therefore, say nothing authoritatively as to the composition of the attacking or defending Forces. We still believe that it was a Native force with a Boer contingent, rather than a Boer force with a Native contingent, that attacked Montsioa. What has happened appears to be a sequel to the events of the 20th and 21st of January. On hearing of them a telegram was sent on the 11th of February to Mr. Hudson, through Sir Hercules Robinson, to urge the Transvaal Government to take effectual steps to maintain the neutrality of Transvaal territory, and to prevent their burghers from encroaching on Native territory beyond the Frontier; and we have learnt that before the receipt of this the Commandant General had been despatched to the Frontier with a small police force to enforce the proclamation of neutrality the Government had previously issued.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH said, he should like to know whether there was any truth in the statement to the effect that a large commando was being raised in the Transvaal territory for the purpose of taking some revenge upon these Natives?

MR. COURTNEY said, he had explained that the Government had no intelligence beyond what had appeared in the papers; and, therefore, they were not in a position to say whether there was any truth in it.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: May I suggest that the Government should ask for information?

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Mr. Gorst

LAW AND JUSTICE—DORMANT FUNDS IN CHANCERY.—RESOLUTION.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON rose to call attention to the Dormant Funds in Chancery, and to the unsatisfactory form in which the list of causes, to the credit of which unclaimed money belonging to the suitors is standing, is issued; and to move—

> "That future lists be strictly alphabetically arranged, with cross-references to the subtitles, together with the names and last-known addresses of the persons originally entitled, the date of the last decree or order, and the amount unclaimed."

The hon Gentleman said, that an abuse existed which might be readily and easily removed. The magnitude of the question was apparent when it was considered that £90,000,000 passed through the hands of the Paymaster in Chancery every year; £40,000,000 last year were borrowed from the Office to enable the Chancellor of the Exchequer to carry through his financial operations, and the New Palace of Justice had been built out of the money in the hands of the Paymaster in Chancery. Of this huge sum total an increasing proportion was yearly becoming dormant. It was to this portion his Motion referred. The suitors had some claim to consideration, not only with regard to the method in which the accounts were kept, but also with regard to the information which was afforded them. The letter and the spirit of Acts of Parliament were in favour of publicity, which, indeed, was called for by common honesty. Publicity was prescribed by an Act passed in 1725 to the end that the improper application of the suitors' money might be prevented. The year before that Act was passed Lord Chancellor Macclesfield was fined £30,000, and the Masters in Chancery £100,000, for applying to their own use the Suitors' Fund. The Government of to-day applied the Dormant Funds to their own use, and there was no one to prosecute them. In 1872 Orders having the validity of an Act of Parliament were passed to the effect that lists should be published every three years, and in alphabetical order. They had not been published every three years, nor were they in alphabetical order. The heading used was not such as to indicate to the general public the character of the information to be given, and the names mentioned would often fail to arrest the attention of persons interested in the absence of explanatory cross-references. The list was nothing but a misleading publication—a hindrance rather than an assistance to claimants. A list such as he asked for was published by the War Office, the India Office, and the Governments of the Colonies, some of which were replete with suggestive details, and would furnish useful models for our Chancery officials. The result of publishing insufficient lists was that encouragement was given to a system of levying black mail. Persons made it their business to ascertain who were entitled to moneys in the Paymaster's Office, and then offered the information to them on condition that they received a share of the money. He knew of a case in which a claimant had to pay 25 per cent. The usual answer to these complaints was that unfounded claims had to be guarded against; but it was equally the duty of the War Office, the India Office, and the Colonial Governments to protect themselves against unfounded claims, and they did it without making a secret of information that ought to be published. What would be thought of a Member of that House if he found in the Library a pocket-book containing bank notes, with the name of the owner written on the first page, and said nothing about it for fear an unfounded claim should be made? In respect of these funds the Government were trustees, with duties to the public, and they were bound to give all the information they could. The true owners existed, but the knowledge of their rights was withheld from them. The knowledge was kept back by the Office which held and utilized the money, and in such a case concealment of truth was an equal crime to a falsehood. A stereotyped official reply he knew would be given, whichever Party was in power; but he appealed to independent Members to unite in endeavouring to sweep away the cobwebs of officialism, which had already clung too long round a time-honoured Department of the State. The hon Gentleman concluded by moving his Resolution.

MR. FINDLATER, in seconding the Motion, urged that the index offered to the public to examine in regard to those funds ought to be framed in a much better manner than was the case at present. Since 1872 the publication of those lists, which were to have been triennial, had been made only twice; and he asked why had no further lists been published? He highly approved of the form of index in relation to those funds which was suggested by his hon. Friend who had made that Motion, and which, if adopted, would enable persons to ascertain whether they were interested in that fund or not. The present system tended to confuse searchers. The officials whose duty it was to prepare the lists might think they now were sufficient; but the public were not satisfied, and the interests of the public ought to be first considered in the matter. Grave scandals sometimes occurred in consequence of the non-publication of that information. His attention was called early last year to a report of the case of Williams *v.* White, tried before the present Master of the Rolls in Ireland, from which it appeared that a clerk in the Accountant General's Office in the Court of Chancery in Ireland had communicated, it was supposed innocently, to a solicitor in Dublin the fact that a derelict fund of £8,000 was remaining unclaimed in the Court. The consequence was that that solicitor, having looked at the file of the proceedings, communicated with the parties interested, and made a bargain with them that if he told them of that particular fund, he should get one-third of the £8,000. The Master of the Rolls strongly animadverted on the matter, expressing a hope that that would be the last occasion on which, either casually or by design, such a communication would be made, and also a hope that steps would be taken to compel publication of accounts of derelict funds in the Accountant General's Office. He said that this must be done by legislation, because the Judges had no power in the matter. In Ireland, as was usual in matters of that kind, no steps had been taken for the publication of any information with regard to these funds. He believed that considerable reforms had taken place in the Accountant General's Office, but none in this respect. When such scandals as that which he pointed out occurred, something should be done to prevent the injury which occurred to persons from the non-publication of this information.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "future lists of the Dormant Funds in Chancery be strictly alphabetically arranged, with cross-references to the sub-titles, together with the names and last-known addresses of the persons originally entitled, the date of the last decree or order, and the amount unclaimed,"—(*Mr. Stanley Leighton*,)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that the hon. Member who had brought forward that subject was not quite correct as to the amount of the funds dealt with by that Motion. He had spoken of very large funds in Chancery, standing to the credit of suits now in existence. That was correct; but the Dormant Fund was only about a hundredth part of the amount referred to by the hon. Member. Still, it was sufficiently substantial to deserve the consideration of the House. The fact was that these dormant funds were remanets of sums which were dealt with by the suits. There were nearly 3,000 very small amounts for the most part, and after a lapse of time they were not thought sufficiently important for persons to make out a claim to them because they were so small. By the regulations of the Office, information was granted to anyone if an application was made by a solicitor; and as soon as the solicitor communicated to the Paymaster that any person thought he had grounds for making a claim to the fund, every information was afforded. The names in the list were not alphabetical, except with respect to the initial letter; but this was a mere matter of directions to the printer, and it was well worthy of consideration whether an alteration should not be made. As to the periods of publication and the allegation that there had not been a publication for three years, that was a matter which ought to be attended to, and the attention of the Paymaster should be called to the necessity of a more regular publication. The hon. Member asked that the names and addresses of the last-known owners of the funds should be published; but that was an impossibility. It would involve a degree of labour and trouble as to small amounts which the Paymaster could not undertake; and, moreover, if done, it would produce but slight practical result. He was quite sure that in this country, however poor a man might be, he would find a solicitor to make application for him. In all the claims paid since 1852, one-half had been paid to three firms of solicitors, and, of course, everyone knew what that meant. As the list at present stood, it was impossible for the inquiring gentleman who traded on these funds to take up the list and ascertain the amount standing in the name of any person. The only desire on the part of the officials of the Paymaster's Office was to protect the property of the public; and they believed that, while the information given was sufficient for anyone who had a just claim on these funds, it prevented the reprehensible traffic to which he had referred. At present the Government saw no reason why the present system should not in the main be maintained.

MR. SALT said, it was desirable that these matters should be occasionally brought before public notice, as discussion would probably lead to some improvements in regard to them. It was not easy to hit off exactly the right point between giving too much and too little publicity and information. But he did not think the public had much to complain of if it was made perfectly clear that, upon the application of any respectable solicitor, all the information needful would be given. He thought it would be well if the lists were published annually instead of triennially, and also that the Rules and Orders made under the Chancery Funds Act of 1872 should be placed before the House. He thought that the thanks of the House were due to his hon. Friend the Member for North Shropshire for bringing the subject forward; but he hoped that he would be content with the assurance and promises given by the Attorney General, and that he would not find it necessary to go to a division.

MR. DONALDSON-HUDSON said, he hoped his hon. Friend would proceed to a division. The Attorney General had endeavoured to minimize the question by stating that the funds were about a hundredth part of what the hon. Member for North Shropshire supposed. But whether the funds were £100,000,000, £10,000,000, or £10,000, the public ought to have information about them. The funds did not always consist, as had been stated by the Attorney General, of mere remanets. He knew a case in which, owing to some difficulty in taking out probate, upwards of £10,000 had been paid into the Suitors' Fund, where it totally escaped notice for nearly 20 years, without earning any interest whatever for those entitled to the money. The interest, which amounted to a considerable sum, was applied to the building of the Law Courts. When a private person applied all information was refused, except when he applied through a solicitor. It was rather hard that those who had only small sums in the funds should be refused all information unless they employed a solicitor. The result was that some of those interested in the fund never received their money. The fund, instead of decreasing, as it ought to do, was increasing; and, therefore, steps should be taken to secure a quicker distribution than could take place under the present system.

DR. LYONS regarded it as satisfactory that it was the intention of the authorities to reduce this list to alphabetical order; but there was another part of it not so satisfactory in which the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General seemed to recognize the absolute necessity that the public required the intervention of a solicitor. That would be imposing a difficulty and adding an expense on the members of the public who might have, or supposed they had, claims to be satisfied on inquiry. He thought it would be quite possible, with due protection of the interests of the fund, to arrange a plan by which some officer should be specially told off, who, on payment of a moderate fee, should give information to all members of the public applying in regard to these funds. Many of the claimants were in very indigent circumstances, but *bonâ fide* claimants would be willing to pay a small fee by which the expenses of maintaining such an officer would be provided for. This small fee would have the effect of excluding curious inquirers. It would also be sufficient to pay for the services of one officer, who in time would be able to discriminate between the curious and the honest inquirer. This system existed in several Public Offices in England, and it existed with great advantage to the public in many Offices in Ireland. In the year 1850 the amount of this unclaimed fund was £562,039, and it now amounted to considerably more. There was another matter somewhat allied to this, which he desired to notice, and that was the unclaimed dividends and stocks in the Government Funds, concerning which no notice was ever given to the public. Some interest was felt on the subject in Ireland. It would be unfair to expect an answer from the Attorney General on the subject now; but he hoped the hon. and learned Gentleman would give the subject some consideration.

MR. GRAY said, the speech of the Attorney General had convinced him of the necessity that really existed for the reforms advocated by the hon. Member for North Shropshire. No doubt, those connected with the present system, which was of very little advantage in assisting persons to discover derelict funds to which they might be entitled, were interested in its maintenance. That was only human nature, because their emoluments were derived from the obscurity that surrounded the present system. Publicity would interfere with the monopoly enjoyed by the three officials who at present endeavoured to trace out the persons entitled to those derelict funds. He supported the suggestion that the Government should cause the list to be published in dictionary form with a cross under. In the present form of the list no one could obtain any information who had not consulted it with a precise knowledge of the nature of his claim. The interest on the funds, which amounted to over £500,000, would pay the cost of indexing and of publication. He could not understand how it was that the hon. and learned Gentleman was not willing to agree with the Motion of the hon. Member. For his own part, believing that if carried it would be attended with beneficial results, he should support the hon. Member if he proceeded to a division.

MR. H. T. DAVENPORT said, it appeared to him to be no objection to the Motion that, by giving greater publicity, they would encourage a large number of applications. The effect would be that the persons interested would be able to decide at once whether it was worth their while to proceed with the inquiry or not. He hoped the hon. Member would proceed to a division; and, if he did so, he should certainly vote with him.

MR. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, that the hon. and learned Attorney General stated that he (Mr. Leighton) had brought a charge of concealment against the Government. He had not done so; but he certainly did bring such a charge against the particular Office which was under the control of the noble Lord the Secretary to the Treasury.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not in Order in again addressing the House.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 47; Noes 28: Majority 19.—(Div. List, No. 44.)

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

ACQUISITION AND CONTROL OF IRISH RAILWAYS.

OBSERVATIONS.

MR. BLENNERHASSETT, who had given Notice of the following Resolution, but was unable by the Forms of the House to move it—namely,

> "That this House, while expressing no opinion on the subject of State ownership, or State management of Railways in other parts of the Empire, is of opinion that it is desirable that the Railways of Ireland should be acquired on equitable terms by the State with a view to their management being conducted in the interests of the public. This measure to be carried out in such a way as not to involve any loss to the finances of the Empire,"

said, that a great many eminent authorities had declared in favour of the proposal which he wished to lay before the House. It would be in the recollection of some hon. Members that a declaration was signed some years ago by 72 Peers and 90 Irish Members of Parliament in favour of the acquisition by the State of the railways in Ireland. The Members for the North of Ireland were, in particular, strongly in favour of the proposition. Evidence had also been given to the same effect before the Committee on Railways now sitting, although the question was not directly within the scope of that Committee's labours. Mr. Isaac Banks, a well-known railway authority, had said that it was most desirable to bring the railways under one control, and that control would be best exercised by the State. He said the whole mercantile community of Dublin were in favour of that view. Mr. Joseph Pim and Mr. Middleton, gentlemen well known in connection with that subject, expressed similar opinions. The present was a very opportune time for the consideration of this question, for anything which would improve the condition of that country could not fail to be of great importance. Hon. Members would remember how Mr. Tuke, in his pamphlet, spoke of the want of enterprize, and the misdirected energies, and the want of development of natural resources as the cause of Ireland's misery and troubles. Of all this the railway system afforded a striking instance. That system gave the minimum of convenience at the maximum of charge. The defects in that system were—first, that the rates were high; secondly, that the speed was slow; thirdly, that the trains were few; fourthly, that the remuneration of the Directors was small. The latest Returns, which were up to the 1st of January, 1881, stated that there were 2,370 miles of railway in Ireland, and of these 1,802 miles consisted of single lines only—only 568 miles being double. In England and Scotland almost all the railways had double lines. The Irish railways were owned by 40 Companies, though some of the smaller Companies were worked by the larger. The number of Companies actually working lines was 23. In 1880 the total receipts were £2,695,000, and the expenditure £1,455,000. Thus the cost of management was 54 per cent of the gross receipts. The total capital was £33,741,000, of which £9,000,000 were debentures. There were 270 directors of these lines, 37 secretaries, 20 actuaries, 36 solicitors, 40 auditors, and 30 engineers—all different persons. While the receipts of all the Irish railways amounted to only £2,695,000, in England the receipts of the Great Western Railway alone were £7,284,000, and of the London and North-Western £9,827,000. Again, while the proportion of working expenses was 51 per cent in England, Wales, and Scotland, in Ireland the proportion was 54 per cent. Scotland had a population of 3,700,000, and the population of Ireland was 5,150,000; yet in the year 1880 the traffic returns of the Scotch lines were

£7,000,000, and of the Irish lines £2,500,000. In the same year 46,000,000 passengers and over 31,000,000 tons of goods were carried by the Scotch railways, and only 17,000,000 passengers and 3,500,000 tons of goods by the Irish railways. He did not ignore the fact that there was much more manufacturing industry in Scotland than in Ireland; but still, considering the relative populations of the two countries, these figures were very disproportionate, and he believed the disproportion was in great part due to the high fares, the bad accommodation, and the slow trains on the Irish railways. With regard to rates and fares, he might mention that the average third-class fare for 100 miles was 3*s*. 4*d*. in Belgium, 4*s*. in Italy, and 6*s*. 6*d*. in Prussia; whereas in Ireland, which was an extremely poor country, it was 8*s*. 4*d*. As regards goods traffic, there was abundant evidence to show that many of the most important industrial enterprizes of Ireland were stifled by the high charges and bad arrangements of the railways. These universally acknowledged evils in the railway system of Ireland were inherent in that system as it existed at present. The railways of that country had been constructed on no regular design, but grew up piecemeal. The result was that the lines were managed on different and often conflicting principles. A Memorial from the Dublin Chamber of Commerce to the Committee now sitting upstairs stated that preferential rates were in many cases granted to particular towns and districts, and also, there was reason to believe, to individuals, firms, and Companies. The through rates were not based on any definite principle, but appeared to be regulated almost entirely by the extent to which competition existed. These facts all showed the great dissatisfaction in the public mind with regard to the present management of the Irish railways, and afforded, he hoped, good ground for his statement that this was a matter in which the Government might well be called upon to interfere. Of course, the principal question he should have to answer was, "How can the existing evils be removed?" In the first place, they could not be removed by the enforcement of more stringent regulations by the Railway Commissioners. Such regulations might, indeed, be to a certain extent useful; but they could never touch the root of the evil. What was really wanted was unity of management conducted in a liberal and an intelligent spirit, and with a view to promoting the public interest as far as was consistent with the avoidance of loss. Voluntary amalgamation of the Railway Companies, even if it were possible, would not produce that result. The amalgamation could only be effected by the acquisition of the railways by the State; and he submitted, as an incontrovertible proposition, that the proposal he was laying before the House was the only way by which the faults of the Irish railway system could be effectually dealt with and removed. Was the acquisition of the railways by the State feasible and practicable, and would it be in accordance with right and sound principles? If Ireland were to derive any considerable benefit from the purchase of the railways by the State, it was clear that the property must be acquired at a fair price. He did not propose that the State should at once buy up all the railways in Ireland; but he believed if fair terms of purchase were offered to the Railway Companies that most of the Companies would accept those terms at once, and that the other Companies would soon accept them also. There might, perhaps, be a temporary loss; but it probably would be very small and of short duration. He had framed his Motion in such a way as to indicate his desire that the losses should fall on exclusively Irish resources, and he felt convinced that public opinion in Ireland would sustain that proposition. But financial considerations were not the only ones involved. Very grave and serious questions arose with regard to the purchase of Irish railways. In the first place, he wished to guard most carefully against the idea that the purchase of the Irish railways would involve also the purchase of English railways. On that point the Prime Minister had said that he did not think that the adoption of a principle as regarded Ireland would render necessary the application of the same principle to the remainder of the United Kingdom. When the circumstances were so different, the right hon. Gentleman said that he did not consider that the adoption of the principle in the case of Ireland would compromise the judgment of Parliament with respect to England or

Scotland. As to the advantages which would be gained by the acquisition by the State of the Irish railways, there would, in the first place, be a simple and uniform management, which would render a low tariff possible. On the question of the reduction of tariff, he was anxious to avoid any exaggeration or enlargement. It would be most unfortunate if the people of Ireland were to expect as a consequence of the purchase of the railways by the State, that there would be an extravagant reduction of tariffs. At the same time, a gentleman of great experience as a Railway Director, the hon. Member for Orkney (Mr. Laing), in 1873 said that if a reduction of railway tariffs by one-half were made, although the step would be attended with some temporary loss, yet it would soon be recouped. That was a significant statement coming from a Gentleman of such experience and practical knowledge as the hon. Member. No doubt, there would be difficulties to contend with at first. The railway system of Ireland had been so bad and so inconvenient that the people had not been in the habit of using the railways as was the custom in countries where they were more expeditious and cheaper. In his opinion, the centralization of the system of railway management in Ireland would lead to many advantages. Attention would be paid to the questions of making narrow-gauge railways to develop the agricultural districts, and of laying down steam tramways to work along the common roads if there were a centralized management. But there was a great principle which lay at the foundation of this proposal, and that was that the State management of railways was necessarily undertaken upon different principles to those which regulated private control. The duty of Railway Directors was simply to obtain the largest dividends at the smallest possible cost; whereas the principle of State management was to give the greatest possible amount of convenience to the public consistent with the avoidance of loss. They were not without experience to guide them in this matter. The system of State management of railways had been adopted in nearly every country in Europe, this country being the exception to the rule. It might be said that there was a political objection to this proposal, and that it was not advisable for the Government to undertake the management of the railways. The acquisition of the railways by the State did not necessarily involve their direct management by the Government. The management of the railways could be placed by the Government under the control of capable and experienced men, without being made a Government Department. It would be intolerable that every complaint with regard to the management of railways should be made a subject of agitation or of complaint in that House. The doctrine that individual interests, if left alone and merely regulated by competition, would work better and conduce more to organized action than if Government intervened, was perfectly sound and true as regarded all ordinary transactions. But nothing could be more unfortunate than that the notion should prevail that the principle that the State ought not to undertake any trade or business capable of being managed by individuals was without limitation. Many industrial undertakings of the highest importance to the community, and giving a just return to capital, could not be regulated by competition. The most practical question was, how those undertakings to which the principle of competition did not apply could be best managed for the public good? Canals, harbours, natural navigation, water supply, the Post Office, telegraphs, and railways were instances of this. In many of those instances the principle of competition was not, in the long run, beneficial, or even possible. There was no kind of industrial undertaking to which that remark applied more entirely than to railways. The late Mr. John Stuart Mill said that when a Government conceded a private monopoly of railways it was much the same as leaving an individual or an association to levy a tax on the malt produced in or the cotton imported into a country. He (Mr. Blennerhassett) maintained that it never was the intention of the Parliament of this country that Railway Companies should enjoy this monopoly. The original intention was that Railway Companies should not enjoy a monopoly, even on their own lines; but that they should charge tolls to individuals using their own rolling stock to run over the Companies' lines. That had been found impracticable, and the result had been that the whole traffic had gone into the hands of Joint Stock monopolists. At present the Government carried on many industrial undertakings. The management of the Post Office, the banking and insurance businesses in connection with it, and the work of the telegraphs were in the hands of the Government. Irish railways had not grown beyond manageable limits. The proposition to buy Irish railways was simply to buy, not a first-rate English, but a second or third-rate English line. Then there was another point—namely, public opinion. The opinion of the people of England had not been expressed in favour of a purchase by the State of English railways in the same way as the people of Ireland had expressed their opinion in favour of a State purchase of the Irish railways. They knew that if the people of Ireland had the opportunity of themselves dealing with this question, they would make a public purchase of the Irish railways by means of a parochial guarantee. He ventured to submit this to the consideration of the House—that in asking this step to be taken he was only asking the House of Commons to do that for Ireland which Ireland, if it had the power of local self-government, would cheerfully do for itself. Was it necessary for the public good, for the proper management of these undertakings, that they should be managed by the State? If it was not necessary, then, he said, it was not desirable. It was entirely on the plea of urgency and necessity that he rested his case. He urged it on the plea of urgency and necessity, because he believed the circumstances of Ireland required that the State should undertake the management of these railways. Some years ago the Prime Minister said that no boon could be conferred on Ireland so comprehensive in its application, so impartial, so free from all suspicion of undue favour to any particular class, so much in conformity with the wishes of the community, so far-reaching in its influence on all conditions and classes of men, as a better development of the railway system of Ireland. He (Mr. Blennerhassett) proposed by his Motion that that system should be better developed. He urged upon the House this sound, practical solution of those difficulties which prevailed in Ireland.

MR. GRAY said, the hon. Member had gone so fully into the question that there was little left for him to say. He thought that one of the first points which deserved the attention of the English Members who looked at the subject dispassionately—and they had, after all, to depend in a matter like this on the votes of English Members—was the consideration, what would Ireland do if left to herself? Now, by every method by which public opinion made itself felt, quite irrespective of any political consideration, Ireland had indicated that if she had her own way she would acquire her railways as every other European country, with the exception of England, had done. There was no comparison between the cases of the acquisition of the Irish and that of the English railways. The acquisition of the English railways, on account of its magnitude, would be beset with very formidable difficulties, which did not arise in connection with the Irish railways at all. It was manifestly impossible to have free competition in railways. It was tried for a few years, and it was found that the results were most disastrous. He thought that every monopoly of such a nature as the railways should be in the hands of the State, and that the opinion of the Government generally, as was manifest by their so long ago having acquired the postal service, and having followed it up by the acquisition of the postal telegraphs. Now, the case of the railways was very much analogous. With regard to the question of finance, the Resolution dealt with it in very general terms. Irish Members did not come at all in the condition of beggars asking something from the State. As the hon. Member suggested, whatever expenses were to be borne would be borne by Ireland herself. The proposition they put forward now was that there should be no burden put upon the Imperial Exchequer in connection with this subject. Therefore, they could not be taunted with constantly wanting to have a pull at the public purse. If they wanted to have a pull at the public purse, it was to have a pull at their own public purse, and he thought they had a perfect right to have a pull at that whenever they pleased. There never was an occasion upon which there was such a consensus of opinion as the occasion of the Memorial to which the hon. Member had referred. His recollection was that there was practically unanimity on this subject. He would not go in detail into the advantages this scheme would produce, because he felt convinced that no person could oppose the Motion on the ground that State purchase of the railways would be to the public disadvantage. The amalgamation of the numerous Boards now existing would be a great public advantage. The immediate saving in salaries would represent nothing compared with the absence of the jealous interference with each other which at present existed and was inevitable, but which would be obviated by working the system upon a comprehensive plan. The financial result, however, could not be despised in the case of a poor country like Ireland, the development of which, in its most backward parts, was being impeded under the present variety of systems. Though it might be suggested that the present was an inopportune time for this Motion, when State assistance might be better directed towards the land system, he could not recognize any force in the objection, because this had always been a pressing question. The matter was very opportune, because, owing to the depression of the last few years, the purchase could have been effected on very favourable terms, and shareholders would gladly transfer their present security, which was of fluctuating value, into State railway stock. The purchase could be effected without any of that extravagance and Stock Exchange jobbery which marked the purchase of the telegraphs; and the only solid objection that he could see to the scheme would come from Irish Members sitting on that side of the House. They might say with much force that, in the present condition of the Irish Administration, it was undesirable that so large an extra amount of patronage should be given into the hands of the Government; and it might be said, he feared truly, that such patronage would be used to some extent—indirectly, perhaps—but certainly for political purposes; in other words, to exclude those who held opinions contrary to the present Administration. He thought all Government patronage was so used in Ireland. That was a serious objection now when political opinion ran so high in Ireland. Nevertheless, he would be prepared to submit to this for the sake of the solid practical advantages that would accrue to the country from having the railways under the control of one body, believing that soon the administration of the railways, together with the administration of other purely local matters, would be given to some body really representative of Irish opinion, and free from the political bias which was, unfortunately, inseparable from all Irish affairs. A further argument was found in the fact that, in every other country except England, the State had some control over the railways, and that such control was gradually increasing. England might be capable of working its present system, but Ireland was not.

Mr. EVELYN ASHLEY, on the part of the Government, said, that this question had been brought fully before the House in 1872, when a Bill introduced by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Kerry was rejected on the second reading. In 1874 the hon. Member again brought the subject forward, and not only was his Resolution rejected by a large majority, but a Resolution was passed stating—

> "That the purchase of the Irish Railways by the State would be financially inexpedient, would unduly enlarge the patronage of the Government, and seriously increase the pressure of Business in Parliament."

He really thought the hon. Member took too sanguine a view, and that a little sober examination into details, and the manner in which his proposed transfer would work, might really very much change the view he took. Now, the only reason he (Mr. Ashley) could possibly see why Ireland should be made an exception to the rest of the country was because the interests involved were small. All the complaints mentioned by the hon. Member in connection with the administration of Irish railways were re-echoed, not only in connection with railways in the United Kingdom, but in other parts of the world also. The complaint about the carriage of fish, for example, was one that came before the Committee at present sitting on Railway Rates quite as strong from Scotland as from Ireland. From Scotland and from England the complaint was that the railways would not adjust their rates so as to enable fish to be brought to the great centres of consumption. Then there was the complaint that goods from Dublin to the interior of Ireland cost the same as from Birmingham to the interior of Ireland. This was the same question of preferential rates for goods in through traffic, as compared with traffic from the sea-board, which had been heard *ad nauseam* from other parts of the United Kingdom. They should not, therefore, approach this question with the belief that Irish railways were worse managed than English railways. He did not believe they were. In some districts where there was not much competition, he believed that the charges for passenger traffic were somewhat higher; but, as a rule, considering the difficulties under which they had been undertaken and constructed, there could be no valid complaint as to their being worse conducted than English railways. That being so, what was to be held out to them as the prospect before them if they changed the management, and handed the railways over to the State? He perfectly agreed that unity of management was of the greatest importance, and they must work to that end as much as they could. But he would point out that great advances had been made already in that direction, many separate Companies having disappeared, and the number of Railway Directors in Ireland having been reduced by amalgamations from 450 in 1867 to 230 at the present time, which was still, he admitted, too many. There was not likely to be any great increase of traffic in Ireland for a long time; but when they were told that a few years ago there was a strong feeling in the country on this subject, and that this feeling had died away, a good deal, he believed, of that was greatly owing to the improved condition and income of the railways through the amalgamations which had taken place, and owing to the action of the Railway Commission of 1873, which went to Ireland, having very much satisfied the more thinking portion of the Irish railway world and the Irish people that their railways were improving, and did not need the drastic remedy they might have required 15 or 16 years ago. The hon. Member for Kerry was of opinion that everything should be done to encourage enterprize and the display of energy among the Irish people; but surely the best way of accomplishing that purpose was not by the exercise of State control. A statement of the Prime Minister had been quoted to the effect that a better development of railways in Ireland would be of the greatest benefit to that country. It had not, however, been shown that Parliament would improve the present system by placing it under Government management. In countries where that principle had been adopted comparatively little extension took place. There was no doubt whatever that in foreign countries you were carried cheaper, and your goods were also carried cheaper, than in England; but, on the other hand, the extreme development of competition, due to private enterprize, had given a more rapid and excellent service. It was more expensive; but the people of this country had the best of the bargain, because there was a constant flow of enterprize in England, which they would not have were the Government the owner of the lines. He did not see how a Railway Board was to be constituted which would not be a Department for which the Government would be responsible, and for the conduct of which they would be held accountable, or else it would be a Board over which Parliament would have no control whatever. He would point out, once for all, to those hon. Members who were continually talking about Continental management of railways being by the Government, how completely dissimilar the conditions of England and Ireland were from foreign countries. They must not forget that the railways here were always exposed at every point to competition by sea. They might call railway management in this country a monopoly as much as they liked; but the railway managers were always checked by the presence of water carriage, and their rates would always have to be adjusted accordingly. In the case of the Post Office and the Telegraph the Government had an absolute monopoly; and the railway system and the conduct of general traffic could not be made a monopoly in the same sense and to the same extent. Further, for letters and telegrams the charges were uniform, irrespective of distance, so that any proposed reduction of charge had to be dealt with simply as an Imperial question; but, as they could not have such uniform charges for railway traffic, the Government would be perpetually exposed to claims for variations of rates on a variety of grounds, from which claims they were effectually protected in the case of the Post Office by the adoption of uniform rates. The various rates which now existed were many millions in number. The evils of State ownership would be that there would be public pressure for the general reduction of rates, possibly down to cost price of working, or even less, which might become a political pressure on the eve of a General Election; and, apart from that, all who had influence would use it to obtain special and local reductions, and the Government would be exposed to imputations of favouritism from all disappointed applicants. At present the Companies who were acknowledged traders could protect themselves; the Directors had to discharge ther duty to the shareholders; they could point to their Acts of Parliament, and they were entitled to say to their customers—"Do not contract with us if you do not wish for our services." But the plea of public policy would, in the case of State management, open the door to all sorts of reasons which had nothing whatever to do with the question of the service rendered. This would lead to constant discussions in the House, which had no time to spare for them. The difficulties of patronage were less serious, although they deserved consideration. If these were to be avoided by leasing the lines to Companies who were to compete, as it was epigrammatically put, for the field, though not in the field, the Government would be tempted to work up to rack rents; while, if the areas were small, the competing Companies would fight over the traffic, controlled only as now by the Law Courts, and if they were large the competition would be reduced, and the business would become a monopoly, so that they would still be exposed to many of the evils now complained of. It was said Ireland was to be divided into three districts, with three bodies of management. If so, there would be just the same inducements to divert traffic that existed now, and the last state of the country might not be better than the first. The only way of controlling the Companies would be by clauses in the leases, which could be enforced only in the Law Courts, and the Government would have to go into Court, if necessary. This could be done now; bodies of traders could take the Companies before the Commissioners to enforce the provisions of the Traffic Act and to protect the public. He did not see how the public were to be benefited by the change, while the public would lose one guarantee which they now possessed, in the hostage which a Company must have as a security for good behaviour in the shape of the capital invested in their undertakings. Then, as to the allegations about the reduction of rates and fares which would ensue, the fact was, that Railway Companies were in this country virtually the lessees of Parliament. The conditions of lease were a maximum of rates and fares, within which they could go up and down as they pleased. If the Government reserved to itself the right to interfere at any moment, and on any occasion, with the rates and fares of their lessees they would get nobody to take leases. The hon. Member abandoned the idea of complete control and management by the Government. He preferred the system of leasing. That system would bring about none of the advantages in view, because such mixed control had been found everywhere, as in India, bad. The Belgian Government had found the inconvenience of giving way in the matter of special rates and contracts so great that in 1862 they had been compelled to abandon the system, and to revert to that of having a fixed rate, and making no change for anybody. But the commercial prosperity and enterprize of this country would greatly suffer if it was deprived of the elasticity which a system of special or exceptional rates under proper control afforded. There were many considerations which would have to be taken into view before the Government ought to bind itself to adopt any plan similar to the one proposed. He believed, however, that amalgamation was advancing in Ireland, and would advance still more, and that the railways were paying better than they did in years gone by. He did not say within the last 12 months, because the number of tourists and others who used the railway had been reduced by the exciting and disastrous events in that country. Still, the Railway Companies were so prospering that he did not believe they would be willing sellers to the Government. Some, no doubt, would be glad enough to be bought up; but the proposal of the hon. Member to purchase so many of them as were willing to sell meant securing all the bad bargains for the Government and not obtaining any of the good ones. The scheme at first sight seemed a very good one, and hon. Members opposite favoured it perhaps without much practical acquaintance with the subject, in which case discontent with existing arrangements was apt to induce a desire for change. But he doubted the real advantage of the change. This question had been very carefully considered by the Duke of Devonshire's Commission, who, without any prejudice in the matter, came to the conclusion that, in the matter of railway ownership by the State, there was nothing in Ireland which ought to be treated in an exceptional manner. He certainly himself had approached the matter rather with a prejudice in favour of buying up the railways. It would be a good thing, perhaps, in a political, but not in a pecuniary or commercial point of view. He could not believe that the Irish railways or the Irish people would benefit very much by it. He believed that the Irish railways, under the influence of amalgamation and of good management, could obtain all the advantages that were hoped for from State management. But it was a fetish and superstition in Ireland that everything ought to be done by the State rather than by private enterprize.

MR. CROPPER said, he thought that the many advantages resulting from individual management, as opposed to a general management of all railways by the State, ought to be carefully weighed. Some years ago a proposition was laid before the Prime Minister for acquiring the various railway systems in this country, by which not only were the public to be benefited, but a large revenue acquired by the State. Now, increased railway returns could only be gained, either by running trains slower, and therefore cheaper, by running fewer, or by the smaller amount of interest which would be paid on the capital borrowed. Experience, however, showed them that the larger railways could borrow at nearly the same rate as the State, and slower and less frequent trains would certainly be no benefit to the public in general. An amalgamation of railway systems did not present the same advantage as that of telegraphs, each railway being, in fact, a separate, unconnected system, whereas the postal service was not. Besides, if the railways were handed over to the State, greatly increased patronage would result. There was already outcry enough about the disposal of the patronage of the Irish Post Office, and he had no desire to see that outcry augmented, or to run the risk of having political appointments made. There were now in Ireland 270 Directors of the various private Companies. For his own part, he wished the number were greater, and that more gentlemen in Ireland took part in public affairs. As the railway system of Ireland developed, it might very probably be subject to that local government which, it was hoped, would soon be established; but, at the present time, he doubted whether the proposed change would be advantageous.

COLONEL COLTHURST remarked, that his hon. Friend the Secretary to the Board of Trade had made no mention of the Commission that sat in the years 1867-8, with Instructions to inquire upon what terms the railways in Ireland could be acquired. That fact showed that there was then some definite intention on the part of the Government to consider the subject with a view to some practical proposal. The Commission, after ascertaining the system adopted in Belgium, came to the conclusion that precisely the same fares might be charged in Ireland without any substantial loss, and calculated that in 12 years enough money would be earned to recoup the State for its outlay. Many parts of Ireland, and particularly the city and county of Cork, suffered from the present state of things; and he was sorry, therefore, that the proposal had not been more favourably considered by his hon. Friend.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, that the Secretary to the Board of Trade had very fairly stated the practical objections to the proposal; but had rather kept in the background the attractiveness of the scheme from a financial and administrative point of view. Financial considerations, as it seemed to him, were all in its favour, and the circumstances of the country lent themselves to its administrative convenience. If he was not mistaken, the result of the Treasury Commission of the year 1867 was to show that a return of 4 per cent might be expected from the purchase of Irish railways on a large scale. The political objections to it, however, were very strong, and the experience they had of the growing tendency to bring forward in that House every question touching local interests strengthened the objection.

Mr. MAC IVER said, that the subject which was now under consideration naturally suggested some comparison with the scheme which was adopted some years ago of the purchase of the telegraphs by the State.

Mr. SPEAKER said, the hon. Member was out of Order. He must confine himself to the subject before the House. There was no Amendment at present before the House.

Mr. MAC IVER said, he was sorry if he was not in Order. He had intended to keep within the lines of the Motion. He wanted to point out, if he was in Order, that the justification for the purchase of telegraphs by the State was this — that whereas the Telegraph Companies formerly conducted their business as private speculations and for private benefit, that business was now conducted in the interest of the whole of the people. That was what he wished to propose to the House—that the railways in Ireland should be conducted for the general benefit of the people of Ireland. He ventured to think that the Secretary to the Board of Trade was not quite correct in his assumption. It was in no way an answer to assume that the railways in Ireland, if purchased by the State, must necessarily be managed by a great political Department in London. They might be managed in Ireland itself, in somewhat the same way as the Inland Revenue Department was managed. It was said the railways in England were not a parallel case to those in Ireland. Why could not English railways be purchased? Because the day for doing it had passed. If it had been possible to purchase the English railways 20 years ago, they might have been acquired on the same equitable terms as the French Government were acquiring the French railways. What might have been done for England 20 years ago might be done now for Ireland. If there was to be any prosperity for Ireland some strong Government—not the present—could not too soon take a statesmanlike view of the question, and acquire on equitable terms the management of Irish railways. He heartily supported the Motion.

Mr. J. N. RICHARDSON said, he was sorry that the Secretary to the Board of Trade had not given a more favourable answer to the Motion. He could not be surprised, however, that in the incessant pressure of Irish affairs the Government should be indisposed to take up further burdens in connection with that country. He hoped that matters would, before long, become more quiet, so that the question might be considered more thoroughly. The Secretary to the Board of Trade had pointed to amalgamation as the true remedy. But that remedy would only enure to the benefit of the shareholders, and would do no good to the general public. The present state of things was anomalous in the extreme. Bread-stuffs could be sent from New York to Londonderry at less cost than they could be sent from Londonderry into the wild districts of the county Donegal. Again, flax could be sent from the interior of Belgium to Dunkirk, thence to Goole, from Goole across England to Liverpool, and thence to Newry at 18*s.* per ton; whereas the cost of forwarding the same article from Sligo to Newry varied from 30*s.* to 35*s.* per ton. These were facts that justified the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Kerry. The undertaking would be by no means a great one; not so great, *e.g.*, as the purchase of a second-class railway in England.

Mr. LEA said, he thought that the discussion which had taken place had been extremely satisfactory. In some cases the rates in Ireland were no less than six times as high as those charged in Belgium. It was simply absurd that the price of the transit of goods should be six times as great as it was in this country. If the money that was wasted in repeated applications to Parliament had been saved, those prices would be reduced proportionately. The late Mr. Graves, a former Member for Liverpool, who was skilled in those matters, had said that 25 per cent would be saved by a unity of management. He ridiculed the objection raised on the score of patronage. There was no abuse of patronage either in the Dockyards or in the Post Office. He thought that the purchase of the railways in the manner proposed must be of advantage to Ireland.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, it must not be supposed, if this question was allowed to stand by, that it had never had sufficient consideration from the Government. That was not the case. This was a question about which, nearly 20 years ago, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer under the Government of Lord Palmerston, he felt a very lively interest and an extreme desire that some mode could be found to acquire Irish railways for the purpose of the State, if certain objections could be got over. A Commission of very great importance, referred to by his hon. Friend (Mr. Ashley), was appointed at that time, of which the Duke of Devonshire was the head, and the present Lord Derby was really the vice-head. It was a very laborious Commission, composed of very able men; and they came, advisedly and deliberately, to an adverse Report on the subject of the acquisition of the Irish railways. That was a very important fact, and when some further inquiry had been made, and when the matter was brought to the view of Parliament by the very general consent of parties, a decision was given—which he had no doubt was a very reluctant decision—which was an extremely authoritative decision. An immense majority of the House, not composed by any means exclusively of the followers of the Government of that day, did declare, and in very strong terms, against the acquisition of the railways by the State. But he had no desire that this question should be allowed to pass by. He would only say one word more; that was, however, that he held it to be absolutely out of the question that in this country the railways should be taken and managed by the State. He would not enter into the details of the objections. Patronage was one of the objections. Incompetency on the part of the State to address itself to a business so exceedingly subtle and manifold as the the conduct of railway traffic, especially goods traffic, was another point; and the additional pressure to be brought on the Government in Parliament through the gratuitous assumption of those vast responsibilities was another great objection. He believed himself that in those, to name no others, would be found topics of the most commanding and comprehensive character against any idea of the assumption of the management of railways by the State. If railways were ever to be acquired by the State, it must be by first overcoming a difficulty in another direction which had not yet been overcome. Undoubtedly he thought, in the abstract, it would be a very good ideal system if it were possible for the State to be the proprietor of the permanent and fixed works of the railways, and to commit to Commercial Companies the ownership of the rolling stock and the management of the business. That would have very great advantages; because it would be much more easy to find capital adequate to a system of that kind than it was to find capitals which, as commercial capitals, were so extremely heavy, in consequence of enormous investments in public works. He was sorry to say that all experience in this country went against the practicability of the leasing of the railways. It had been tried once or twice, but it had never taken root. Where it had been tried it had not succeeded. He did not say it was impossible. He believed there might be great advantages if it could be put on a footing in which the respective interests of the lessor and the lessee would be adequately provided for and defended. But no progress had been made in this direction as yet. It had been found impracticable to solve that problem, and until that problem was solved he was convinced that an obstacle stood in the way of the present Motion. It was with great regret, because he owned his desire, especially for Ireland, stood in that direction; but he could not see his way through obstacles of such a serious character. If it were possible by human ingenuity—and human ingenuity could do many things, and sometimes achieved at a later period what had not been accomplished at an earlier period—to devise a good system of leases, then, undoubtedly, the mere financial operation in Ireland would be within reasonable compass. He did not say he thought the State ought to look at the matter as at a speculation, whether it would be a good speculation or otherwise; but though he did not recommend it on that ground, he quite admitted that within a reasonable compass, and in a matter recommended by strong considerations of public policy, it might easily be faced. But it was idle to shut their eyes to the real difficulties of the case; and those would best serve the public interest in the matter who should be able to procure and suggest in a practical shape any means for the avoidance and diminution of those objections and difficulties.

Dr. KINNEAR believed he was only expressing the general opinion entertained in Ireland when he said that the House should take up that matter seriously, and deal with it in a practical manner.

Mr. CALLAN said, he thought there was no real hope of the amelioration of the Irish railway system until it was embraced in a scheme of what the Prime Minister called local government, but of what the people of Ireland called Home Rule, for that country.

Mr. BIGGAR observed that, although great objections had been taken by hon. Members to the present system, the arguments, on the whole, were very much against the proposed acquisition of the Irish railways by the State. He concurred very much with what had fallen from the hon. and gallant Member for Cork County (Colonel Colthurst) as to the irregularity in the railway charges at particular places. Where there was no competition between different railways, or between the railways and other modes of conveyance, the public were likely to have to pay far higher rates than would otherwise be imposed; and he could not well see how that and similar evils were to be remedied, unless the State were to establish a more stringent supervision over the rates charged by Railway Companies than that which had heretofore existed. It had been said that public opinion in Ireland was in favour of the State acquiring the railways; but he did not believe that anything really deserving to be called general public opinion on the subject had ever yet been evoked or formed in that country. Whatever might be the opinion in Ireland if the arguments on both sides were placed before the public, there was nothing at present to warrant a change so enormous as the one now proposed would be. Nor did he think the time at all opportune. It was extremely inopportune. The Irish Land Question was in a very unsettled state, and it now filled the public mind, and was of far greater importance than anything connected with the railways could possibly be. As to the success of the Irish railways, the shares of three of the principal lines were now above par; and, of course, the small lines opened in districts where there could be but little traffic were unprofitable, as would be the case in any country. He thought that things should be allowed to go on as they were until a better case had been made out. The people of Ireland very much preferred to have the management of their own affairs in their own hands rather than to let the State interfere with them, directly or indirectly.

SUPERINTENDENT OF ROADS, SOUTH WALES.—OBSERVATIONS.

Viscount EMLYN, who had the following Notice on the Paper:—To call attention to the action of the Local Government Board in the matter of the appointment of the General Superintendent of Roads in South Wales; and to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, it is desirable that adequate time should be given to the Authorities concerned to take steps for the efficient discharge of his duties, before the termination of the present arrangement,"

said, that he did not object at all to the legislation proposed, but only to the manner in which it was to be carried out. The duties of the officer in question were important and very extensive. He had to examine, inspect, and manage the affairs of all the turnpike roads in South Wales, to supervise the execution of all improvements and works upon them, and to superintend and control all the overseers and officers of the district County Boards in all the counties of South Wales. In addition, he had to examine, audit, and check the whole of the accounts of these County Boards, to prepare a general statement of their expenditure and revenue, and an estimate of the probable expense of all proposed improvements, alterations, and works. It was true that about 1876 the real reason for the payment of this officer's salary by the State came to an end, and representations were made to the then President of the Local Government Board that he should not continue the salary of this officer. That position of the subject remained unchanged until the present Government came into Office in 1880. If the Government disapproved of the existing arrangement, it was their duty to declare their opinion to that effect on their coming into Office, and to provide a better system; but they did nothing, though the question was raised. It was again raised last year; but until January of the present year the authorities in South Wales heard nothing of the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman.

At that period, however, an intimation was conveyed to them to the effect that the Government intended to legislate on the subject, and asking their advice. Now, he did not complain of the proposal to legislate on the subject, but only maintained that it was desirable that adequate time should be given to the authorities concerned, to enable them to provide for the efficient discharge of the duties of the General Superintendent of Roads before the termination of the present arrangements. All he asked was that the President of the Local Government Board should bring in his promised Bill as soon as possible, so that the House might have an opportunity of duly discussing it; and he objected strongly to any Bill dealing with this important subject being hastily scrambled through. He wished to know also to what extent the Government proposed to aid the maintenance of main roads in South Wales?

MR. D. DAVIES said, he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would be able to see his way to comply with the very moderate request of the noble Lord the Member for Carmarthenshire (Viscount Emlyn), especially after having gone in the other direction and paid this gentleman's salary for a considerable period after the term for which he was originally appointed had expired. After having done so much to get these roads properly looked after, it seemed to him a pity that they should go back and take this officer away before provision was made for replacing him. As a monetary question it was a very small matter indeed. It was simply a question of three months' salary, and if the House of Commons objected to pay it, rather than get rid of the services of the Superintendent of Roads, why he (Mr. Davies) would pay it himself. He did not imagine, however, that any difficulty could arise on that head; and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board would see his way to comply with the request of the noble Lord.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he thought his noble Friend had some cause to complain of the way in which South Wales had been treated in the matter of this gentleman's salary. The holder of the office of Superintendent of the South Wales Roads was appointed in the year 1875, and at that time there were many thousands of pounds to be looked after which had been raised previously to pay off the debt on the South Wales turnpike roads. He believed that some of the debt, although only a very small portion, was still unpaid. The gentleman who then retired had been in receipt of a large salary—something like £1,200 a-year—and it was arranged that the incoming Superintendent should receive a much smaller sum, with the knowledge that his duties, as far as the State was concerned, would rapidly come to an end. But when the debt was paid off the Statute requiring this appointment to be maintained was neither repealed nor altered, nor could it be without requiring that elaborate machinery should be set up in its place; and, as his noble Friend had stated, until Parliament had time to provide a substitute for the existing machinery under which an admirable system of road management had prevailed for so long a period in South Wales it was only reasonable to leave this gentleman in the receipt of this small salary of £400 per annum, and to keep together the system of local government for road purposes by which these six counties in South Wales were bound together. Another objection to any interference with the existing circumstances was that the system which prevailed in South Wales was really a model system for the rest of the country. He did not mean to say that the whole of the country should be pledged to the details of the South Wales system; but there could be no doubt that it was an excellent system, giving great satisfaction, and it would be a great pity to disturb it. He hoped that his right hon. Friend's Bill, when they came to see it, would not disturb that system, but would require that a Superintendent of the South Wales Roads should be retained and paid at the joint expense of the six counties. Whatever his noble Friend's wishes might be as to these six counties having a voice in the matter, and then going their own way as to the payment of any portion of the salary, he must say that a far better plan would be to keep the system together as a whole for a year or two until the whole question of road management for England and Wales could be brought under one system. That being his view, he should certainly be sorry to see the present system spoilt; and it would be a thousand pities if, before general legislation was decided upon, the office of Superintendent of the whole of these six counties should be got rid of. The small salary of £300 or £400 a-year could be of very little importance. His noble Friend's contention was that only a small portion of the salary would be required for the coming year, and that the counties would have to put their hands in their pockets for the rest. By all means let them do so; but he should very much deprecate a permissive system which would enable four or five out of six counties to escape from the guarantee which, under the original Act, required one system for the whole of these counties.

Mr. DUCKHAM said, the noble Lord the Member for Carmarthenshire (Viscount Emlyn) was quite correct in stating that he had expressed great dissatisfaction with the present system, owing to its cost; and it was quite true that the proposal to relieve the State of this payment had been made by him. He had certainly made a Motion for the removal of the Superintendent of Roads in South Wales, and he was not a little surprised to hear so much complaint made of the course taken by the President of the Local Government Board in carrying out the removal of that officer so many years after the period for which the original appointment was made had expired. He had made a short calculation, and he found that the National Exchequer had paid for the inspection of roads in South Wales something like £41,000. It must also be remembered that in Wales the road authorities had still the benefit of turnpike gates. The Government were now asked to continue for an uncertain time to pay the cost of inspecting the roads out of the National Exchequer, and that when the grants which had been promised by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer towards the expense of maintaining the main roads of England were provided they should come in for a full share of them. Surely the noble Lord forgot the important fact that the road authorities in Wales still had the benefit of turnpike gates on their roads, while in England they had to maintain their roads from the rates. They had also to pay the salary of the same individual for the inspection of the main roads; in his county—the county just over the Border—they had all these expenses to bear from the rates; and if the services of this gentleman were so valuable to the six counties of South Wales, he did not see why they objected to put their hands in their pockets to continue to pay him for the discharge of the duties which they considered to be so very necessary out of the rates of the six counties, and save the Imperial Exchequer £844 per annum. He was surprised that such an application should be made; but he felt that it was one which the Local Government Board would find it impossible to entertain.

Mr. RYLANDS said, he had taken part on two or three occasions in Committee of Supply in the discussion of this charge upon the Exchequer; and certainly he had a general impression that on more than one occasion a promise had been made by the Government that the Exchequer should be relieved from it. The duties of the office for which this gentleman was originally appointed had now been completed for several years, and on several occasions the Government promised to get rid of the salary. It therefore excited his astonishment to find that the noble Lord, who must be aware of the pledge having been given, should now come before the House with something like a lamentation that the Government had succeeded at length in carrying out their pledge. He did not wonder at the noble Lord, or any Member of the House who found out how difficult it was to get any Government to effect any real economy; he did not wonder that the noble Lord should feel surprise that the Government had actually carried out the intention they had so long expressed. He must say that he thought the request made by the noble Lord to the Local Government Board was one which they ought not for a moment to comply with. Surely, during the period which must elapse before a general measure dealing with County Government could be passed, the county authorities in South Wales ought to be able to make any temporary arrangement that might be necessary for insuring the efficient inspection of the roads. He had not the slightest doubt they would do so; and if the Government disregarded the appeal of the noble Lord the counties would still continue to pay the salary of this gentleman until general legislation was completed. If this course were not taken, he did not know how long the Superintendent's salary might not remain a burden upon the Imperial Exchequer. It would be far better that the expenditure should now stop, and proper measures be taken by the local authorities in South Wales to secure the efficient inspection of their roads.

MR. DODSON: I can only repeat substantially what I said yesterday in reply to a question put by the noble Lord. I do not think that this is a matter that need be discussed at any length. It is quite true that a discussion took place in Committee of Supply last year, and that I then made the statement which the noble Lord has referred to. The Local Government Board have adopted the course which I then pointed out as possible, and have put an end to the payment by the public generally of the expense of maintaining this officer, who has been employed for the benefit of these particular counties. There is no need to remind the House—for I have no doubt it was explained by the noble Lord before I entered the House—how it came about that so exceptional an officer was appointed. It was mainly because the Government had advanced money for the extinction of the debt upon the roads in South Wales, and an officer was appointed and paid by the Government to watch over the administration of the money, and to see that the debt on the tolls was not increased, so as to impair the Government security for their loan. In 1874 the Superintendent who had been appointed by the Government died. At that time the debt had been nearly paid off; and when the present Superintendent was appointed, it was expressly explained that his appointment would not be a permanent one. The debt was entirely paid off in 1876; and the appointment ought to have been put an end to when the debt was paid off. But it lingered on from one year to another. Attention was called to it the year before last by the hon. Member for Herefordshire (Mr. Duckham), and again last year, and I stated that I should have taken last year the course which I have taken this, had it not been that the House of Lords had a Committee sitting on the general subject of highways; and I deferred acting in the matter until it was seen whether their Report would have any material bearing on the subject. In the meantime it was found that we should not be able to legislate on the subject of highways at large; and we gave notice of the termination, with the current year, of the payment of this officer. With regard to what the noble Lord has said as to the inconvenience to which the counties will be put, and the impossibility of carrying on the management of the roads, it does not appear likely that serious inconvenience can arise to the counties from the termination of the arrangement. The Act specially provides that the annual meetings of the County Roads Boards shall be held in the months of January and February, and that at those meetings the Superintendent must submit estimates of the expenditure of the year, and of the materials required. The estimate of deficiencies on the tolls are required to be made good out of the county rates, and a statement of accounts has to be furnished. That is the main part of the work of the Superintendent, and for the current year it has already been completed. Therefore, in going out of office the Superintendent is leaving behind him the substantial portion of the work of the year already completed. I have made inquiries in order to ascertain whether there is anything immediately to be done after the annual road meetings in January and February; and I have been informed that practically there is very little or nothing to be done by the Superintendent for some time to come. Therefore, I am of opinion that no material inconvenience will fall on the County Boards, even if there should be an interregnum pending legislation. I have consulted the different Road Boards of each county in order to ascertain what their wishes are; and, having ascertained their wishes, I am prepared to bring in a Bill in conformity with them. The Bill which the Government propose to bring in will give them the power, either singly or in combination, as they may prefer, to appoint an officer to carry out the duties necessary for the administration of the roads. It will be a very short and a very simple Bill. The noble Lord seems to think that it will be a Bill requiring a great deal of discussion.

VISCOUNT EMLYN: I did not say so.

MR. DODSON: No, the noble Lord did not say so; but he talked about a Bill being hurriedly scrambled through the House, as if he imagined it would require considerable discussion.

VISCOUNT EMLYN: I said it would probably be hurried rapidly through both Houses at the end of the Session.

MR. DODSON: The noble Lord certainly implied that proper time would not be afforded for the consideration of it. Now, I think that when the Bill is introduced, it will be found to be so simple that it will not occupy any length of time in discussion. I can only say that if it can be proved to us that any material inconvenience will result to the counties from any delay during the short interval which will elapse, pending legislation, the Government will endeavour to assist any arrangements to enable the duties to be carried out. The noble Lord talks, by the way, of the arrangement being for my convenience, or that of the Government. That is not so. The introduction of the Bill is for the convenience of the counties, and that being so, I trust the noble Lord will use his best endeavours to expedite its passing.

EARL PERCY said, he thought the argument of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board answered itself. The whole proceeding certainly appeared to be an extraordinary one for doing away with the salary of a public officer before the formulation of any scheme to supply the want. The excuse of the right hon. Gentleman was that the interregnum would be short, because he was about to introduce a Bill which would not take long in its passage through the House. If that were really the case, it formed a very good ground for not attempting to stop or interfere with the salary of the Superintendent until the Bill passed. But the real fact, as the right hon. Gentleman knew very well, was that these little Bills, which were considered to be so easy to pass through the House, were often impeded, and did not pass for several Sessions. Little Bills often fell through because they were little Bills. The Government did not care to force them on, and in that case a slight interregnum, which was the only justification the right hon. Gentleman could give for the course he now proposed to take, often proved fatal; and if any accident happened to the Bill in this instance, according to the right hon. Gentleman's own confession, great inconvenience would be occasioned. If the right hon. Gentleman apprehended any danger or difficulty, it would be better to adopt the advice of the noble Lord and continue the salary of this officer.

RELIGIOUS DISSENSIONS (GIBRALTAR)—DR. CANILLA.

OBSERVATIONS.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF wished to make an appeal to the Government on a subject of some urgency. He was, therefore, glad to see the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies in his place, as he had no doubt the hon. Gentleman would be able to answer the question he wished to put. The question had reference to a serious occurrence which had just taken place in Gibraltar. It appeared that on Thursday, the 2nd of March, in consequence of a Proclamation of the Governor of Gibraltar, acts of great violence were committed by the Governor against the inhabitants of that fortress, in pursuance of arbitrary instructions from Her Majesty's Government arbitrarily carried out by the Governor. He had just received a communication which stated that in pursuance of instructions received from Her Majesty's Government, the Governor had caused a notice to be inserted in *The Gazette*, warning persons against interfering in any way with the Vicar Apostolic or any of the clergy on pain of fine and imprisonment provided for such cases by law. This was a Government notice issued after a correspondence between the inhabitants and the Governor in consequence of Doctor Gonzalo Canilla, Vicar Apostolic, whose appointment was exceedingly distasteful to the people, being forced upon the Roman Catholic inhabitants by illegal means. And what had been the result? They might be reading of Warsaw or any other place where despotic government was exercised to the fullest extent. Even Ireland at the present moment appeared to be in a better position than Gibraltar. It appeared that the most respectful remonstrances were addressed by the Roman Catholic inhabitants of Gibraltar, in consequence of their objection to the intrusion of a Vicar Apostolic who was distasteful to the population, and who had been nominated, as they believed. in an illegal manner. The letter he had received stated that on Thursday, the 2nd instant, the open space in front of the Church of St. Mary the Crowned was blockaded by troops. Field pieces were held in readiness, and the entire garrison was under arms, and the town was virtually in a state of siege without proclamation. This array of military power was brought into play against a loyal, peaceful, and aggrieved population, who had hitherto always been faithful to the laws of their country. The Catholics, when they were led to believe that Dr. Canilla was to be installed by force of arms, entered the Church of St. Mary the Crowned and barred the doors. The troops entered the court-yard, and the military and police, acting under orders from the highest authorities, broke open the doors, forced an entrance into the church, and forcibly expelled all the Catholics who were inside, arresting many of them. Subsequently the police magistrate summarily passed sentence on all the prisoners, condemning some of them to six months' imprisonment with hard labour, without the option of a fine. He wished to ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether this report of these violent proceedings and arbitrary sentences was correct, and whether Her Majesty's Government intended to inquire into the circumstances, and to see how far it was possible for citizens in the fortress of Gibraltar, irritated by the conduct of the authorities, acting in contravention of any legal decree, and on the mere *ipse dixit* of the Governor, in pursuance of instructions from the Colonial Office, to be kept in prison with hard labour upon the mere sentence of a police magistrate, the legality of which seemed to be altogether doubtful? He had no wish to stand between the Government and Supply; but, in his opinion, this grievance was so urgent that he deemed it his duty to bring it at once to the knowledge of the House, and unless he got a satisfactory answer from the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies he should renew the question on Monday.

MR. COURTNEY said, he was extremely sorry the hon. Member for Portsmouth had not been in possession of further information before making the statement which he had just brought before the notice of the House. It was only the other day that he told the hon. Member exactly what had been telegraphed by the Governor of Gibraltar with respect to the occurrence of Thursday, the 2nd of March. He was not aware that any fresh communication had been forwarded; but certainly up to that evening no further intelligence had been received. The hon. Member had read to the House a very highly-coloured statement which had been sent from Gibraltar, and which terminated with the allegation that certain persons had been committed to prison by the police magistrates for offences of which he (Mr. Courtney) knew nothing whatever. The exact state of things, so far as their information went, was very simple, and had been clearly explained last week. Dr. Canilla had been appointed Vicar Apostolic of Gibraltar. There was no dispute whatever as to that circumstance. Then there was no dispute about the fact that there was at Gibraltar the Church of St. Mary the Crowned, which belonged to the Crown.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, that fact was not stated in the decree of the Governor.

MR. COURTNEY said, whether that was so or not, the fact was not disputed even by those persons who objected to the appointment of Dr. Canilla as Vicar Apostolic of Gibraltar. His former answer went to show that the appointment was objected to by some persons, and that a notice was issued in *The Gazette* warning all persons that whoever interfered with any ecclesiastic going to church for the purpose of performing the sacred functions of the Roman Catholic religion would do so at his peril. The hon. Member stated to the House that in consequence of its being known that Dr. Canilla would go to the church on the Thursday in question a considerable crowd entered the church at the time of early Mass and then barricaded the door; that when Dr. Canilla proceeded later to celebrate High Mass the doors were broken open, and that some persons were forcibly expelled, and others arrested. Upon that last point he (Mr. Courtney) said he had no information whatever. The hon. Member himself did not pretend to know the truth of the matter; nevertheless, he came forward to arraign the Government because a police magistrate, in certain proceedings which came before him at Gibraltar, under circumstances of which they knew nothing, had sentenced certain persons to imprisonment. For these reasons it was impossible that the matter could be advantageously proceeded with on that occasion; and he trusted if the hon. Member again brought it forward he would do so at a time when they were in possession of all the facts.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he was surprised that the hon. Member for Portsmouth should come forward on that occasion in his present character, because he had always been accustomed to regard him as identified with the cause which united authority with religion. As far as could be gathered, the hon. Member now objected to religion being united with authority on the occasion in question. However, his (Mr. O'Donnell's) small cavils must disappear at finding the author of *Vaticanism* so warmly engaged in supporting the Pope.

STATE OF IRELAND—POLICE PROTECTION FOR CARETAKERS.

OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. GORST said, in the absence of his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), he wished to call the attention of the House to the serious outrages which had been committed at Thurles, in Tipperary, in consequence of the withdrawal of the protection of the police from caretakers placed upon that farm by the Property Defence Association in Ireland. In the earlier part of the Session, on the 17th of February, his hon. Friend had put a question to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant respecting the intention which the Government were supposed to have of removing police protection from the caretakers of farms. On that occasion the right hon. Gentleman, in his reply, not only assured the hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire that there was no such intention, but boasted that the measures which the Government were about to take would be more likely to conduce to the peace of the country than the measures which had previously obtained. The right hon. Gentleman said they had organized a system of police patrolling that would afford a much more effectual means of carrying out the object they had in view—namely, the preservation of law and order. He also said the Government must trust, to some extent, to the ability of persons attacked to protect themselves. But that was not all. On the 21st of February this matter again became the subject of a conversation in the House, in which several hon. Members took part, and in the course of which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant again assured the House that there was no reason for alarm, and that the new mode of having the police patrol whenever it was wanted would very much conduce to the safety of the caretakers. That being the position of affairs, he would ask the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to what had since taken place. It appeared that on the 7th of March an attack had been made upon a dwelling-house on a "Boycotted" farm within four miles of Thurles. The house was in the care of some men employed by the Emergency Committee. A correspondent of *The Times* stated that a short time ago Mr. W. Biron was obliged to evict the tenants from seven farms for non-payment of rent; he appealed to the Emergency Committee for caretakers, and four men were promptly sent down. Police protection was applied for owing to the disturbed state of the country; but as the new regulations had come into force it was refused. The caretakers then found it necessary for their own protection to live together in one of the farm buildings. On Monday morning they observed a crowd of about 700 men approaching one of the farm-houses of which they had charge, and in a few minutes the house was in a blaze. The four caretakers sallied forth, and the head caretaker had great difficulty in restraining his men from firing on the crowd. No police, it appeared, were in the vicinity, and the incendiaries, having effected their object, departed. The caretakers stated that during the week they had been stationed at Kilrush they had only once seen a policeman, and that was when he came to bring them their arms' licences. So much, it was said, for the efficiency of the system of police patrols upon which so much was staked. There were only 10 constables stationed at Thurles, a number quite insufficient for the duties they had to perform. Now, if that account was correct or accurate, it was quite obvious that the plan which the right hon. Gentleman assured the House would be so much more effective than the former system of police protection had, in the first instance in which it had been tried, completely broken down. He thought the House was entitled to some assurance from the Government with reference to the system of police patrols beyond that which the right hon. Gentleman had given on the previous occasions referred to; and also some explanation as to why the police patrol appeared in this particular case to have been so lamentably insufficient for the purpose which it was intended to perform. He would also like to call the attention of the House and of the right hon. Gentleman to another rather serious matter connected with the position of affairs in Ireland. A great many English Members had been re-assured at the commencement of the Session, when they heard from Her Majesty's Government that after all, notwithstanding the disturbed condition of some parts of the country, the state of Ireland generally had to some extent improved. Although, of course, they knew that the Government had strong motives for making the best of the state of things which existed, and although they anticipated that a *couleur de rose* view of matters was likely to be laid before the House, yet the assurances of the right hon. Gentleman were so positive and so continually reiterated that some hon. Members were brought to believe that an improvement had, to a certain extent, taken place with regard to the state of affairs in Ireland. Many people, and he confessed he was one of them, thought they had a right to distrust assurances given by the Government, and when such assurances were given they were in the habit—acquired in the course of Parliamentary experience—of looking to some independent testimony by which they could be corroborated, and they never felt quite comfortable until the official statement was confirmed. As a consequence of this, he looked to some authority which was sure to be impartial for information as to the position of affairs in Ireland. He referred to the Charges of the Judges who went on Circuit in Ireland, and a most sad and lamentable picture they presented, some parts of which he would offer to the consideration of the House. He found that in North Tipperary Lord Justice Fitzgibbon said that the duties of the Grand Jury on the occasion would be confined to the investigation of four distinct cases. If the business to be disposed of could be regarded as a sufficient indication of the condition of the country, it would appear to be one of almost unknown peace—one of unparalleled social security; but, unfortunately, the Returns which the County Inspector had laid before him presented a very different picture. He had no means, he said, of estimating the state of the country; but he found in the County Inspector's Return that there were 159 offences at these Assizes, as against 75 for the same period last year, and he concluded by saying that the Return contained a variety of offences, all of which indicated the bad state of the country. So that, although the Calendar at North Tipperary was so low that the country appeared in a state of unparalleled social security, as a matter of fact there were more than double the number of bad and serious crimes committed in the district than had been committed during the same period of last year, at a time when, it should be remembered, there was no Coercion Act and no "remedial measure." But that was not the principal case, because when he looked at the state of Limerick, where Judge Barry, last Tuesday, opened the Commission for the County of Clare, he found the learned Judge regretting the spirit of lawlessness and crime which was manifesting itself, and saying that the number of offences had been more than doubled during the past few months, as compared with the same period last year, and that the offenders were not made amenable. With the exception of two or three, all the crimes were of an agrarian character; and the murder of the farmer, Moroney, he denounced as a crime disgracing any country professing civilization. But this was not all. There was another part of Ireland—the county of Louth—which the hon. Member for Louth (Mr. Callan) praised some days ago on account of its freedom from anything in the nature of agrarian crime. But Mr. Justice Lawson, in addressing the Grand Jury there, said he found, on looking over the Report, that there was a considerable increase, as might naturally be expected, in the number of a certain class of offences committed with a view to prevent people paying their rents. He did not quite understand why an increase in the number of offences was naturally to be expected; on the contrary, he should have thought that after the passing of the Land Act the number would naturally be expected to decrease. But, however that might be, there was the same story from Louth as from the other places referred to. No persons, said the learned Judge, had been made amenable for those offences; and, therefore, the business to go before the Grand Jury would be disposed of in a very short time. But he (Mr. Gorst) thought the Charge of Mr. Justice Fitzgerald, in Westmeath, even more remarkable. He told the Grand Jury that their duties on the occasion would be very light indeed. There were but two small cases to go before them. But it would be a mistake to allow it to go abroad that the existence of two small cases gave any index whatever to the state of the country. It was a remarkable feature, however, in considering what was the state of the country. The Report of the County Inspector gave a perfect view of the county since the last Summer Assizes; and the list was by no means a gratifying one. As contrasted with the corresponding period of 1881, it was exactly double—or, rather, not exactly, because the total number of cases reported for the corresponding period of last year was 44, and they were dealing with 86, so that they were nearly double in number, and they were certainly not at all of a less character. The list commenced with the crime of murder. It was a case they all knew well—the murder of a young woman, the daughter of Mrs. Crohan, of Crohanmonan. He could only characterize it as one of the most audacious murders ever carried out. Next on the list they had no less than 25 cases of threatening to murder; and, on looking into those, it was found that they were no sham offences, but real threatening notices—threatening to murder. Then there were three cases of firing at the person, and 16 of assembling with arms, seizure of arms, and so forth; and in addition to the 25 notices threatening to murder there were 28 cases of the ordinary threatening letters. Then there were three cases, well established, of firing into dwelling-houses, and carrying out of the previous threatening notices that had been served upon the parties. The learned Judge went on to say that, without dealing with the case of murder, all those cases, so far as he could judge from the Report, had one tendency and one direction—that was, to try to prevent parties by intimidation from meeting their engagements to pay their rents. The enumeration of these cases was in itself enough to show that the condition of Westmeath was not satisfactory—nay, more, in the period with which they were dealing, it had been and was in a most unsatisfactory condition. He thought it would be wrong to let it go to the public, without calling attention to these facts, that there were but two cases to be disposed of by the Grand Jury. That, the learned Judge believed, was one of the most remarkable features of the case—it was a feature that led him almost to despair of the future of the country. When he mentioned that there were 86 defined indictable offences, against 44 in the corresponding period of last year, reported to the Constabulary and capable of being proved, it was remarkable that in only two small cases—one of cattle stealing, and another for a petty larceny—had anyone been made amenable; in other words, there was no evidence available by the authorities to establish the guilt of any of those parties. When they looked from the Charges of the learned Judges to the cases which were heard before them, they found that in almost every instance there was an acquittal. He would call the attention of the House to one or two of these cases. At the Assizes at Carrick-on-Shannon, a man named Arthur Donnelly was put on trial as being one of a party of ruffians who, some time ago, broke at night into the house in which an aged herdsman and his grandson lived, and, dragging the old man, Michael Keegan, out of bed, put the muzzle of a rifle into his mouth, made him swear he would cease from herding a "Boycotted" farm, and then struck him on the head with the butt of a gun, and dragged him over some live coals which they scattered from the hearth upon the floor, setting fire to his shirt. Both Keegan and his grandson identified the prisoner Donnelly as one of the party. At the same Assizes John Feely was indicted for stabbing and maliciously injuring a horse, the property of Michael M'Cafferty, on the 22nd of last September. The prosecutor swore he kept post horses for hire, and that the prisoner had been in his service as post-boy on the 21st of September. On that day the prisoner was drunk, and witness refused to allow him to drive. The prisoner said he would be revenged, and on that night the stable of the prosecutor was entered, and a long gash inflicted on the horse's quarter. The police immediately searched the prisoner's house, and found a knife stained with blood beside his bed, and found footprints corresponding to the boots of the prisoner near the stable. The prosecutor was unpopular in the neighbourhood and had quarrels. The jury acquitted the prisoner. James M'Tiernan and Edward Stewart were indicted for posting on a telegraph post at Blackrock, in this country, the following notice:—

> "Take notice, that any person who pays one penny rent to Mrs. O'Burne will get the death of Lord Leitrim, and no further notice shall be given; and £10 reward will be given to any person who gives information of those who pays one shilling rent to Mrs. O'Burne."

The prisoners were seen by a police patrol passing the telegraph pole, on which there were no notices. The police turning back shortly afterwards found the notice up, and the prisoners in the neighbourhood, who were arrested. The prisoners were acquitted and discharged. Thomas Reynolds and Patrick Reynolds were indicted for an assault on Robert Hyland, on the 19th of January last. On that day the prosecutor was seen at the house of the rent-warner on Sir Morgan Crofton's estate, and afterwards paying his rent to the agent in Mohill. On his return home that night he was beaten by three men. Two of whom he identified. The defence was that the identification was a mistake as the night was dark. The jury acquitted the prisoners. But here was, perhaps, the most remarkable case. It occurred at the Longford Assizes, and was the trial of Andrew M'Cormack for the attempted murder of William Lawler, a postman, on October the 12th, 1881. Lawler was returning from Ardagh to Edgeworthstown on the day named, when he met the prisoner in company with another man. They threw him down, and, after a struggle, the prisoner fired several shots at him. They left him for dead on the roadside; but he crawled to two houses, and sought admission, but in vain. He then crept into a stable. Hearing a car go past he called for help, but was either unheard or unheeded. He then tried to make his way to Edgeworthstown, when he was met by some constables who had come in search of him. Twenty-two bullet marks were found on his body. His recovery was despaired of. Six bullets were extracted from his body, and three still remained in it. He positively identified M'Cormack, whom he had known for four or five years. At 9.30 P.M. the jury came into Court, and, having stated the improbability of their being able to agree to a verdict, were discharged. The prisoner remained in custody. These were real pictures of the state of Ireland drawn, not by any interested person, not by a political opponent of the right hon. Gentleman, but from the Charges of learned Judges and from the published accounts of the trials. Twice as many crimes were committed now as were committed before the remedial legislation of the Government. The country was in such a condition that, according to a learned Judge, it was a disgrace to civilization. The attempts to administer the law were breaking down in almost every case. Although prisoners were known to have committed most atrocious crimes, and the most convincing testimony had been given against them, they were acquitted or juries failed to agree. That was the state of the country, not as depicted by the assurances they received from the Treasury Bench, but as depicted by a source on which, he thought, they were entitled to place every reliance. The right hon. Gentleman and the Government must not be surprised if, shortly, some of the Members of the House who represented English constituencies, and who had hitherto taken no part in the discussion which had gone on in the House about the state of Ireland, thought it their duty to intervene. Last Session Parliament passed three measures which were extremely distasteful to almost everyone, both in the House and the country—namely, two Coercion Bills, by which personal liberty in Ireland was suspended, and the Land Act, which reversed all one's preconceived ideas of political economy and of sound principle with regard to the rights of property. These measures were accepted on the assurance of the Government that they would restore Ireland to a state of, at all events, comparative tranquillity, and to a condition in which it would not be a disgrace to civilization. It appeared that the sacrifices then made were made entirely in vain, and as if, notwithstanding the suspension of personal liberty and the enacting of remedial measures, the state of Ireland now was worse than it was a year ago. If the evidence of the further progress of the Assizes and of the list of outrages which would be placed on the Table should show that the assurances given by the right hon. Gentleman at the beginning of the Session were not borne out, and that Ireland was not improving, but was growing worse, then it would be the duty of the Members of that House to call to account Her Majesty's Government, and to express the opinion—at all events, a section of the House—that the time had come when the House and the country could no longer have any confidence in the management of Ireland by Her Majesty's Government.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I will first reply to a Question put by the hon. and learned Member as to a recently reported outrage. Notice has been given of Questions for Monday, and I have written to ask for information beyond what I have to-day received by telegram. From the telegrams I have received the published accounts seem to be full of exaggerations and inaccuracies. I am told that there was not a mob of 700 persons present, and that no house in charge of caretakers was destroyed. The system of patrolling in the district was sufficient and efficient. The hon. and learned Member has quoted from the Charges of the Judges. No doubt it is distressing to read these Charges; but they only show to the hon. and learned Member that the country is in the state I knew it to be in. He seems to suppose that I had given the House to understand that the state of the country was very different from what he now discovers it to be. Well, I am in the recollection of the House, and I think I can challenge contradiction, when I say that in no debate have I ever said that the state of Ireland is such as we can look on with pleasure, or anything but great anxiety. I have said that there were signs of improvement. I still maintain that there are signs of improvement; but that there is great cause for anxiety. There is not a single fact which has been stated by the hon. and learned Gentleman which has not occupied my attention day and night for weeks. I am perfectly aware of what is going on in Ireland; but the question is—what can best be done to put a stop to it? There are, as I have said, signs of improvement; I repeat what I said on the Address. There were fewer outrages reported in December and January, especially in January, than there were in the corresponding period 12 months ago; but the chief sign of improvement is this—there has been a strike against rent, and certain persons have instigated the non-payment of rent, and, willingly or unwillingly, by doing so, have instigated the commission of outrages, one of the chief causes of outrage being that instigation. The landlords for a long time took no steps to recover their rents; they have, however, been taking steps to recover them within the last few weeks. We expected—everyone expected—that there would have been a considerable increase of outrage; but the step the landlords have taken has not been followed by such an increase as was feared. From the Reports which have reached me through my Office, and from what I myself heard when recently in Ireland, the actual state of things, I may say, without taking any *couleur-de-rose* estimate of it, is to this extent encouraging—that in most of the districts all over Ireland we find that rents are beginning to be paid much more than they were. There appears to be some abatement of the lawless and desperate resistance to the payment of rent. No doubt we have a desperate contest still to carry on. The hon. and learned Member says he and his hon. Friends will call the Government to account, and will suggest their own method of bringing about a satisfactory state of affairs in Ireland. He says they will be obliged to move a Vote of Censure on the Government for their action. I am quite ready to meet such a Vote; and if the hon. and learned Member could, out of the resources of his knowledge and ability, suggest a better method of governing Ireland than that pursued by the Government, I should be glad to yield to him, and leave him to deal with the situation. There is one remark I should like to make, and it is this. I warned the House, in the debate on the Address, against being too much encouraged by the results of the trials at the Winter Assizes. These trials were conducted under rather favourable conditions, with less exposure to intimidation, so far as jurors were concerned, than was usually the case at the Spring Assizes, and I am afraid that my warning may turn out to be justified. But it is too soon yet to form any real judgment on the matter, as the Spring Assizes have only just begun. The hon. and learned Gentleman alluded to one most terrible case of outrage—the case of the postman who was almost riddled to pieces by bullets in County Longford, and who has survived his fearful wounds in a manner truly wonderful. I can only say that one of the local officials connected with the inquiry stated that he very much feared that if 500 men could give evidence of having seen the man shot the jury would not have convicted. They have not convicted; they have disagreed. The prisoner will have to be tried again. I do not think I can say anything more about that case. If the hon. and learned Member has any charge to bring against the Government, let him bring it specifically—for not using every effort that can be used for putting a stop to lawlessness in Ireland, for instance. It is not for me to lecture him, or suggest to him his duty; but if he really thinks he can help the cause of law and order in Ireland, let him consult with those who are interested in the preservation of law and order, or bring a specific charge against the Government, and not make such speeches as that to which we have just listened.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I must take exception to the last expression that fell from the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. E. Forster). I do not understand what right the right hon. Gentleman has to lecture my hon. and learned Friend for the speech he has made. My hon. and learned Friend has given to the House what seemed to me a very dry, but, at the same time, a very faithful statement of facts, so far as he could learn them, and they met with a suitable appreciation. Why the right hon. Gentleman supposes that the hon. and learned Member laid himself open to a lecture I cannot tell. I should have thought he had done good service in making this statement to the House, because the House wants to know, as far as possible, the exact truth with regard to these matters. I will not say a word about the assault on the caretakers, because the right hon. Gentleman has stated that he will be prepared with further information on Monday, when a Question is to be put to him on that subject, and I do not think it would be right to press that matter any further at the present moment. But with regard to the outrages and the Charges of the Judges at the Spring Assizes, there are one or two observations that ought to be made. I quite feel that the Government are, and always must be, anxious to cling to any sign of improvement they can possibly see in the state of Ireland; but I am afraid that more than once they have clung to straws, which have sunk under their hands. Everyone must remember the speech of the Prime Minister during the Recess, in which he mentioned two circumstances, which he then held forth to the country as signs of improvement. He dilated upon them at great length, and one of those signs of improvement was that the hon. Member for Tipperary (Mr. Dillon) had taken a perfectly different line of action from that of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell). The speech was hardly out of his mouth, and had hardly reached the ears of the hon. Member for Tipperary, when he entirely repudiated what the Prime Minister had attributed to him; and within a short time he was in gaol. That was one sign of improvement. In the same speech there was another sign of improvement, which was also dilated upon at great length. That was that the Corporation of the City of Dublin, although only by the casting vote of the Lord Mayor, had rejected a proposal to confer the freedom of the city upon the hon. Members for Cork and Tipperary. The Prime Minister dwelt upon that at great length as a sign of improvement; but only a short time passed before the Corporation of the City of Dublin, by a considerable majority, passed this very vote, conferring the freedom of the city upon those two Members of this House. That sign of improvement also passed away; and, therefore, although always very anxious to hear of good signs of improvement, we a little bit distrust signs held out from time to time, because such signs as these show that they have not always a solid foundation. In the Queen's Speech we also have signs of improvement mentioned, and the Prime Minister spoke at considerable length upon them in the debate upon the Address. One sign of improvement was the payment of rent, which was supposed to be increasing. I say nothing about that now, because no facts have been brought forward, although I have no doubt we shall hear more on the subject when facts are brought forward. But the one point upon which the Prime Minister rested his case very strongly was that justice was going to be administered again. That was a point he repeated over and over again, and laid much stress upon. My right hon. and learned Friend the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Gibson) pointed out, with great care and caution, that too much value must not be attached to the Winter Assizes, because they were held under peculiar circumstances. I quite admit that the right hon. Gentleman admitted that that was so; but, still, that was one of the signs of improvement upon which so much stress was laid, and I shall be anxious to see the results of the Spring Assizes, to learn if there was any sound ground for that sign of improvement. As far as these Assizes have gone—I do not say it is far, for they have only just begun—I am afraid that sign of improvement has no solid foundation. If so, it is one of the most lamentable things this House could have to contemplate, that the administration of justice in Ireland, in spite of all that has been done, is rendered absolutely impossible. Now, I want to say that I hope my right hon. Friend will not refuse to lay on the Table the Charges of the learned Judges at these Assizes.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I should be glad to do so, if it was in my power; but the right hon. Gentleman must be aware that the Charges are not given in such a form that they can be presented.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I think these Charges might be laid on the Table, and I hope before long an order may be made for reports of them to be produced. I have no doubt the Charges were formal documents, or that they were taken down; and that there will not be much difficulty in getting them. Then I hope that as soon as possible after the Assizes we may have laid on the Table a Return of all these crimes which are reported by the police, showing the cases that are prosecuted, and the acquittals. When the right hon. Gentleman states that these Charges of the Judges are not a surprise to him, I think that statement must be a surprise to the House, because it is very startling to hear that in Westmeath you have 86 serious agrarian crimes against 44 last year, and that in the county of Louth, and also, I think, in the county of Clare, there have been very nearly, if not quite, double the number of crimes in the previous year. But if the right hon. Gentleman was aware of that, it is difficult to conceive how he can hold out as a sign of improvement the fact that, with the help of the Government in collecting them, there has been some increased payment of rents. However, I do not want to say more on that at the present moment. I think my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gorst) has done good service in laying these facts before the House, and I only regret that he was not able to do so when there were more Members present. We shall have the Judges' Charges laid on the Table in some form, I hope, together with the Returns of the crimes, and then the House will judge for itself whether my hon. and learned Friend is right or not.

Sir JOHN HAY said, the increasing disorder and abominal outrages in Ireland must make everybody's blood run cold; and it was quite evident that the plans adopted by the Government to remedy this desperate state of things had done no good whatever. It was quite evident that Ireland was going from bad to worse, and that the process by which it was at present governed was not to the credit of this country. The process which he thought would be most advisable would be to recall the Lord Lieutenant, and do away with the method of government at Dublin Castle, and place Ireland in the hands of Sir Thomas Steele, who was Commander-in-Chief of the Forces, and was quite capable of governing Ireland and reducing it to order. He would contrast the condition of Ireland with the condition of another island, very much nearer than Ireland. What was the process by which the Isle of Man was governed? [Several Irish Members: Home Rule.] The Government of the Isle of Man was a credit to this country. The Imperial Government was supreme in that Island, all matters being conducted by the Home Office in this country; and so good government was produced; but until good government was effected in Ireland—under the superintendence of the Commander-in-Chief, instead of the Lord Lieutenant and the Chief Secretary, the condition of that country would still be a discredit. He did not know what system of local government could be adopted in Ireland; but the present system was detestable and abominable, and the sooner it was swept away the better. That was the feeling of a great many people in Scotland, that the condition of Ireland was discreditable to this country, and that until order was restored by handing Ireland over to the military authorities, there would be no peace or prosperity in the country.

MR. CALLAN observed, that the Chief Secretary had some difficulty as to laying the Judges' Charges on the Table; but he knew that the former practice on Circuit was that the Crown Solicitor obtained special shorthand reports of the Judges' Charges, which were written out and forwarded to Dublin Castle, and placed on record. Had that practice been done away with for economical reasons? The cost was only a guinea, and he thought the present Government might indulge in the expense of a guinea or two to obtain shorthand repors of the Judges' Charges at the Assizes. But he believed that, as a matter of fact, every Judge's Charge in Ireland was at present specially reported and sent to Dublin Castle within 24 hours of its delivery. It would be easy for the Chief Secretary to obtain copies of these Charges; and he was quite certain that Mr. Justice Fitzgerald would be most happy to correct his Charge and forward it to the Chief Secretary, so that it might be laid on the Table. The right hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir John Hay) had spoken of Louth and Clare as having double the previous number of crimes. He (Mr. Callan) entirely repudiated that connection between Louth and Clare. The county of Clare had become celebrated by acts of violence and outrages; but, according to the authority of a Resident Magistrate, Louth was one of the quietest spots in Europe. That gentleman had been 10 years in Louth, and during that time there had not been a single outrage on persons. Nevertheless, Louth had been proclaimed under the Coercion and Arms Acts by the Chief Secretary—perhaps as an incentive to outrage; certainly not to put down outrage where no outrages took place. With regard to the Judges' Charges, he would ask the Chief Secretary to inquire at Dublin Castle whether there was not a report of Mr. Justice Fitzgerald's Charge. If not, could not a copy of the report in *The Freeman's Journal* be sent to Mr. Justice Fitzgerald, and, after corrections, be laid on the Table within a week?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, he had gone on the largest Circuit in Ireland for 26 years, and he had never heard of the Judges' Charges being specially reported. He had been a Law Adviser to the Crown for a good many years, and he had not heard of the practice; and his sanction, as Attorney General, would be required for a shorthand report of any Charge, and that sanction had not been asked for. With respect to the question of obtaining these Judges' Charges, the Government had no control over the Judges, and, therefore, could not get their Charges as a matter of practice. Of course, they would try to obtain the Charges, and the Judges would, no doubt, do their best to help the Government; but they could only be obtained in that way.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN said, it seemed to him that English Gentlemen never tired of quoting instances of Irish atrocities; but he was amazed that they did not say something about, or appear to be moved in the slightest degree by, English atrocities. He would undertake to say that every day in the week they could, if they chose, pick up from the English papers as long and serious a list of crimes and outrages as was supplied to them every day by the industrious gentlemen who made it their business to collect these stories of crime and outrage in Ireland. It was said that people's blood must run cold on reading of the cruelties and atrocities in Ireland; but what blood would not run cold at the horrors and cruelties and atrocities in England every day, committed on women and children, the most helpless members of the community, and on dumb animals? The House had heard of the mutilations committed in Ireland; but all over London at this moment there was placarded a list of cruelties in London in one month, amounting to several hundreds. But these were allowed to pass unheeded, and the eyes of these great moralists were turned to the crimes in Ireland. What did they expect? Did they want to make saints of all the Irish people? If they did, they were going the wrong way about it. Their rule never had tended in that direction, and never would. With regard to the outrages now occurring in Ireland, he declared his belief that they were very largely due to the Coercion Act. He believed that the half-informed men who performed those disgraceful deeds felt, in their unenlightened minds, some sort of justification for their acts in the fact that hundreds of their countrymen were arrested and thrown into gaol without right or reason. He believed that the arrest of Mr. Rorke, of which they heard to-day, was a vindictive and most reprehensible proceeding; and he was inclined to believe that the effect of this act of the Government, when the act was reported through the length and breadth of Ireland, would be to intensify the feelings in many minds out of which sprung a good deal of the crime now being committed in that country. Such acts exasperated the minds of the people; they exasperated the minds of educated men; they exasperated the minds of intelligent men; they exasperated the minds of virtuous men. What effect must they have upon the minds of men who were not well disposed, upon men who were, as he had already said, half-informed and unenlightened, and who had a natural tendency to crime and cruelty? He repeated that he believed, sincerely and honestly, that those unjustifiable and cruel arrests were the cause of a good deal of the cruelty and outrage now prevailing; and he believed it would have a wholesome effect towards the pacification of Ireland, and towards a diminution of crime in that country, if the prison doors were thrown open, and the men who were incarcerated upon so-called reasonable suspicion were allowed at large to advise their countrymen. They would advise and direct the people to engage in an open and fearless agitation; but, at the same time, they would advise their countrymen to abstain from those disreputable and criminal acts which disgraced the country; they would advise them to abstain from crime and outrage, which did not serve the Land League movement, which did not serve any good purpose, which did not serve the cause the poor Irish people had at heart, but which only afforded occasion for sham moralists to orate against the crimes of a country which upon the whole score of morality compared most favourably with England.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1881-2.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £7,772, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1882, for the Salaries, Allowances, and Expenses of various County Court Officers, and of Magistrates in Ireland, and of the Revising Barristers of the City of Dublin."

MR. LEAMY said, before this Vote was passed, he would like to hear something from the Chief Secretary in explanation of it. He found there was a sum of £3,130 for the salaries of 15 extra magistrates, extra remuneration of six special magistrates, and salaries of six clerks. He was anxious to know what was the amount of the remuneration paid to each of those special magistrates and clerks, and who they were? There was also a further sum of £3,712 for subsistence, allowance for six special magistrates and their clerks. It was desirable they should know what was the actual sum which each of the special magistrates received, not only by way of extra remuneration, but by way of ordinary pay; what was the sum they received for travelling expenses and subsistence? It was proper, too, that they should be told what were the instructions which the special magistrates received.

MR. HEALY said, he would have preferred his hon. Friend to move to report Progress, on the ground that an important question was involved in the Vote—namely, the appointment of Major Bond, who had been proved in his own native town to be a perjurer. The appointment of Major Bond was so serious a matter that they desired to show the British public, as well as the Irish public, the character of the man whom the Chief Secretary used as his instrument in his coercive policy; and at that late hour of the night they ought not to be expected to proceed with the Vote. Personally, he had no objection to the Government taking any non-contentious Votes; but Irish Members ought not to be expected, at half-past 1 o'clock in the morning, to enter into a matter affecting the Irish people so closely as the remuneration of the magistrates whom the Chief Secretary had appointed to carry out his hateful policy of coercion.

MR. CALLAN said, it would be to the convenience of the Committee if the Vote were postponed. It was well the English and Irish people should be made acquainted with the circumstances attending the appointment of Major Bond, because underlying that appointment was the system under which the Chief Secretary governed Ireland. The Vote had once before been postponed to admit of the presence of the Chief Secretary, and to take a matter of such general interest after half-past 1 o'clock in the morning was a mere sham. Not a single Gentleman on the Conservative side of the House was now present; but opposite they had a complete phalanx of the Radical Party prepared to support the Chief Secretary in his coercive policy. They also saw that some Members of the Caucus had come down to defend the appointment of Major Bond. It would be well to at once take whatever non-contentious Votes there were, and not enter upon this one, which would involve a long and embittered wrangle. They could not discuss the appointment of Major Bond at a time when their proceedings could not be published. They intended to impugn the capacity of Major Bond, to impugn his honesty, straightforwardness, independence, and fairness; and unless the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary wished to gag them, to put the *clôture* upon them by a side wind, he would not take the Vote on the present occasion.

MR. W. E. FORSTER reminded hon. Gentlemen that on the subject of the appointment of Major Bond there was a Motion on going into Committee of Supply on the Paper, and, in all probability, it could be taken at an early hour. He had every wish to have the appointment discussed, and he should very much prefer what he had to say on the matter should be said when it could be published throughout the country. It was, however, important to get the Supplementary Estimates finished in the course of the week, and therefore he trusted they would be allowed to proceed. He would explain how the matter stood with regard to Major Bond, and, unless there were other matters——

MR. HEALY: Yes, there is Mr. Clifford Lloyd.

MR. W. E. FORSTER said; he thought the appointment of Mr. Clifford Lloyd had been discussed so often that there was not very much more to be said about him. If hon. Members were so strongly of opinion that the Vote could not be conveniently taken now he would postpone it.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

(1.) £636, Royal University of Ireland.

NAVY ESTIMATES.

(2.) £50,000, Army Department (Conveyance of Troops).

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked if this was an Army or a Navy Vote, and if there was any item called "the charge for coal?" Perhaps the Secretary to the Admiralty could say whether the Government was aware what amount of coal there was in the different ports and Navy Yards of the country. Some years ago it was discovered that £6,000 worth of coals, at Portsmouth, had been overlooked for a very long time; and it was very possible that the taking of stock with regard to coal in England was not altogether complete yet. With regard to coal, again, he believed that sundry complaints had been made to the Admiralty as to some very questionable transactions in the shape of the issue of coals to private purchasers in Gibraltar, and some other places. Possibly the hon. Gentleman would tell them what the Government had done in the matter.

MR. TREVELYAN said, that the Services for which money was asked were entirely connected with the Army. There undoubtedly did exist an abuse at Gibraltar with regard to the sale of coals to private persons. He thought the system would not be found so objectionable if the sales had been made directly to the merchant ships; but they were conducted through a middleman. The matter was only brought to the knowledge of the Admiralty within the last few months, and very strict orders had been issued to stop the sales. He had a communication on the subject only two days ago, and he had not the least suspicion that the abuse was existing, nor did he think it was at all probable that there were any large stocks of coal overlooked in any of their establishments. The stock of coal for the year had been kept extremely low, and in those parts of the world where coal depreciated patent fuel was being used.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked who the middleman was through whom the sales of coals were made at Gibraltar, and whether he was connected with any other Government contract?

Mr. TREVELYAN said, he might observe that the question had nothing to do with the Vote. The coal which the Vote referred to was entirely used in two transports, which made a voyage from the Cape to Bombay. Perhaps the word "abuse" was too strong a word to use in respect to what had transpired at Gibraltar. He had no reason to believe there was anything surreptitious; it was only the system that was bad. The name of the middleman, or coal agent, he did not remember at present; but he would ascertain his name, and he would also inform the hon. Member whether there was anything which called for reprehension.

Vote *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next;

Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Postponed Resolution [3rd March] *further considered.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

Mr. HEALY said, there were several points in which the Government promised explanation on Report. For instance, the Attorney General for Ireland promised to look into the matter of the advertisements of the Land Commission. He (Mr. Healy) and his hon. Friends had pointed out that those advertisements were published in *The Scotsman*, the Dublin *General Advertiser*, which was owned by the hon. Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron), and in the London *Times*, so that if the people of Ireland wanted to know anything about the relation between landlord and tenant they must refer to those papers. The Attorney General for Ireland undertook to look into the matter and have things remedied. It was shown by the Irish Members that there were such papers as *The Freeman's Journal*, that were largely read by the people; and it was to such papers that the advertisements of the Land Commission should be given, and not to papers like *The Scotsman* and London *Times*. Furthermore, there was the question of Mr. Barrett, the chief evictor of Lord Kenmare, who had been appointed valuator under the Land Act. It had been denied that he had been so appointed; but on looking the matter up he found it distinctly stated in the Report of the proceedings of the Judicial Sub-Commissioners that in the case of Mr. Bence Jones, Mr. John Barrett was appointed by the Sub-Commissioners as valuator. It was said they had not got the interest of the Land Act at heart; but he would ask the Attorney General if it was desirable that evictors like John Barrett, who, from their well-known propensities, were odious in the eyes of the people, should be appointed valuators under the Land Act? He desired to know if Mr. Barrett had been permanently appointed, or had been simply appointed in the case of Mr. Bence Jones's tenantry. Then, again, in regard to the appointment of the Solicitor to the Land Commission, it was stated in the papers the other day that Mr. Fitzgerald had been appointed. It was a remarkable thing that Judge Fitzgerald was one of the chief instruments of the Government in Ireland, and, as first member of the Privy Council, he always took a prominent part whenever any measure of coercion was to be put in force. That learned Judge decided what cases were to be tried, and then went down to the Assizes to make a series of special Charges to the Grand Juries, in accordance with a pre-arranged line of action decided upon by the Privy Council. He had now received his reward in an appointment for his son—a briefless barrister, whom nobody had ever heard of, and while the son had received an important appointment on the one hand, Judge Fitzgerald's nephew, on the other hand, had been appointed to the solicitorship of the Land Commission. He (Mr. Healy) wished to know if that was true? If it was, it was a remarkable fact; and it was a matter upon which they ought to have some explanation. Then, again, there was the question of maps. He had pointed out the other day an absurd rule laid down in the originating notice, which was based upon the assumption that every Irish tenant had a copy of the Ordnance Survey map in his house or library. It was ridiculous to suppose that an Irish tenant with a 10 acre farm had a library of any kind in which to place the maps of the Ordnance Survey. The originating notice required the character of the holding to be stated in accordance with the definition on the Ordnance map. The tenant was to describe the name of the farm and the locality, and he was not to give the names by which the holding was known to the people of the locality, but the names which appeared on the Ordnance map. In many cases English - Irish names were employed, and in others Irish-English names, a splendid mess being made of the whole thing. It was an extraordinary requirement that a humble peasant should be called upon to obtain a copy of the Ordnance Survey map, and describe his holding in accordance with that map. There were many other points upon which he might ask for information; but he would content himself with these four at present—namely, what course had been taken in regard to the advertisements of voluntary agreements; next, as to the appointment of the Solicitor to the Land Court; next, as to the Ordnance Survey map; and, lastly, as to the appointment of John Barrett as a valuer?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, it was not required that every tenant should possess an Ordnance map; but it was thought that he would have no difficulty in obtaining access to one. He (the Attorney General for Ireland) would now give a very short answer and explanation to all the points which had been raised by the hon. Member. In the first place, in regard to the newspapers, it was a fact that the advertisements of voluntary agreements were inserted in the three papers mentioned—the Dublin *General Advertiser*, the London *Times*, and the Edinburgh *Scotsman*. It was required under the Act that the agreements made out of Court, and which were of a very elaborate nature, should remain for two or three months—he forgot which—before they became binding. The House would easily see the nature of one of these advertisements from the document he held in his hand. Now, it happened that a very large amount of Scotch and English money was invested on mortgage in Ireland through the Insurance Companies; and as all these agreements related to the arrangements between landlord and tenant, it was necessary to inform the mortgagee who lent the money, and resided out of the country, what the nature of the agreements entered into was, so that they might be apprised of what was going on. Accordingly the Land Commissioners selected *The Times* in England, *The Scotsman* in Scotland, and *The General Advertiser* in Dublin. The reason why the last-named paper was selected was that it was generally employed by the public Courts as the medium for advertising. The Landed Estates Court advertised in *The General Advertiser*, the Public Works Department advertised all their loans and applications for loans in that paper. *The General Advertiser* circulated 36,000 copies all over Ireland; it was delivered gratuitously in Dublin and the suburbs, it was filed in the Public Offices, and it was posted free to almost every town in Ireland. By that means it possessed a very large circulation in Ireland. If one of these advertisements were inserted in all the Dublin newspapers, it would entail a very considerable expense. He was informed that the cost would have been £287 for the present month alone for a single insertion in the Dublin papers. The cost, therefore, was so great that the Land Commissioners thought it would be much more economical to insert the advertisements in the papers which had been mentioned. In reference to this matter, it had been stated that an hon. Member of that House—the Member for Glasgow (Dr. Cameron)—was the owner of *The Scotsman* and the owner of *The General Advertiser*. [An hon. Member: Not *The Scotsman*, but *The Glasgow Mail.*] The imputation conveyed was that it was a bribe to the hon. Member for Glasgow for his support to the Government. He (the Attorney General for Ireland) entirely disclaimed any such object, and he was told that the interest of the hon. Member in the Dublin *General Advertiser* was very small indeed. As to the next question—the employment of Mr. Barrett as a Government valuer—what he had stated at the time the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) called attention to the matter was that Barrett was not one of the valuers appointed by the Court; that was, that he was certainly not a permanent valuer. The fact turned out to be as he had stated it. Barrett, however, had on one occasion been appointed, under the provisions of the Act, as an independent valuer; but that was a matter over which the Commissioners had no control. He was appointed under one of the sections of the Act to determine a question relating to a holding in regard to which the Sub-Commissioners were empowered to employ an independent valuer. As regarded this particular case, he was informed that the Sub-Commissioners appointed Barrett to make the valuation of some property at a considerable distance from his own residence. The appointment was made with the approbation both of the landlord and of the tenant. The result was satisfactory to the tenant, and was not complained of either by the Court or by the landlord. That was the only occasion on which Barrett was employed, and he had never been appointed a valuer by the Commissioners. Their valuers were Mr. Gray, Mr. Bell, and he believed there was a third gentleman named Russell. In regard to Mr. Fitzgerald, he happened to be personally acquainted with that gentleman. Mr. Fitzgerald was an intimate friend of his; he had known him from the time he was called to the Bar. He had received previous information from Mr. Fitzgerald that he was most unwilling to take the appointment, and that it required pressure to induce him to do so.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: In the first instance he did refuse it.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary corroborated him, and bore testimony to the fact that, in the first instance, Mr. Fitzgerald refused the appointment. With regard to the appointment of Solicitor to the Land Court, he understood that the Commissioners were most anxious to complete the appointment; but it had not yet been decided who was to be the lucky man. The Government left all the responsibility to the Commissioners themselves, who were certainly the best judges. With reference to the Ordnance Survey maps, he had ascertained that it was necessary for the purposes of the Appeal Court to have the holdings described in accordance with the Ordnance maps. The valuers employed by the Commissioners were then able to go down and value the property. It was not correct that the originating notice required the maps of the Ordnance Survey to be used; but the Rules provided that the farms should, as near as possible, be described in accordance with those maps.

Mr. HEALY asked if the right hon. and learned Gentleman would object to read the notice?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, he had not got the Rule with him; but the words he had taken down were these —"May be in the form." Those were words extracted from the Rule. It was not an imperative obligation; but the Rule provided that the description might be in the form of the description given in the Ordnance map. He thought these were all the points the hon. Gentleman had mentioned. It was the Commissioners themselves, and not the Government, who selected the papers in which the advertisements were to be inserted, and he had already mentioned the reasons which actuated them. He had also given the names of the valuers immediately connected with the Commission. The only other point it was necessary he should answer was this:—On a previous occasion he undertook to lay before the House a statement in reference to the examination of the clerks who had been appointed in the office of the Land Commission. He found that he was correct in stating that the clerks, with nine exceptions, were required to satisfy the Civil Service Commissioners in regard to their qualifications. Among the officers who were excepted were the secretary, the accountant, the chief agent for land sales, the assistant agents for land sales, registrars of sales, the valuer, and the solicitor. Special certificates were required by the Land Commission from the Civil Service Commissioners, in reference to some of the appointments. He had further undertaken to ascertain whether the forms supplied to the valuers were sufficient to enable them to make a proper valuation. He held one of them in his hand, and he found it was of a very exhaustive character. It specified, among other things, the county, the name of the landlord, whether the land was town land or not, the area, the name of the tenant, the rateable value, the actual rent, the situation of the holding, its elevation and aspect, the number of fences, the character of the soil, the nature of the improvements, and various other matters that affected the holding. In order to fill up that form it would be necessary for the valuer to make a very extensive examination of the property. The name of Mr. Murphy had been mentioned as a valuer. He believed that Mr. Murphy would have been appointed if he had chosen to put his name forward. He would not trouble the House further. He thought he had answered the material questions put to him, and he had taken the greatest pains to obtain all the information that was necessary.

Mr. CALLAN said, he had listened with attention and interest to the speech of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland in explanation of the course adopted by the Commission of advertising in *The Times* and *The Scotsman* the voluntary agreements which were entered into by the tenants in Ireland, and he had come to the conclusion that his statement would have been in every respect eminently satisfactory had Irish Members not been in a position to read between the lines.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, he should have stated that the course which was at present adopted by the Commissioners was that of inserting a brief advertisement in the Dublin morning papers, announcing that a longer advertisement with regard to these voluntary agreements would be found in *The General Advertiser*. The same notice appeared with reference to the advertisements in *The Scotsman* and *The Times*.

Mr. CALLAN said, he was quite unable to agree with the Attorney General for Ireland that it was necessary or desirable that English and Scotch mortgagees should be informed of the voluntary agreements made in Ireland by means of advertisements in English and Scotch papers. That statement formed the sole excuse which the right hon. and learned Gentleman had offered for the course adopted by the Commission with regard to the advertisements in *The Times* and *The Scotsman*; and it was a very remarkable one, because the right hon. and learned Gentleman was a man of large experience, and would know perfectly well that not one penny of Scotch money was lent in Ireland, except through agents in Dublin. No Scotch mortgagee of land in Ireland would think of reading *The Scotsman* for the purpose of getting information with regard to these voluntary agreements. He would unquestionably refer to his Dublin agent, who read the Dublin morning papers; and, under these circumstances, he (Mr. Callan) contended there was no necessity whatever for advertising in *The Scotsman*. The objection taken by his hon. Friends was not against individual newspapers, but against the corruption of the Press. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had referred to the advertisements inserted in Irish papers by the Board of Works. He wished to ask the noble Lord the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, whether or not it was a fact that in this matter the Board of Works were controlled entirely by the Department which he represented? Was it not the case, that since the meeting of Parliament the Treasury had sent directions to the Irish Board of Works as to the papers in which their advertisements were to be inserted? The opinion in Ireland was that the Board of Works were not allowed to use their own judgment in this matter, and that they simply sent advertisements as they were directed by the Treasury Department in London. If such instructions were sent to Ireland, surely the noble Lord would be aware of the fact, and would be able to make a statement to the House; but if it had been concealed from him, he (Mr. Callan) could do no more than characterize the proceeding as most improper, and he was quite certain that the noble Lord would investigate a system which allowed under-officials in his Department to direct the Board of Works to advertise only in certain newspapers. Would the noble Lord like to assume the responsibility of directing in what newspapers the advertisements were to appear? The long advertisements were inserted only in *The General Advertiser*, which was not read by the people of Ireland, and had a very limited circulation; and he repeated that the statement in Ireland was that they were published in that paper in consequence of peremptory instructions received from the Treasury in London, the Department which issued them having no discretion whatever in the matter. The question he had to put to the noble Lord was this—did he, or his Department in London, control the Board of Works in Ireland in the matter of advertisements?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he was obliged to point out to the hon. Member for Louth that his question with regard to the advertisements of the Board of Works in Ireland had nothing whatever to do with the Vote before the House.

MR. CALLAN regretted that the noble Lord had not felt himself in a position to reply to his question. He should not have alluded to the Board of Works in Ireland, had not the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland done so in the course of his reply to the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy).

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN said, he should like to know whether the system at present in operation with regard to these official advertisements in Ireland was to be persevered in? He had listened to the explanations offered to the House; but the right hon. and learned Gentleman had given no intimation as to whether the existing arrangement would be continued or altered. He (Mr. Sullivan) regarded the system as most objectionable, and contended that it should be changed. The Attorney General for Ireland had stated that *The General Advertiser*, in which the notices of voluntary agreements appeared in Dublin, had a most extensive circulation throughout Ireland. Without any reflection upon the right hon. and learned Gentleman, he was bound to say that he did not at all believe in the accuracy of that representation. The publication in question had, according to his information, a very limited circulation. It was gratuitously distributed to a few persons in the city of Dublin, and on the following Monday a messenger was sent round to their houses, and was supposed to get back the copies, which were then to be sent into the country. No doubt some of the copies were returned; but the idea that they were sufficient for the purpose of distribution throughout the length and breadth of Ireland was, in his opinion, altogether a mistake. For these reasons he found it impossible to accept as accurate the statement of the Attorney General with regard to the circulation of the paper. But it appeared from the statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman that a short advertisement referring to the longer announcement in *The General Advertiser* was inserted in *The Freeman's Journal*. Now, the latter newspaper had unquestionably the widest and most extensive circulation of any in Ireland; it was sent out from the office every morning in bales, containing thousands of copies, that were delivered in all parts of the country. Every man in Dublin read *The Freeman's Journal*, no matter whether or not he agreed with the political principles which it advocated. And it was in this paper that the Attorney General said that a brief advertisement was inserted, referring the people to the long advertisement in *The General Advertiser*. In his opinion the practice should be reversed. For his own part, he considered that the daily papers in Dublin, of every class of politics, were entitled fairly to share in the matter of these advertisements; and he was at a loss to understand why a publication of so limited a circulation as *The General Advertiser* should be made, as it were, the pet out of all the other newspapers published in the country. The present arrangement was artificial and unsatisfactory, and he thought he had shown good reasons why it should not be allowed to continue. The placing of these advertisements was evidently a matter of favour, obtained in some way which Irish Members did not understand. But coming to the common sense and just view of the case, having regard to the question of what newspaper was most read, and which would consequently offer to the people the most full information, he said that *The General Advertiser* was not the paper, and that *The Freeman's Journal* was. The right hon. and learned Gentleman had said that English and Scotch mortgagees and Insurance Offices were largely interested in the matter of the voluntary agreements, and it was, therefore, desirable that notices with respect to them should appear in *The Times* and *The Scotsman.* The statement of the right hon. and learned Gentleman went a long way to prove that landlordism in Ireland was a hollow sham, for they were now told that Irish landlords, who, it was said, spent their money in Ireland and did so much good there in other ways, really had to hand over most of their rents to English and Scotch mortgagees and Insurance Companies. That was one of the considerations which pressed on the minds of Irish Members when they contended that neither Ireland nor the tenantry of Ireland could be on any foundation of prosperity until this system of sham landlordism was broken up, and its place supplied by the reality of a peasant proprietory.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR pointed out that in the case of Army advertisements the military authorities thought there was good reason for advertising in a large number of the Irish newspapers whenever they had any information to communicate with regard to military affairs in Ireland. He found by an Army Circular which he held in his hand that there were no less than 27 Irish newspapers which were recognized by the Department as proper channels for the dissemination of information in respect of contracts in connection with the Military Service in Ireland. He could not understand why the Irish Land Commission, having its head office in Dublin, should not make their announcements in these 27 Irish newspapers. He was quite certain that it would be better for them to advertise in all the papers which circulated amongst the agricultural population of Ireland than it would be to advertise in *The Scotsman.*

MR. LEAMY said, he could not see that it was any advantage to Scotch mortgagees to have information with regard to these voluntary agreements after they were executed. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, as he understood, gave as the reason for advertising in a Scotch paper that the announcements were made for the purpose of inviting the attention of Scotch mortgagees to the fact that agreements had been entered into for a reduction of rent. He (Mr. Leamy) thought it would be proper that mortgagees in England and Scotland should receive information with respect to such agreements, provided it was of any use to them to be so informed. He could quite understand that it would be of use to the mortgagee to discover by means of an advertisement that a voluntary agreement was about to be made between the landlord and tenant for the purpose of fixing the rent of a farm, if the mortgagee were entitled to go into Court, either personally or by his solicitor, and ask the Court not to allow the agreement to be carried into effect. But he was not aware that the Land Act contained any provision whatever for protecting the interest of mortgagees in this respect, although he thought it only reasonable that the mortgagee should be allowed to go into Court. What, then, became of the mortgagee's interest in the matter, seeing that it was settled on the application of the tenant? The right hon. and learned Gentleman stated that the arrangement with regard to advertisements was settled by one of the Rules which, however, had not yet been laid upon the Table of the House. He should certainly be glad to know what advantage the mortgagee derived from the advertisements in question. As they were not inserted for the purpose of enabling the mortgagee to contest the arrangement in any way, but only to give notice of the fact that the rent had been reduced, he hardly supposed that the mortgagee would derive much satisfaction from the announcement. Nor did he suppose that an advertisement in *The General Advertiser* was likely to serve even the purpose for which it was intended, because, according to the information received, that paper was first distributed in Dublin, and afterwards sent amongst the people in Ireland. How, then, was it to reach the mortgagees in Scotland?

MR. SPEAKER: I must call upon the hon. Member to address himself to the Chair, and not to a particular Member of the House.

MR. LEAMY said, he was about to point out that under the arrangement which had been condemned by his hon. Friends every mortgagee in Scotland had an opportunity of knowing at least something about the agreements entered into between the landlord and tenant; but there was no advantage whatever to the mortgagee in reading an advertisement in *The Scotsman* to the effect that the matter was set forth in *The General Advertiser.* The announcement was practically worthless to him.

Mr. SEXTON said, he thought Irish Members were justified in asking for some further assurance in the matter of the advertisements. For his own part, he was not in favour of Scotch money lenders, who, he thought, were quite able to take care of themselves, and, therefore, stood in no need of special announcements with regard to agreements between Irish landlords and tenants. On the other hand, he considered that the Irish farmers, and the class financially connected with them, had the right to expect that the announcement of matters which so much concerned their interest should appear in those Irish journals which were generally read. He was very well acquainted with *The General Advertiser.* It was a paper that was circulated gratuitously amongst the official and legal classes; it was also sent to some of the principal merchants and a few of the gentry in Ireland. But the Irish farmers knew as much about it as they did of *The Scotsman.* But, even if they saw the short advertisement in *The Freeman's Journal,* it was not fair to ask these very often illiterate men to go or write to Dublin for the purpose of obtaining a particular paper. Irish Members, in a matter of this kind, relating to the administration of the Land Act, were justified in claiming that all information which it was necessary and desirable for the people of Ireland to possess should appear in the journals that were most accessible to them. It was surely not unreasonable to ask that the Commissioners should place that information before the people in the easiest possible way. The method now pursued was both unreasonable and objectionable; and in order to afford an opportunity to right hon. Gentlemen opposite to say what steps would be taken to alter it he begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Sexton.*)

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he was certain that the sole object of the Commissioners had been to give information to the parties interested in Ireland and elsewhere, and to give that information fully. They had come to the conclusion that the best way of carrying out the plan, so far as Ireland was concerned, was to insert the advertisements in *The General Advertiser.* It was quite true that *The Freeman's Journal* had a large circulation; but he thought that there would be a great deal of complaint, and perhaps justifiable complaint, from persons who read the other papers in Dublin if the advertisement appeared in *The Freeman's Journal* only. The Commissioners, after consideration, had decided to advertise in a thorough business paper, which had been used for Government announcements formerly. It had been said that the Commissioners first began by advertising in three newspapers—*The Times, The Scotsman,* and the Dublin *General Advertiser*; but the expense was found to be so great that they ceased to advertise in *The Times* and *The Scotsman,* putting these two papers in the position of the ordinary journals. Notice was given that on a certain day *The General Advertiser* alone would contain the advertisement. The amount saved by not advertising generally in the newspapers would be shown when it was said that the cost of advertising in *The Times* and *The Scotsman* amounted to £3,000 a-year. If the advertisements were put into 27 county newspapers the cost would necessarily be very great. The object of the Commissioners had been to give the necessary information, and to give it fully and economically. He did not think their discretion in the matter should be interfered with.

Mr. SPEAKER: Do I understand the hon. Member for Sligo to move the adjournment of the debate?

Mr. SEXTON: I do move it.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR: I beg to second the Motion.

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not entitled to second the Motion, having exhausted his right to speak.

Mr. BIGGAR said he would second the Motion. He had had some experience of local towns in Ireland, and he could assure the House that *The General Advertiser* was not read in them at all. An hon. Gentleman who sat near him informed him that the ordinary custom was for the paper to be brought in at the hall door on Saturday, for it to lay on the table until Monday morning, and then be taken away without being read. So far as he was concerned, he never got a copy of the paper sent to him. He did not think the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland would intentionally misstate any fact; but the allegation that the paper was distributed freely was not correct. On the other hand, they knew that *The Freeman's Journal* was read by every class in every part of Ireland; there was not even a village in any section of the country that did not receive one or more copies. He did not suppose that anybody wished to make a fight on this occasion in the interest of *The Freeman's Journal;* but it was only proper that the House should be made aware of the medium through which information could be sent to the tenant farmers of Ireland. It was all nonsense to say that information could be conveyed to the farmers through *The General Advertiser.* The Sub-Commissioners might be able to get through the 70,000 cases entered for hearing in three or four years. Some people were sanguine enough to think that they would; but other people, on the other hand, said that it would take 15 years. But even if they did get through all these cases it would still leave out five-sixths of all the tenant farmers; and if the Government really wished to make the Land Act worth anything at all they should bring it within the reach of all these people—popularize it. It did not, however, seem to be the wish of the Government to do this, or they would give the tenant farmers all the information in their power. For the first year of the operation of their Act they should try to popularize it, and endeavour to make the benefits which were to be derived, or were supposed to be derived, from it as generally known as possible. They should have given these advertisements to the papers that were read by the farming class. The Government should not be so absurd as to publish important advertisements in papers that no one ever read, and which were, therefore, so much waste paper. There was another point to which he wished to draw the attention of the Chief Secretary—a matter to which he had directed his notice some time ago—namely, the appointment, as a Sub-Commissioner, of a Mr. Bomford in the County Cavan. He (Mr. Biggar) had never attacked this gentleman, who was really placed in a very invidious position. Mr. Bomford was placed in this position—he was put in a county where he had near relatives, where he had been an agent, and where his decisions, even supposing they were perfectly honest, were liable to be misunderstood. It seemed to him (Mr. Biggar) that, under the circumstances of the case, Mr. Bomford's decisions would be suspected by some people of being partial. It was only fair to Mr. Bomford, to Mr. Bomford's relations, and to the tenant farmers of Cavan, that this gentleman should be moved to some other district. This was a reasonable suggestion, and he did not think the Government should throw any obstacle in the way of its being carried out.

MR. O'DONNELL said, he was afraid, whatever might be said to the contrary, that the general opinion was that in Ireland the operation with regard to the placing of these advertisements was a "Boycotting" operation. He did not, however, think it was worth the while of the Irish Party to make a fight on the matter. The Irish papers, even the least influential of them, could do extremely well without the support of Her Majesty's Government. Perhaps the conduct of the Government on this matter might be regarded as a trial of Land League principles; and it was not the first time Her Majesty's Government had borrowed from that organization. They had taken this piece of "Boycotting" out of the book of certain Land League Societies in the West of Ireland.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. E. Forster) had misunderstood him with regard to Army advertisements. The Government did not advertise in the 27 papers on the list at one time; but when they had to advertise, say in the Cork district, they would put their advertisement in the Cork newspaper, and when they were advertising in the Enniskillen district they would patronize the Fermanagh journals. The Land Commissioners should do the same as to the property upon which they had to adjudicate. The long advertisements were expensive; but those that were inserted in *The Scotsman, The Times,* and *The General Advertiser* were precisely those that were most heavily charged for by newspaper proprietors. What he would suggest was that instead of having these long advertisements, which were practically a waste of money, a number of small advertisements should be inserted in the newspapers circulating in the districts interested. In this way economy would be secured, and information would be better disseminated than at present.

Mr. HEALY said, that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary had merely repeated to the House words which had come to him from Dublin; therefore, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman was acquainted with the real merits of the case. He did not agree with the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) that it was immaterial whether the advertisements were inserted or not. He took great interest in the working of the Land Act, and should like to see what agreements were being made between the landlords and tenants. How was he to know these things? Was he to write to *The General Advertiser* in Dublin, and get a copy of that paper sent back by post, in order to see what arrangements were being made? He read three Dublin papers—*The Freeman's Journal*, *The Irish Times*, and *The Express*. He did not care a button which papers got the advertisements; but he could quite understand that if one were singled out for them the others would be jealous. He should think that the advertisements should be inserted in papers that were read, and not in journals like *The General Advertiser*, which was so uninteresting that the bulk of the people who received it never opened it. He would suggest that the Attorney General for Ireland should communicate with the Commissioners in Dublin, and ascertain the general feeling as to whether the general public could be best supplied with information through *The General Advertiser* or through any other newspapers. He hoped the Government would not let the matter rest where it was, but that they would communicate with the Commissioners to see whether some arrangement more satisfactory than the present could not be adopted.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, that the question of advertising rested solely with the Commissioners; but he would take care that what had taken place in the House would be brought before them. They would be made acquainted with the strong feeling which had been expressed by hon. Members.

Mr. GRAY said, he hoped his hon. Friend would not persevere with his Motion to divide the House for the reason that it might make people believe that he was fighting in the interest of particular journals, and that, he (Mr. Gray) was sure, was not what the hon. Gentleman wished to do. The noble Lord (Lord Frederick Cavendish), who was in his place, was aware that, so far as the Treasury were concerned, Government advertisements were given for political reasons. There was a list of newspapers to which the advertisements were to be sent drawn up, and this list was altered without hesitation; in fact, the whole thing was a matter of political corruption. He trusted the noble Lord would give attention to the matter, for at present the system adopted seemed very much like the misappropriation of public money. He (Mr. Gray) wished to know whether the Government would take measures to get the statements made in the Courts at the first sittings by the Land Commissioners printed and circulated amongst hon. Members? The statements, or judgments, had been published—not officially; but semi-officially, because they had been sent out by the official reporters to the Court. A difficulty had been raised in the way of placing important judgments of the Land Commissioners on the Table of the House. It was said that there was no copy of them kept by the Commissioners; but that difficulty could be easily got over if the Government wished to get over it. Very nearly every Irish newspaper had given verbatim reports of the judgments; and if these judgments themselves could not be procured the Government might print and circulate the reports.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he could not see why the Government should cut a report from a newspaper, print, and circulate it. They could not pledge themselves to the accuracy of such things, because those hon. Members who were interested in the matter would probably have read the accounts of the judgments which appeared in the newspapers. It would be establishing an extraordinary precedent if they were to lay on the Table of the House an extract from a newspaper for the correctness of which they could not vouch.

MR. GRAY asked, whether he understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that there was no way in which the judgments in question could be laid on the Table, printed, and circulated?

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he understood the hon. Member to say he had seen the report of the judgments in the newspapers. No doubt, other hon. Members who were interested in the matter had done the same. With regard to Mr. Bomford, to whom the hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) had referred, he thought the hon. Member was mistaken, and that Mr. Bomford really had no connection with the county named. He (Mr. Forster) was anxious, and the Commissioners were also anxious, that no Sub-Commissioner should be employed in a county in which he was in any way interested. He hoped this anxiety would operate in the minds of the Commissioners when they proceeded to re-cast the districts.

MR. SEXTON said, his sole desire in making the Motion was to secure that the public money spent in advertisements should not be thrown away. The fullness and cordiality of the explanation which had been given by the Government gave him the hope that their assurance was something more than formal; therefore, he begged to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

MR. LEA said, he would give Notice that he would, on another occasion, take the liberty of doing what he had intended doing to-night—namely, show that the statement made last night by the hon. Member for the City of Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) with regard to one of the Sub-Commissioners, Mr. M. Cunningham, was founded on an inaccuracy.

MR. BYRNE said, he wished to enter his protest against the manner in which these advertisements had been given away. He did not think there was much English money lent on land in Ireland, although there was a good deal lent to Corporations; still he did not object to the advertisements being given to *The Times.* He did not object to their going to *The Scotsman,* because there was, no doubt, a great deal of Scotch money lent on Irish land; but he did object to these advertisements being given to the Dublin *General Advertiser,* which was not a newspaper at all, and did not contain a single line of news. The *General Advertiser* was never used by people advertising goods, nobody ever bought it, and it was scarcely ever read. With regard to Land Court procedure, he should like to ask the Attorney General for Ireland whether the acreage was taken from the Ordnance, which had all the roads in a county in it? He wished to know whether the farmers were charged for half the roads of the counties?

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution *agreed to.*

TURNPIKE ROADS (SOUTH WALES) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. DODSON, Bill to further amend the Law relating to Turnpike Roads in South Wales, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. DODSON and Mr. HIBBERT.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 101.]

House adjourned at a quarter before Three o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 13*th March,* 1882.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Royal Assent*—Consolidated Fund (No. 1) [45 *Vict.* c. 1]; Post Cards (Reply) [45 *Vict.* c. 2].

SOUTH AFRICA—BASUTOLAND.

QUESTION.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON, referring to the Papers recently laid on the Table with reference to South Africa, said, that in a despatch dated the 9th of December there was something which apparently required explanation, allusions being made to expressed opinions of Sir Hercules Robinson which did not therein occur, and he should be glad if the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies could give it?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY, in reply, said, the fact of the matter was that the words at the end of the despatch referred to a confidential communication which could not be included in the Papers. The whole, however, need not have been omitted, and he would read an extract from it which might be given, and which conveyed the views of Sir Hercules Robinson, and he would afterwards lay it on the Table. Sir Hercules Robinson said—

> "If Her Majesty's Government feel a difficulty in promising beforehand that they will not, under any circumstances, interfere, I would advise that, instead of a direct answer to the inquiry, Ministers be informed as follows:—'That, whatever have been the views of Her Majesty's Government as to the origin of the war, they look upon the award accepted by both sides and approved of by Her Majesty's Government as a fresh starting point, and that, if the Colonial Government finds it necessary to proceed to extreme measures with Masupha to enforce the award, the colony may rely on the moral support, and, if need be, the assistance of the Imperial Government in securing for the loyals fullest measures of justice.' I think it possible that, if Masupha found either that the colony was free to deal with him as it pleased, or that it had the countenance and support of the Imperial Government in insisting upon the rights of loyals being respected, he would give in. The belief that the Colonial and Imperial Governments are not in accord upon the matter is, I imagine, in a great measure at the bottom of the difficulty."—(Date, December 30, 1881.)

He would take that opportunity of reading a telegram he had received that morning upon the subject of the disturbances on the North-western Frontier. In answer to an inquiry, Sir Hercules Robinson telegraphed—

> "12th. Yours, 11th. On the 27th of February Rutherford, in the absence of Hudson, reported as follows:—'General Joubert, with 60 mounted police, left some days ago to coerce Skalafyn, a Caffre chief residing within Transvaal territory on the Western border, who had given trouble and raised wall defences. Meanwhile, Skalafyn had come to Pretoria by another route and given explanation to the Government which had led to instructions being sent after Joubert to stay proceedings, subject to Skalafyn paying expenses of expedition, which he had promised to do. There had been extensive commandeering in Potchefstroom, and a large number had left the district to follow Joubert; but it is understood all will be recalled.' On the 6th of March Rutherford reported having received on the 3rd a letter from Government, stating that affairs on the West border continued unchanged; within Transvaal line all quiet, but outside, daily fighting and bloodshed, and Government apprehend conflict will extend and last long."

The telegram also contained some observations on the possible mode of dealing with the difficulty which it would be premature to mention at present; but he might state that Sir Hercules Robinson added, on his own part, that the Transvaal Government seemed doing what they could to maintain the neutrality of their territory.

The Earl of Kimberley

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: Was the expedition inside or outside the Transvaal Frontier?

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY said, he did not apprehend there was any "Transvaal expedition;" but there had been a demonstration made against a Native Chief within the Transvaal Frontier. This, he imagined, had given rise to the statement that large commandeering had taken place, which meant, of course, an official assembling of troops.

BRITISH NORTH BORNEO COMPANY (CHARTER).—OBSERVATIONS.

LORD LAMINGTON, on rising to call the attention of the House to the Royal Charter granted on 8th November 1881 to the Company calling itself the North British Borneo Company, said, that if he did not hold in his hand *The London Gazette* of the 8th of November, 1881, he should scarcely venture to bring this question forward, lest their Lordships should think him the victim of some deception, or endeavouring to mislead their Lordships. They were all aware that the East was the land of adventure—that there individuals rose suddenly from obscurity to the summits of fortune; but this *Gazette* contained the history of a change almost without parallel. He read there how a merchant in China, of a house long enjoying the greatest commercial repute, but of no political importance, suddenly emerged from his obscurity to become practically a Sovereign Prince of a country on the North Coast of Borneo, containing about 30,000 square miles, with a seaboard of 500 miles, and a jurisdiction extending over three leagues from the shore, together with all the adjacent islands. Indeed, as it was well observed, "this *Gazette* almost took their breath away." The history of this transaction was this:—It seemed that in 1865 an American trading Company obtained from the Sultan of Borneo a 10 years' lease of this same territory. In 1875, when this lease was about to expire, Mr. Alfred Dent, of the eminent Chinese house of Messrs. Dent and Co., who had from time to time visited Borneo, thought it was a favourable moment to oust the American Company, and, at the cost of a large annual tribute, to purchase the whole territory. It was a bold idea, and it succeeded. There were no less than three different grants from the Sultans of Brunei and Sulu, and a fourth by the Prime Minister, the Pangeran Tumongong. For the terms of these grants and the extraordinary powers they conferred on Mr. Alfred Dent, he would now refer to *The Gazette*. The Petition stated—

"That on the 29th day of December, 1877, the Sultan of Brunei, in the island of Borneo, made and issued to the petitioner, Alfred Dent and another, or one of them, three several grants of territories, lands, and islands therein mentioned, and a commission. And whereas the said Petition further states that by the first of the grants aforesaid the Sultan of Brunei granted to the grantees, co-jointly, their heirs and associates, successors, or assigns, all the territory and land belonging to the Sultan on the West Coast of Borneo, comprising Gaya Bay from Gaya Head to Loutut Point, including Sapangar Bay, and Gaya Bay, and Sapangar Island, and Gaya Island, and all the other islands within the limits of the harbour and within three marine leagues of the coast, likewise the province and territory of Pappar adjoining the province of Benoni, and belonging to the Sultan as his private property. . . . . By the second of the grants aforesaid, the Sultan of Brunei granted to the grantees co-jointly, their heirs, associates, successors, or assigns, all the territories belonging to the Sultan from the Sulaman River, on the North-West Coast of Borneo, unto the River Paitan, on the North-East Coast of the island, containing 21 States, together with the island of Banguey, and all the other islands within three marine leagues of the coast, for their own exclusive uses and purposes."

The grant then went on to provide that the grantees should pay the Sultan, his heirs, and successors, the sum of $6,000 per annum. Further—

"By the third of the grants aforesaid, the Sultan of Brunei granted to the grantees, their heirs, associates, successors, or assigns, all the following territories belonging to the kingdom of Brunei, and comprising the States of Paitan, Sugut, Bangaya, Labuk, Sandakan, Kina, Batangan, Mumiang, and all the territories as far as the Sibuco River, with all the islands within three leagues of the coast belonging thereto, for their own exclusive and absolute uses and purposes; and in consideration of that grant the grantees promised to pay co-jointly and severally as compensation the sum of 2,000 dollars per annum."

It was further declared—

"That the Sultan had nominated and appointed, and thereby did nominate and appoint, the same grantee supreme ruler of the above-named territories, with the title of Maharajah of Sabah (North Borneo) and Rajah of Gaya and Sandakan, with power of life and death over the inhabitants, with all the absolute rights of property vested in the Sultan over the soil of the country, and the right to dispose of the same, as well as the rights over the productions of the country, whether mineral, vegetable, or animal, with the rights of making laws, coining money, creating an army and navy, levying customs rates on home and foreign trade, and shipping and other dues and taxes on the inhabitants, as to him might seem good or expedient, together with all other powers and rights usually exercised by and belonging to sovereign rulers, and which the Sultan thereby delegated to him of his own free will."

It was also stated in the Petition that by the grant—

"The Sultan called upon all foreign nations with whom he had formed friendly treaties or alliances, and he commanded all the datoos, nobles, governors, chiefs, and people owing allegiance to him in the said territories, to receive and acknowledge the said Datu Bandahara as supreme ruler over the said States, and to obey his commands and respect his authority therein as the Sultan's own; and in case of the death or retirement from office of the said Datu Bandahara, then his duly-appointed successor in the office of supreme ruler and governor-in-chief of the Company's territories in Borneo should likewise, if appointed thereto by the Company, succeed to the title of Datu Bandahara and Rajah of Sandakan and all the powers above enumerated be vested in him."

They now arrived at the second act of this drama. Mr. Alfred Dent, as they saw, awoke one morning to find himself a Sovereign Prince; but he was soon oppressed by his own greatness, and resolved that others should share his honours and responsibilities, so he founded a Company called the North British Borneo Company, and consisting of the following names:—Sir Rutherford Alcock, K.C.B., Richard Biddulph Martin, M.P., Richard Charles Mayne, C.B., and William Henry Macleod Read. The 1st clause of this Company's articles of association was the most remarkable, and required much explanation—

"To purchase from Alfred Dent, his interests and powers in, over, and affecting territories, lands, and property in Borneo, and Islands lying near thereto, including Labuan."

Did the noble Lord the Secretary of State for the Colonies know that sovereign power of life and death in Labuan as well as Borneo was conceded? And this brought him (Lord Lamington) to the third act of this Eastern transformation play, when a Royal Charter was granted to the Company. Before, however, he touched on the terms of that Charter, he wished to recite to their Lordships what was the position of the island of Borneo. The earliest settlers were the Dutch and

Portuguese; but Spain also had claims of territory; and for the last 40 years this country had had an interest in the island by the cession of Labuan to Great Britain, and of Sarawak to Sir James Brooke, who first planted the British flag in Borneo. He was one of those men, like the adventurers of old, who dared much, not for personal objects, but in the spirit of Sir Stamford Raffles; there was no more interesting study than the history of the early struggles of Sir James Brooke; but not only did he fail to receive any Royal Charter, but he was the victim of cruel persecutions, and the chief charge made against him by Mr. Hume and others was, that his was a commercial enterprize, whereas, on the contrary, all commercial interests were subordinate to those of civilization; and, although his great and good work had been carried on so successfully by his nephew, the present Rajah, the slight support he received from the Government by the presence of a British Consul at Sarawak had, he understood, been withdrawn within the last few years. And now, as to this Charter, he thought their Lordships would be startled at the magnitude of the concessions made by it. In some respects it exceeded the conditions granted to the East India Company. The only similar charter was that given to William Paterson, of the Isthmus of Darien Company, and the result was certainly not encouraging; and in the same way, the present concession might prove to be most disastrous. He thought that the Government would be glad of the opportunity of more clearly defining the powers of the Company. He turned again to *The Gazette*—

> "Transfer to Company of Grants and Commissions.—1. The said British North Borneo Company (in this our Charter referred to as the Company) is hereby authorized and empowered to acquire by purchase or other lawful means from the British North Borneo Provisional Association (Limited), the full benefit of the several grants and commissions aforesaid, or any of them, as the same is vested in that association, and all interests and powers of that association thereunder, and all interests and powers vested in that association in, over, or affecting the territories, lands, and property comprised in those several grants or in, over, or affecting any territories, lands, or property in Borneo, or in any island lying near thereto, including Labuan, and to hold, use, enjoy, and exercise the same for the purposes and on the terms of this, our Charter."

The General Powers vested in the Company comprised authority—

> "To acquire and take by purchase, cession, or other lawful means, other interests or powers in, over, or affecting the territories, lands, or property comprised in the several grants aforesaid, or any interests, or powers whatever in, over, or affecting other territories, lands, or property in the region aforesaid; and to hold, use, enjoy, and exercise the same for the purposes and on the terms of this our Charter.
>
> "To farm out for revenue purposes the right to sell in the Company's territories spirits, tobacco, opium, salt, or other commodities.
>
> "To take and hold, without licence in mortmain or other authority than this our Charter, messuages and hereditaments in England and in any of our Colonies or Possessions and elsewhere, convenient for carrying on the management of the affairs of the Company, and to dispose from time to time of any such messuages and hereditaments when not required for that purpose.
>
> "To do all lawful things incidental or conducive to the exercise or enjoyment of the authorities and powers of the Company in this our Charter expressed or referred to or any of them."

It seemed to him that the Charter being a voluntary grant, the Government might at least have insisted on more favourable conditions in the Charter. He suggested that it might not yet be too late to do so by means of a supplementary agreement. He would touch very lightly on our relations with foreign Powers, especially Holland and Spain, for all his information was derived from foreign papers. He therefore would not refer to the possibility of any foreign complications, which he hoped would not arise. He had already stated that since 1521 Spain had claimed the Sulu Archipelago, and he saw *The Liberal* asserted that the Sultan was a vassal of Spain, and in the Chamber, the Minister said that Spain had protested against the English occupation of Borneo, and that no country had rights on the Northern Coast superior to Spain. He had no fault to find with the Government in the matter. One of the accusations brought against the late Government was that it was too ambitious, and involved the country in new responsibilities; but he was pleased to see that some part of Lord Beaconsfield's mantle had fallen on noble Lords opposite, and that, to some extent, they might be congratulated on the fact that they were also developing an Imperial policy—only instead of a new Cyprus we had a new Borneo, and an interest in North Borneo instead of Suez Canal shares. He concluded we should now hear no more of the cession of Colonies and the sacrifice of dominion; but he thought, however much we might approve of an Imperial policy, we might ask whether the Government had fully considered the complications which might arise from granting a commercial Company a Charter, the most extensive in its powers that was ever granted by the Crown?

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, although I think the noble Lord opposite (Lord Lamington) might have waited until the Papers on the question were laid on the Table to-morrow or Wednesday, I do not complain that the matter has been brought forward now, particularly in the vein of cheerful pleasantry which the noble Lord has adopted. I am glad the noble Lord has given me an opportunity to make some observations in explanation of a subject about which there appears to have been some misconception and some exaggerated alarm. Borneo is, as your Lordships are well aware, one of the largest, if not the largest, island in the world, if Australia be properly described as a continent. Borneo has vast national resources, and abounds in mineral and vegetable riches. It has long been a subject of jealous observation between this country, the Dutch, the Spaniards, and the Portuguese, and has been colonized partially by each of those Powers. In fact, the East India Company had Treaties regarding Borneo in the last century. Since the Peace of 1814, however, the English and Dutch have alone maintained establishments there. But for more than 60 years diplomatic communications have been going on in regard to it. It is not necessary for me to describe them in detail. It is sufficient to state that under successive Governments the British contentions have been of a perfectly consistent character. During that time the Dutch have made immense acquisitions, not only in the islands south of the Straits of Singapore, but also in the South of Borneo. The claims of Spain, as lately developed, would, if they had been verified, have placed the whole of the islands of the Eastern Archipelago, extending 2,000 miles in one direction, and 2,500 in another, with the exception of the land lying on the track of our immense trade with China and Australia, the Straits Settlements, Labuan and Sarawak, entirely in the power of those two nations, with both of whom we desire to be on the most friendly terms, but whose commercial arrangements are far from being as liberal as our own. It was under those circumstances that my noble Friend (the Earl of Derby), when he was Foreign Secretary, considered it to be his duty to take a firm stand as to the claim of Spain. Some communications followed, and they were spread over considerable time, and, in 1877, a Protocol was signed by which England and Germany agreed with Spain as to a *modus vivendi*, securing the freedom of navigation and commerce to this country in the Sulu Archipelago, but without an acknowledgment of Spanish sovereignty. Subsequently, however, to this Protocol, England and Germany thought they had reason to complain of acts which appeared to them entirely in discord with its provisions, and which showed that the Spaniards intended to occupy portions of North Borneo. The Dutch, on the other hand, made new claims, being alarmed by concessions which had been made by the Sultan of Borneo and of Sulu to Mr. Dent, who, on his part, in 1878, applied to Her Majesty's Government for a Charter of Incorporation. The noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury), the then Foreign Secretary, also held firm language to the Spanish Government, repudiating their claim to any portion of North Borneo, stating that the claim of the British Government was a stronger one, if the independence of the Sultan was to terminate in favour of any European country. He held language equally firm to Holland. Germany concurred in these views. Mr. Dent again pressed for a decision on his application for a Charter, which, during the preceding two years, had not been unfavourably received by the noble Marquess, who, I think, with propriety, considered that it was matter to be finally decided by the incoming instead of the outgoing Administration. The problem left to us was not an easy one to decide. The noble Lord opposite (Lord Lamington) has said there has been a great change of policy on the part of the Government, and he called it an Imperial policy. Now, no one feels stronger than I do with regard to the great responsibility which there must be in reference to the government of the island of Borneo. It is not necessary for me to say that Her Majesty's present Government are also deeply impressed with the enormous responsibilities which weigh upon this small island, and the undesirability of recklessly increasing these responsibilities without sufficient cause. But this is not a reason why we should obstinately refuse to consider, on its own merits, any case which may arise. If a case should present itself which promises great advantages to our political and commercial interests, with an absence of reasonable ground for apprehending military or financial burdens, it would be the act of doctrinaires, and not of statesmen, to refuse to go into an examination of such a case. There seemed to be three courses open to us—either ourselves to annex this vast territory; to leave it to Mr. Dent and the important Company which he represented to make the best of the concession which had been granted to them—in other words, we might have left things to take their own course—or to leave the whole country to its almost inevitable absorption by foreign nations. There were grave objections to the first and third courses that did not appear to apply to the second. We learned not only from Mr. Dent, but from the concurrent reports of our Consular and of our naval authorities, the most satisfactory account of the progress, the development, and the civilization of the country under the Company. Order prevailed, Englishmen have been cordially received, and the authority of the Resident was everywhere acknowledged. It is a country which, from its climate, is not fitted for European labour; but it has a population, and may receive other immigrants, who, under the honest and intelligent supervision of Europeans, may produce great results. Mr. Dent had his concession and could act under it. The Royal Charter had no legal effect, except to give the Company incorporation. But it was possible for it to get incorporated under the Companies Acts. I have heard it said that it is unconstitutional to have conferred this Charter without consulting Parliament. That objection has certainly not presented itself either to the Foreign Office, to the Council Office, or to the Colonial Office, to the Cabinet, to the learned Lord on the Woolsack, or to the Law Officers, and for the simple reason that the Charter, in this instance, contained no powers beyond those which Mr. Dent and his partners might have procured by simply putting themselves under the Companies Act. Your Lordships know that in some of our Colonies —New Zealand, for instance—there are large Companies which possess extensive territories, and the Charter obtained by Mr. Dent does not go beyond those obtained by those Companies. The Royal Charter gives no additional powers to the Company. It is of a restrictive character. We obtain a negative control over the Company with regard to their general treatment of the Natives and to their dealings with foreign Powers. We incur no obligation to give them military assistance, except that which we give to all Englishmen engaged in trade in uncivilized countries. The noble Lord complains that our position and that of the Company is not sufficiently defined with regard to this Charter—that our duties and obligations are vague. I must join issue with the noble Lord. The advice of the Law Officers was sought for in the drafting of the Charter, and their attention particularly drawn to the salient points. As to military protection expected or hoped for by the Company, they have distinctly stated that the Charter would entail no responsibility upon Her Majesty's Government for the protection of the country, beyond that which is inseparable from the nationality of those engaged in developing its resources. Her Majesty's Government are advised that they are not pledged by the Charter to afford any greater amount of protection or support to the Company than would be extended to it if it were simply incorporated under the Companies Act. More than this, the Company have stated, they do not expect or hope for under the Charter. In the case of the Hudson's Bay Company and the New Zealand Companies, the Crown had dominion over the respective countries. That fact alone entailed the duty of providing for their military defence. In the present case, there is no dominion over North Borneo from which such an obligation can flow. The granting this Charter does not vest in Her Majesty any Sovereignty over the territory, which remains under the suzerainty of the Sultan, although he has delegated the administrative power to the Association. The grant of the Charter has moral advantages for the Company, but legally it does nothing for it except turn it into a body corporate with perpetual succession. On the other hand, it imposes considerable restrictions upon the Association. It establishes a control over them which would not have existed if they had incorporated themselves under the Companies Act. But this control is of a negative character. It was first proposed to follow the precedent of the Eastern Archipelago Company, and to provide that the Company should obey the directions of the Secretary of State. But we decided that the power should be confined to a power of objection and dissent in matters affecting foreign Powers and the treatmentof the Natives—confined, in fact, to certain limited matters in which the conduct of the Company might conflict with the views and policy of the Government, or with public opinion in this country. But this negative power is strong, and any disregard of the objections of the Government entails the possible cancelment of the Charter. I trust that this controlling power will not be called into effect; but its existence is most important. With regard to an objection raised by the noble Lord as to Mr. Dent being connected with the opium trade, the great China opium firm of Dent and Co. wound up its affairs more than 10 years ago, and this Mr. Dent never belonged to it. Opium would have been grown by the Natives under this Association whether a Charter had been granted or not. A monopoly can alone restrain the abuse of it, excepting by a total and sudden prohibition, which would cause the greatest resistance on the part of the Natives. This monopoly has been found necessary at Hong Kong and Singapore. I am bound to say that one of the greatest objections which have been brought forward against the grant of this Charter is that complications might arise with other Powers. I am inclined to believe that the delay in granting the Charter on the part of the late Government was principally caused by this difficulty. It was one of considerable weight; but I am happy to say that the final result will be rather an avoidance of these difficulties than any increase of them. Germany has formally stated that she has no objection to raise to the course which we have pursued. Both Spain and Holland entered protests. Your Lordships will see by the Correspondence that the question was fully argued with Holland, and that the Dutch Minister made a statement in the Chambers which I felt it my duty to acknowledge as being of a very statesmanlike and friendly character. The Correpondence has ended entirely in that tone, and also with an assurance from Holland that the incident may be considered as finally closed. The Spanish Government took up the subject warmly; but in the last discussion in their Parliament they announced their intention of treating the matter as an accomplished fact. Since then we have discussed a further arrangement by which we should acknowledge the sovereignty of Spain over Sulu, subject to provisions of perfect liberty to our trade and navigation, while they would withdraw all claim to sovereignty in North Borneo, and the matter will thus, I have every reason to believe, be closed in a way perfectly satisfactory to Germany, Spain, and ourselves. Borneo is a most valuable and important part of the world. Though its climate is such as to prevent the use of European labour, it is well adapted to labour of a different sort; and if the resources of the country are developed under the honest and intelligent supervision of a certain number of Europeans, I believe that great results may be achieved, while no additional burden, either military or financial, will be thrown upon this country.

The Earl of CARNARVON said, he thought the House was under an obligation to his noble Friend behind him (Lord Lamington) for having brought the question forward, as it was an important one and might be still more so in the future. But the discussion must be carried on under disadvantageous conditions, as there were no Papers upon which to found an opinion. Still the House could not have failed to hear with interest the statement of the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville) with regard to the position taken up by different foreign countries in connection with this matter, and they would be able to reserve their judgment until the Papers were before them. As he (the Earl of Carnarvon) understood the question, there were really four parties to be considered, but of two of these the statement of the noble Earl disposed. The parties to whom he referred were Holland, Spain, and the Sultans of Sulu and Brunei. The annexations which Holland had made in the last 30 or 40 years were simply enormous. They stretched 2,000 miles in one direction and still further in another. It was impossible not to remember that Holland had not shown, and, indeed, did not possess, the power to make use of the territory she had acquired. Though he said this, he certainly bore Holland no ill-will, and considered her an excellent neighbour in that part of the world. He had no wish that she should lose her possessions there, or that her power should be curtailed. It would, on the other hand, show a very ill-founded and mistaken notion of her own interests if she were to indulge in any jealousy of England. She was a very reasonable neighbour to us, and we, in our turn, were very good neighbours to her. He was very glad to hear that Spain had practically confined herself to a formal protest against the proposed step. He could not conceive how Spain could have even the smallest possible case in such a matter as that which was under their consideration. There was a difference between the position of the Spanish nation and the Spanish Government, and he therefore drew a distinction between the action of individual captains in the Spanish Navy and the intentions of the Spanish Government. The interference with freedom of trade by Spanish cruisers in Eastern waters had been sometimes simply intolerable. He would not say that it had been authorized by the Spanish Government. Mention had been made by the noble Earl opposite of the joint action of Germany with ourselves in that matter. He (the Earl of Carnarvon) had heard that statement with pleasure, for it was very desirable that there should be co-operation among Powers in that part of the world. He thought the Government might well take advantage of the recent interchange of amicable communications between Spain and this country, to ask whether the Spanish Government would consent to a demarcation of territorial rights? He believed that some understanding had been come to on the subject in 1877 and 1878, and he should like to know how far it had been carried out? He maintained that it would be desirable to place the matter upon a less shifting basis than that which it occupied at present. With regard to the position of the Sultan of Brunei, he would point out that the Sultan was already actually under a Treaty obligation not to alienate territory without the consent of the British Government; and so far from objecting to this country, he desired to see all the accessories of English Government established in his territory, believing that he would be a gainer to a large extent. He (the Earl of Carnarvon) would go so far as to say this, that it would have been not only disastrous to the Natives and the population in that part of the world, but a source of great inconvenience and risk to ourselves if any other conntry than England had been lodged in the North-eastern part of Borneo, and there could be no doubt that if we had not established our position there, some other European Power would. It was very desirable that they should see the Papers that were promised, and he was convinced the more closely they looked into this matter the more satisfied they would be, and the more highly they would appreciate the advantages gained by this country under the Charter. Risks and responsibilities should not be lightly incurred, and he quite agreed with the noble Earl opposite that the matter should be judged on its own merits; but, on the other hand, it was very important that this country should recognize what an enormous stake it had in the trade that passed through these waters. The trade from the West between England and China was simply vast; but there was also the trade growing up between China and Australia, which was very considerable. There could be no doubt that their position in the North-east of Borneo, whether looked at as a matter of peace or of war, was of very great consequence. He could not, of course, speak with the same authority as the noble Earl; but he believed the result of this settlement had been extremely advantageous already. Great improvements had been made, piracy had diminished, murders and other crimes had been reduced, kidnapping had been brought almost to an end, human sacrifices had disappeared, and there was a general indication of prosperity. No force had been used; on the contrary, taxes had been imposed, and assented to without any remonstrance on the part of the Natives. He had more than once had to question the policy of the Colonial Government; but in this particular case, he could do nothing but congratulate them on the policy they had adopted, and as one who had held the Office of Colonial Secretary, he gave them his cordial support in the matter. With regard to the powers granted to the Company, what the noble Earl said about the Charter was quite true. The Company might have gone elsewhere, or it might have registered itself under the Joint Stock Companies Act; but so far as the Charter went it really granted no new powers to the Company; it recognized the status of the Company under the Sultans of Sulu and Bornei, and it imposed restrictions, so that the Company would not be able to abuse those powers if if it were disposed to do so. Objections had been raised, especially with respect to the monopoly in opium; but that was no new complaint, and the fact that the monopoly existed would tend rather to diminish than to increase its general consumption. Besides, a higher tax was imposed by the Company upon opium; and there was no danger in the direction pointed out by his noble Friend. Objection had also been raised with respect to the extensive powers granted to the Company; but if there was to be any government worthy of the name, they could hardly give much less power than that obtained by the Company under the Charter; and it did not appear that the Company had ever used their powers improperly, or diversely from the wishes of the Government, or interests of the country. In his opinion there was a very good defence for the course which had been taken, and it would place the island very much in the position in which it was when governed by Governor Brooke, if we had allowed it to drop into the hands of some barbarous Chief. He did not see how the Government could have acted otherwise than they had done, and he believed they had taken the only course open to them. They would have done a great wrong if they had allowed this territory to pass into the hands of any foreign State. He believed that the possession would be a valuable one both in peace and war, and as such he welcomed its acquisition.

LORD ELPHINSTONE said, he concurred with the noble Earl (the Earl of Carnarvon) in thinking that the Government had taken the proper course in this matter. It was a curious thing that some years ago, when the late Mr. Hume was quoting the testimony of Mr. Burn, the captain of a small trading schooner, as to the non-existence of piracy in Borneo, that gentleman was having his head cut off by some of the very men he maintained had no existence; and the ship to which he (Lord Elphinstone) belonged was sent to avenge his death. The chief pirate afterwards unhesitatingly avowed that had not the most of his men been away on a piratical expedition not a man of his (Lord Elphinstone's) party would have been allowed to return to their ship alive. There was a vast contrast between the state of that country in 1851 and 1881. When he visited it at the former date the country was then in a very lawless state. Piracy was openly acknowledged. To show what North Borneo was at present, he desired to read to the House a few brief extracts from the letters of a gentleman who was well known in North Borneo. Mr. Prior, writing from that country in February, 1881, said he was well satisfied to find that the bare knowledge of an Englishman's presence in the country had sufficed to put a stop to sacrifices and to the cruelties practised in the collection of customs; but, he added, much yet remained to be done. Writing in June, 1881, he stated that when he arrived in the country crime was simply rampant, robbery was rife, and there was no security either for life or property. In so short a time as two years all this had changed. There was a brisk trade doing, two steamers called regularly every month, and crime had almost disappeared. This was the testimony of a gentleman well worthy of the attention of their Lordships. Some years' experience had taught him of the great advantage, geographically and commercially, which the possession of Borneo would confer, for the splendid position of the country and its spacious harbours were well known to the House. Its commercial products resembled those of Ceylon, the latitude of both places being approximately the same, and coffee, the cocoa bean, and sago were very generally grown. The country showed every sign of still further development; and he congratulated the Government upon the course they had pursued in not refusing the Company's request for a Charter.

The Earl of KIMBERLEY said, he had extremely little to add to the discussion their Lordships had already listened to. One or two points raised by the noble Lord opposite (Lord Lamington) seemed to require some answer from him. The noble Lord appeared to consider that the Company's Charter contained a clause enabling them to interfere in the Colony of Labuan. The clause in question gave the Company no particular rights whatever. All that the Charter said was that they might have power to purchase lands and property in Labuan, in precisely he same manner as in any other island in the neighbourhood. He need not have said anything about the concession with respect to the opium traffic, if it were not that some extraordinary opinions appeared to prevail on the subject of opium farming. The provision in the Company's Charter merely enabled them to farm out revenue obtained in the usual way from the sale of opium. Farming the tax did not mean a monopoly of growing opium; but by means of farming out the tax the Company would be able to control the opium trade. Similar farms of taxes on opium had existed for many years in Hong Kong, the Straits Settlements, and Labuan; and he never heard of any objection being made to them. With regard to the general question and the alleged impolicy of interfering in the affairs of Borneo, and looking to what was going on in that part of the world, it was only a question of time as to whether some control should be exercised by England or by a foreign Power over this part of Borneo. He could not too strongly assure the House that the Government were opposed to any plan which would enlarge the responsibilities and the charges at present imposed upon this country. But each case must be considered in reference to its own particular circumstances; and the territory in question was peculiarly situated. Its position was a very central one; it might be said to be in a manner derelict, as the Native Sultans exercised very little authority there, and, sooner or later, in all probability sooner rather than later, some foreign Power must intervene. He thought that anybody who had studied all the relations which existed between the different States, both Native and European, in that quarter of the world, must have seen that the only natural conclusion was that this country should undertake this amount of responsibility. It was not the first time that we had interfered in the affairs of Borneo; and we were only now following the line of action which had formerly been pursued. We had entered into a Treaty with the Sultan of Brunei more than 30 years ago, and the policy Her Majesty's Government were now acting upon was a policy which they had pursued for a very long period. With respect to the Dutch possessions in that part of the world, he did not think that it would be contended by anyone that we were under any obligation to the Dutch not to interfere. Our relations with them were regulated by the Treaty of 1825, and he saw no reason why we should not always be good friends with them. He thought that the Dutch, who had in recent years made such great additions to their territories in this quarter, might reasonably acquiesce in the extension of our power. He believed that they were satisfied that we had not taken these steps in hostility or dislike to them—on the contrary, that those we had taken were in their interest as well as our own, and that we should work together in perfect harmony in the exercise of our respective influence in that country. He thought that there was no probability of a recurrence of the disputes which had from time to time arisen between the English and Dutch in that part of the world. Our interest there was peaceful trade and commerce; and he reminded the House that it was probable that conflicts and disturbances would be the result of the introduction of any new power into the Island. As to Spain, as his noble Friend had said, the Government had taken the same view on this question as that taken by their Predecessors—they did not admit in any way that the Spaniards had any rights on the mainland of Borneo; but he was happy to say there was a prospect that all disputes would come to an end in that quarter by the demarcation of a distinct line of boundary. The course taken by the Government was perfectly consistent with the policy which they had followed throughout the world—namely, a policy of promoting peace and tranquillity, instead of increasing the dangers and burdens, already so great, which this country had incurred.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Lord ORANMORE and BROWNE rose to call the attention of the House, to report in "Times" of 6th instant, of Mr. Justice Field's statement in Queen's Bench (County Court Appeals),

> "That it was essential to the exercise of the right of appeal that the judge should take notes of the evidence, and state the facts proved and the points decided clearly and distinctly, so as to enable the Court to understand them;"

and to ask Her Majesty's Government, whether justice does not require that the commissioners and sub-commissioners under the Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881, should be guided by the same rules as are laid down by the learned judge for the guidance of county court judges in England? The noble Lord said, he only hoped that the principles enunciated from the Treasury Bench that evening would be carried out nearer home. He wished the Government could only find out some of those able men such as were connected with the North Borneo Company, who seemed to have ability to charm away crime in that savage country, and send them to Ireland. The remarks of Mr. Justice Field appeared to be so peculiarly applicable to many of the appeals which were being made from the Sub-Commissioners to the Commissioners under the Land Act, and also to appeals taken from the latter tribunal to the Court of Appeal, that he should be glad to hear from Her Majesty's Government an intimation of their willingness to call the attention of the Commissioners to the declaration of the learned Judge he had quoted from, with the object of securing to Irishmen interested in landed property the same principles which were applied in England, and without which the right of appeal given under the Land Act would become null and void. It was plain that as many of the Sub-Commissioners were only appointed by the year, that the Government could influence, if not direct, them; and it was at least probable that the Commissioners would attend to suggestions from the Government that their Courts and the Courts of their deputies should be carried on under such rules as would enable the rights of appeal given under the Act to be available. The real point involved in the question was this—were Her Majesty's subjects in Ireland not only to live under laws entirely different from those which were enforced in Great Britain, but whether the laws themselves, exceptional and strange as they were, were to be administered by a new and untried tribunal in a manner so loose and uncontrolled as would not, according to the decision of an English Judge, be accepted in the administration of the law in this part of the United Kingdom?

Lord CARLINGFORD said, that when he saw the noble Lord's Question on the Paper he was rather surprised that such a Question should be put, and he wondered what the facts were which had caused him so much anxiety; but having inquired into the matter, he thought he should be able to relieve the noble Lord of the anxiety which he felt. On making inquiries, he found that the fact was, as regards the Sub-Commissioners, that the legal Commissioner took notes of the substance of the evidence given before him. He believed, however, that those notes, in cases of fixing fair rents, were not important elements in the decision of the Land Commission when an appeal was heard. The so-called appeals were, in the words of the Land Act, "re-hearings by the Land Commission," which heard the *vivâ voce* evidence fully, and employed its own valuer to value the land for its own purposes. The noble Lord would therefore see that the notes of the legal Commissioner were comparatively unimportant. But when a point of law was reserved by the Sub-Commission, the Land Commission was furnished with a full report of the facts and the evidence on which the question arose. The Land Commission itself, from which, of course, an appeal in the strict sense of the word, lay to the Court of Appeal in Ireland, always employed a shorthand writer, and all the evidence and the proceedings before them were taken down in full for the use of the Court of Appeal, if there should be an appeal; and when that was the state of the case the noble Lord would see that the admonition which he desired to give to the Land Courts in Ireland was quite unnecessary. No one could be more interested than the Land Commission itself in having appeals or re-hearings brought before it in a proper and convenient way, and they had no reason to complain in that respect of the proceedings of the Sub-Commissions. In appeals from the chief tribunal itself, the Court of Appeal before which the cases were taken was furnished with full means of considering the questions submitted to it.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE said, that in the only appeal which had been taken from the Land Commission to the Court of Appeal the facts were insufficiently explained, and the Court had a difficulty in arriving at any decision in consequence. In disposing of the appeals which had come from the Sub-Commission, Mr. Justice O'Hagan stated that it was only on points of law they were disposed to change the decisions of the tribunal, and that they could not go into details as to the value of the holdings.

LORD CARLINGFORD said, it was true that one of the Judges in the Court of Appeal did criticize the form in which the case of Adams *v.* Dunseath was brought before them; but he (Lord Carlingford) believed there was no reason to question the great pains taken by the Land Commission in bringing that case before the Appeal Court. The case of Adams *v.* Dunseath, as submitted to the Court of Appeal, was drawn up with the full consent and concurrence of the solicitors and counsel on both sides, and especially with the concurrence and to the satisfaction of the eminent counsel, Mr. Holmes, the Solicitor General for Ireland under the late Government, who raised the question on the part of the landlord.

CLAIMS OF PEERAGE, &c.

MOTION FOR PAPERS.

THE EARL OF GALLOWAY moved for Copies of the Scottish Acts of Parliament of 1567, entitled "Ratification of the Erledom of Mar," "Ratification of the Baronie of Blyth;" also for Copies of the Scottish Act of 1587 entitled "An Act in favour of the Erle of Mar," as well as all other Scottish Acts ratifying grants or *re*-grants of Peerages with lands under Royal Charter, with a view to their being translated into modern English for the use of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the state of the law respecting the claims and assumptions of titles of Peerages in Scotland, &c.; and, secondly, that the Act 10th and 11th Vict., chap. 52 (passed 25th June, 1847) in reference to "dormant or extinct" Peerages in Scotland, be reprinted with a view to the correction of a misprint in line 10 of the preamble on the first page, which recites erroneously the words of intitulation of the Act 6th Anne, chap. 23. The noble Earl said, that with regard to the first Motion, he had only to remind the House that they had been pleased to re-appoint the Select Committee of last year to inquire into the state of the law in respect of claims and assumptions of titles of Peerage in Scotland; and it was therefore advisable that that Committee should have at their command all the documentary evidence that could be obtained to aid them in their inquiries. The Scottish Acts of Parliament, ratifying Peerages with grants or re-grants of land already gifted by Royal Charter, were framed, however, in language which he feared would be hardly intelligible to the greater number of Peers appointed to serve on the Select Committee; and it was on this account that he now moved that they should be translated for their use into modern English. He had alluded to three special Acts, for the reason that he happened to be familiar with them; but he wished all other Scotch Acts of a similar nature to be included in his 1st Motion. As to the 2nd Resolution which stood in his name, he might relieve their Lordships' minds of one fear at once—namely, of its having any reference whatever to the controversial question of the Mar Peerage, and for this simple reason—that the Modern Act of 1847 he referred to had no bearing whatever upon any but "dormant or extinct" Peerages, which, of course, could not apply to the Mar Peerage, which, since its restoration by Act of Parliament in 1824, had certainly become neither dormant nor extinct. He thought it important to mention this, because the fact had evidently been lost sight of by the Committee, of which the ex-Lord Chancellor (Lord Cairns) had been Chairman, appointed in 1877 to report upon the question of the precedency of the Earldom of Mars. In 1847 a Committee of the House was appointed, on the Report of which the Act was subsequently passed, and that Report stated that in reference to the particular evil there complained of, there was no power in their Lordships' House to remedy it by a Resolution, but that it was necessary to proceed by Act of Parliament. An Act was accordingly passed, containing various provisions. But, in the Preamble of this Act of 1847, there were quoted the titles or general bearing of several previous Acts having reference to Scotch Peerages, and, amongst others, that to which his Motion specially referred—namely, 6 *Anne* c. 23. In this Preamble the phrase "regulating of votes" is cited as a part of the intitulation of this last-named Act. He had accordingly referred to this Act—6 *Anne* c. 23—to find out what "regulating of votes" its provisions enacted; and great was his astonishment to find that there was not a single provision of any kind whatsoever on the subject in any line from the beginning to the end of this Act. It was then that he looked carefully into the terms of intitulation of this Act, 6 *Anne* c. 23, and that he discovered that the phrase was "regulating of voters," instead of "regulating of votes," as cited in the Act of 1847. The "voters" thus referred to were the Peers assembled at Holyrood House to elect the 16 Representatives from their number; and the "regulating of voters" referred only to some enactments to guard against their each bringing beyond a certain number of retainers with them for fear of their being made use of to overawe the votes of any Peers present, for which the Peers guilty of such an offence were to be visited with the penalties of *praemunire*. This being the case, he thought it but right that the Act of 1847 should be reprinted, with the view of having the erroneous intitulation of 6 *Anne* c. 23 in the Preamble of the former properly corrected, which he begged now formally to move.

Moved, That there be laid before this House, Copies of the Scottish Acts of Parliament of 1567, entitled "Ratification of the Erledom of Mar," "Ratification of the Baronie of Blyth;" also Copies of the Scottish Act of 1587 entitled "An Act in favor of the Erle of Mar," as well as all other Scottish Acts ratifying grants or *re*-grants of Peerages with lands under Royal Charter, with a view to their being translated into modern English for the use of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the state of the law respecting the claims and assumptions of titles of Peerages in Scotland, &c.

That the Act 10th and 11th Vict., chap. LII. (52.) (passed 25th June 1847), in reference to "dormant or extinct" Peerages in Scotland, be re-printed with a view to the correction of a misprint in line 10 of the preamble on the first page, which recites erroneously the words of intitulation of the Act 6th Anne, chap. 23.—(*The Earl of Galloway.*)

THE LORD CHANCELLOR said, he had assented to the re-appointment of the Committee this Session; but he certainly did not anticipate, when he did so, that there would be interlocutory applications to the House as to matters which might or might not come under the consideration of the Committee. The Motion, in all its parts, seemed to him to be unprecedented and inexpedient. It was premature to judge what should be done to facilitate the working of the Committee before the Committee asked them to do so. The Committee could take cognizance of any Acts of Parliament, and it was inconsistent with their nature to lay them on the Table. If the Committee desired, it could multiply copies of the Scottish Acts, and if the noble Lords on the Committee were unable to translate any of the Acts into modern English, they could avail themselves of the services of an expert. That was quite within their competency. The latter part of the Motion was still more extraordinary. The noble Earl asked that an Act of 1847 should be laid on the Table with a view to the correction of a misprint, and the correction to be made was to put in "votes" instead of "voters." But the error—if it was an error—was in the original Parliament Bill of that Act, as it received the Royal Assent; if the Act were reprinted, it must be reprinted as it was passed, and not otherwise. An error could not be corrected by reproducing copies of it, and he was totally unable to understand what use there could be in doing so. For these reasons he could not advise their Lordships to accede to the Motion.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

House adjourned at Seven o'clock
till To-morrow, half past
Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 13*th March*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committe* —ARMY ESTIMATES.
Resolutions [March 10] *reported,*

PRIVATE BILLS (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Wimbledon, Merton, and West Metropolitan Junction Railway *.
Withdrawn—Harrow and Uxbridge Railway *.
PUBLIC BILLS — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Imprisonment for Debt * [102].
Second Reading—General Police and Improvement (Scotland) * [77].
Committee—Bills of Sale Act (1878) Amendment * [8]—R.P.

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

REGENT'S CANAL, CITY, AND DOCKS RAILWAY BILL.

Mr. Robertson and Mr. O'Donnell, two of the Tellers in the Division upon Tuesday last upon the Second Reading of the Regent's Canal, City, and Docks Railway Bill, came to the Table and acquainted the House that they had erroneously reported the number of Ayes as 254 instead of 244, which was the proper number corresponding with the Division List.

Ordered, That the Clerk do correct the said error in the Journal of this House by stating the number of Ayes as 244 instead of 254.

QUESTIONS.

NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—THE MODEL SCHOOLS.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the statement in paragraph 20 of the last Report of the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, namely, "The Results Examinations show that the Model Schools continue to maintain their high character," is to be understood as implying that the Model Schools show results superior to those of the best ordinary National Schools, say those examined for the Carlisle and Blake Premiums; whether he is able to give any statistics in support of the Commissioners' assertion; and, whether he can give the House any assurance that the Model Schools realise the "chief objects" for which, according to the Commissioners' Rules and Regulations, paragraph 37, they were founded, namely,

> "To promote united education, to exhibit to the surrounding schools the most improved methods of literary and scientific instruction, and to prepare young persons for the office of teacher,"

having regard to the present state of the attendance, and also to the fact that, during the year 1880, only eighty-five teachers were prepared by ninety-four Model School Departments?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the words quoted from paragraph 20 did not imply any comparison, nor was any intended. The statement was one of opinion, and did not require any statistics to support it. The Commissioners of National Education did their best to make the Model Schools realize the chief objects they were founded to promote.

THE NATIONAL EXHIBITION (IRELAND)—SUBSCRIPTION FOR SHARES.

MR. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that the prisoners detained, under the Coercion Act, in Monaghan Prison have been prevented from subscribing for shares in the National Exhibition Company, their letters making application having been detained by the authorities; and, if so, whether he has sanctioned such a proceeding?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, it was true that the collective applications of the prisoners referred to were stopped by the Governor, and, as he thought, rightly stopped; but, at the same time, they were informed that, individually, they might apply for any number of shares they desired.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. J. M. MURRAY.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, On what grounds John M. Murray is still retained in prison, he having been arrested over twelve months ago?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, there must be some mistake in this matter, as he could find no one of this name among those detained in prison.

MR. BIGGAR said, that the name should be John M'Murray; and he would ask the Question with the proper name on an early date.

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION—STAMPED AGREEMENTS.

MR. MACARTNEY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether he is aware that the officials of the Irish Land Commission decline to acknowledge the receipt by Post of stamped agreements entered into voluntarily by landlords and tenants in Ireland for the purpose of fixing a fair rent for fifteen years, and also refuse to give any acknowledgment of having received similar notices when left at the Land Commission Office; and, whether such refusal is sanctioned or directed by the Chief Land Commissioners; and, if so, upon what grounds? He also wished to know whether the demand made by the Stamp Office as to the scale of stamp duty to be charged had been sanctioned by the Treasury?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, with regard to the last Question, the matter, which is entirely abnormal, is under the consideration of the Law Officers of the Crown, and no opinion has yet been given. The agreements, to which the Question of the hon. Member refers, are those in Form 33, in the Schedule to the Rules of October last. Up to the 6th of February, 1882, those agreements were considered originating notices, and on receipt were filed on the record of the Court, and, therefore, not otherwise acknowledged; but on that date the Land Commission judicially decided that they were not originating notices, and ever since the 6th of February, those which are forwarded by post are duly acknowledged, and for those which are lodged by hand a receipt is given if requested.

STATE OF IRELAND—ST. PATRICK'S DAY IN DERRY.

MR. LEWIS asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Government has received a Memorial from certain loyal inhabitants of Derry relating to a projected procession or demonstration in that city on a grand scale fixed for the 17th instant; whether the Government has taken into consideration the facts and allegations stated in such Memorial, tending to show that such demonstration is intended to be a disloyal one, and is likely to lead to a breach of the peace; and, whether the Government will take steps to prevent the placing on the walls, or in the streets of Derry, of any arches or other erections on which disloyal emblems and devices may be fixed or exhibited?

MR. SEXTON said, that, before the right hon. Gentleman answered the Question, he should like to ask whether this was not a demonstration in honour of St. Patrick, the patron Saint of Ireland; and whether the 17th of March, known as St. Patrick's Day, was not recognized in official circles as a national holiday?

MR. O'DONNELL also wished to ask, whether the Catholic majority of the population of Derry did not carefully respect the annual demonstrations of their Protestant fellow-citizens?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, a Memorial has been received from the Apprentice Boys' Association, asking that the proposed celebration might be stopped. The matter will require serious consideration, and the Government are in consultation with the Mayor and magistrates of Derry to take such measures as may be necessary to prevent a breach of the peace.

THE QUEEN'S COLLEGES AND THE ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state the number and value of the scholarships, prizes, and exhibitions open exclusively to the Queen's Colleges, and derived from public funds; whether it has ever happened that there were not as many candidates as there were scholarships, prizes, and exhibitions; and, if so, on what percentage of marks were the scholarships, prizes, and exhibitions awarded on those occasions; whether these scholarships, prizes, and exhibitions are open to all the students in the Queen's Colleges, irrespective of any limit of age; whether the students from the Queen's Colleges are also eligible for the scholarships, prizes, and exhibitions in the Royal University; and, if so, whether, in the interests of education, steps will be taken to open the scholarships, prizes, and exhibitions, at present open to Queen's College students only, to all the students of the Royal University; and, whether he will give a Return, showing the proportion of scholarships, prizes, and exhibitions in each faculty to the number of students in that faculty; the average number of candidates for each scholarship, prize, and exhibition; and the definite minimum percentage of marks on which the scholarships, prizes, and exhibitions are awarded in the Queen's Colleges?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that much of the information the hon. Member asked for would be found in chapters 9 and 17 of the Statutes of the Queen's Colleges. The scholarships, prizes, and exhibitions of the Royal University, were open to all students. He believed that in every University the number of prizes sometimes was greater than the number of persons competing for them. There was no limit of age, and candidates were eligible to scholarships and other prizes in the Royal University, from whatever quarter they came. He did not think it would be in the interests of education to open the prizes in the Queen's Colleges to all the students of the Royal University.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. MANGAN.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true that Mr. Charles Mangan, a prisoner detained, under the Coercion Act, in Dundalk Gaol, has been unanimously elected Mayor of Drogheda; how long Mr. Mangan has been imprisoned; whether the district of Drogheda is in a peaceful condition; and, whether he will, under the circumstances, order the release of Mr. Mangan, so that he may fulfil the functions of his position as chief magistrate for that borough?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he understood that Mr. Mangan was not now Mayor of Drogheda, as a successor had been appointed by a majority of 14 to 8 votes. Mr. Mangan had been in prison since the 14th of October. The district was, happily, peaceable; but, in the interests of peace, he could not at present consent to put an end to Mr. Mangan's imprisonment.

NAVY—ROYAL MARINE ARTILLERY AND ROYAL MARINES.

Colonel MAKINS asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he could explain why Major Derriman, Royal Marine Artillery, has not been seconded in his Corps whilst serving as an Adjutant in the Auxiliary Forces, as is the custom in the Army, and has been the custom in the Royal Marines hitherto; also whether, considering that the length of service of the senior Captains of the Royal Marines exceeds that of any branch of the Service, a scheme of promotion, by length of service, will be prepared for them similar to that proposed for the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, I beg to inform the hon. and gallant Gentleman that the number of majors of the Marine Artillery is in excess of the peace requirements of the corps sufficiently to allow an officer to be temporarily taken for other duties. The hon. and gallant Gentleman will not forget that the number of majors in the Marine Artillery has been increased within the twelvemonth from eight to 14. With regard to the other Question of the hon. and gallant Gentleman, I have to say that the Admiralty and the War Office are at the present moment in communication on the subject of promotion by length of service in the higher grades of the corps of Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, and Royal Marines.

IRELAND—RESIGNATIONS IN THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will state the number of resignations received from members of the Royal Irish Constabulary Force in the years 1879, 1880, and 1881, respectively?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, the number of resignations received from members of the Irish Constabulary in the years 1879, 1880, and 1881, were 113, 155, and 352 respectively. The whole strength of the force was about 12,000 men.

Mr. REDMOND: Can the right hon. Gentleman give any reason for so large an increase in the number of resignations?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: That Question was asked and answered a few days ago.

Mr. REDMOND: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. That Question has not been asked.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I understood it had. A large proportion of the resignations were from recruits. There had been a large number of recruits, and it is generally found in the case of recruits that there are a good many resignations.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND)—ESTATES OF THE IRISH SOCIETY.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that tenants on the estates of the "Irish Society," in the county of Derry, being in arrear of rent, and having offered to pay off part of the arrears, and to apply for a Government loan towards paying off the remainder, under the Arrears Clause of the Land Act, have had their offers refused by the agent of the "Irish Society," and are to be evicted for the entire sum of unreduced arrears, together with large amounts of alleged illegal costs; and, whether he will inquire into the case of John Carlin, farmer, Braehead, Derry, holding sixteen acres of mountain land at a rent of £36?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, only three evictions are pending on the estates referred to by the hon. Member. The ejectment in one case was held over for some time to afford the tenant an opportunity of selling the farm. As to the case of John Carlin, the hon. Member has been misinformed. The farm consisted of 38 acres, not 16. It is not mountain land, but agricultural upland land, within two miles of the city of Londonderry. The Government valuation is £32 15*s.*, and the rent £33 15*s.* 7*d.*, with £2 for interest on £50 advanced to the tenant. The tenant was three years and a-half in arrear.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that extensive evictions of tenants, for arrears of rent, are taking place, or are about to take place, in the districts of Clonmany, Binnion, Garryduff, Adderville, and Cardonagh, in the county of Donegal; whether it is true that meetings of the inhabitants to protest against these evictions, and to invite public sympathy with poor tenants, on the ground of their incapability to pay the unreduced rents accumulating since the years of distress, have been prohibited by the Government, on the ground that such meetings might obstruct the sheriff in the exercise of his functions; and, whether it is not the case that all these districts were scheduled as "distressed districts" in the Compensation for Disturbance Bill, and were in receipt of famine relief up to and since March 1880?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, since the 1st of January 339 persons have been evicted in Donegal, of whom 83 have been re-admitted as caretakers. It is not the case that any meeting of inhabitants to protest against the evictions, or to invite sympathy with the tenants, has been prohibited by the Government. The district was scheduled as the hon. Member states. I have good reason to hope that in many of the cases satisfactory arrangements will be come to between the landlords and the tenants. In some instances such an arrangement has already been made.

MR. SEXTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman allow meetings of the kind referred to to be held in future?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Only those meetings are prohibited which we have reason to believe have been called for purposes of intimidation.

AUSTRIA AND TURKEY—THE HERZEGOVINA—TURKISH TROOPS AT NOVI BAZAR.

MR. BUCHANAN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is the fact that a Turkish force is stationed at and near Novi Bazar; what is the size of that force, and with what object has it been concentrated in that district; and, whether any representations have been made by the Austrian authorities against the amassing of this force on their Herzegovinian border?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Her Majesty's Government have not received any official information with regard to the concentration of Turkish troops towards the frontier of the Provinces administered by Austria which are at present the scene of a partial rising. At the same time, we have seen the statement to which the hon. Member refers in the newspapers, and we think there is little doubt that the concentration of troops has taken place.

ARMY—MILITARY TACTICS—THE FIELD EXERCISES.

COLONEL ALEXANDER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that a Memorandum has been issued to the troops at Aldershot, dated 13th February 1882, directing them to practise a system of attack which is entirely at variance with that enjoined in the Field Exercise under the sanction of Her Majesty; whether this attack contains principles which have been rejected and condemned by all the armies of Europe after the experience of their recent campaigns; and, if such a Memorandum has been issued, whether it has received the sanction of the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, no Memorandum has been issued to the troops at Aldershot directing them to practise a system of attack differing from that in the Field Exercises; and of course, therefore, my answer to the third Question must be in the negative also. A Memorandum has been issued, however, to one of the brigades requesting the officer commanding it to try experimentally a particular system of attack. It was issued on the 13th of February, and again on the 9th of March in a revised form. It involves no new drill, but only the application of drill already known. In reply to the second Question, I have to say that, allowing for certain differences of organization, the principles of the system tried are identical with those adopted in the German Army.

ARMY—REPORT OF COMMITTEE ON RIFLE PRACTICE.

Sir ROBERT LOYD LINDSAY (for Colonel Stanley) asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether he can lay upon the Table of the House the Report of the Committee who were appointed, under the presidency of Sir Daniel Lysons, to inquire into the system of rifle practice in the Army?

Mr. CHILDERS: No, Sir; the Report is of a very confidential character, and I shall certainly be unable to lay it on the Table *in extenso*. I will consider whether, later in the Session, some extracts can be given.

Sir ROBERT LOYD LINDSAY asked if the right hon. Gentleman would have any objection to allow the recommendations to be laid on the Table?

Mr. CHILDERS: I have considered that; but it would not be possible without disclosing confidential matter.

Colonel Alexander

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—JUDICIAL RENTS.

Mr. MOLLOY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been drawn to the late action taken by Lord Digby against his tenants in the King's county, on the Geashill Estate; whether many of these tenants had not served initiatory notices in the Land Court for a judicial rent; and, whether he will propose any means to quicken and facilitate the fixing of judicial rents in such cases, and so enable the tenants to avail themselves of any of the advantages of the Land Act?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, his attention had been drawn to the subject; and he could only say that the Government were taking steps in the direction indicated in the latter part of the Question of the hon. Gentleman.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARRESTS UNDER THE ACT.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he has any objection to a Return being furnished, giving the names of persons arrested in past twelve months under the Coercion Act (whether now in prison or released), the place of their arrest, the prison, and period of confinement, the number of re-arrests, the dates of release, where release has taken place, and the conditions of release if such have been signed, showing the counties where arrests have taken place?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he would lay a Return upon the Table which would give the hon. Member nearly all the information he required.

Mr. HEALY hoped that the names would be given in alphabetical order, as otherwise it would be almost impossible to follow it; he also wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman would give the names of persons who had signed conditions of release, as some released "suspects" who had not signed conditions had been nearly ruined by the suspicion that they had done so?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that the hon. Member's last statement was a somewhat significant one. He could only say that it was the privilege of Members of the Government to give Returns in the form they thought best. If the hon. Member was dissatisfied with the Return he proposed to give he could move for another.

Mr. REDMOND said, he hoped the residences of those who were arrested would be given, and the prison to which they were conveyed.

PALACE OF WESTMINSTER—THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—THE ELECTRIC LIGHT.

Mr. DONALDSON-HUDSON asked the First Commissioner of Works, If he will inform the House whether there is any probability of the system of electric lighting by means of incandescent lamps being tested in the House of Commons during the present Session?

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE: I propose, Sir, to try the incandescent electric light in the New Law Courts. Until I see the result of that experiment I do not think it would be advisable to make another experiment in this House.

INDIA—CONSUMPTION OF RUM.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been called to the Report of Mr. Lyall, Financial Commissioner, quoted by the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, stating that "there is a growing liking among the natives for rum," and complaining of the insufficiency of the supply; whether the Lieutenant Governor approves of Mr. Lyall's proposal to require licensees to keep a full supply of rum, and to sell it at reasonable prices; and, whether the Home Government has approved of this action of the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, and whether it is in keeping with general instructions of the Indian authorities?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, in the Report on Excise Administration in the Punjab in 1880-1, Mr. Lyall says—

> "There is a growing liking among Natives for rum, now that its price is not very different from that of Native liquor, and if the trade were allowed to follow its natural course the consumption would expand rapidly, somewhat to the detriment of the revenue derived from country spirits."

His proposal—

> "To require all rum contractors to keep a full supply of rum and to sell it at reasonable prices,"

is simply intended to check the practice of those interested in the sale of country spirits—

> "Who frequently buy up the rum licence, not with the view of making a profit by selling rum, but of limiting or preventing its sale,"

and who, having thus acquired a practical monopoly, "prefer to sell country liquor at a high price, because it gives them the larger profit." This being the case, the Lieutenant Governor is of opinion that the growing taste for rum, "which is, at least, as wholesome as country spirits," should not be discouraged, and approves Mr. Lyall's proposal. It has not been considered necessary to comment in any way on the order of the Lieutenant Governor on a detail entirely connected with local administration.

CRIMINAL PROCEDURE AMENDMENT BILL (INDIA)—THE INDIAN PENAL CODE.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true that, under the new Criminal Procedure Amendment Bill (India), no European British subject may be sentenced to more than one year's imprisonment by the judgment of a sessions court, but that an Indian British subject may be sentenced by the judgment of the same court to imprisonment for fourteen years, to transportation for life, and even to the penalty of death?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, the Criminal Law of India contained in the Indian Penal Code is precisely the same for Natives and Europeans. But there are differences in criminal procedure originating in the fact that the Courts of the East Indian Company had no power to try European subjects of the Queen, over whom the Supreme Courts, being Crown Courts, had exclusive jurisdiction. Since the assumption of the government by the Crown, the Indian Legislature has taken considerable steps towards assimilating the procedure applicable to Natives and Europeans; but some differences still remain, and that referred to in the Question is one of them. A Sessions Court can try a Native and sentence him, if convicted, to any punishment prescribed by the Penal Code; but there is an appeal from the conviction and sentence to the High Court. In the case of a European subject of the Crown, if the Sessions Court thinks that the offence with which he is charged demands a severer punishment than one year's imprisonment, it must transfer the case to the High Court, which will try the accused person with a jury, and sentence him, if convicted, to the proper punishment, and there will be no appeal. The Criminal Procedure Amendment Bill—in the latest shape in which it has reached the India Office—does not propose to alter the existing law in these particulars.

STATE OF IRELAND—POLICE PROTECTION FOR CARETAKERS.

Mr. FITZPATRICK asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the statement in the "Daily Express," March 9th,

> "That, on Monday night, a house on one of seven evicted farms, which are in charge of a small party of emergency caretakers, at Kilrush, near Thurles, county Tipperary, was set fire to and burned down by a mob of 700 persons. The head caretaker with difficulty restrained his men from firing on the incendiaries. The caretakers are, under the late rule, without police protection, and the alleged patrol system proved to be wholly unavailing in this case;"

whether a more efficient system of patrol can be established in that district; whether distinct official orders will be issued for the guidance of caretakers of the Emergency Committee and Property Defence Association, in regard to their right of firing in defence of themselves or of the property which they may have in their charge; and, whether, if they act strictly in accordance with such instructions, they will be held to have acted within the Law?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: There is no truth in the statement as given. There was no mob of 700 persons present, or a large mob of any kind, and no house in charge of caretakers was destroyed. A house was found to be on fire, and some neighbours, about 20, were seen assisting to quench the flames. We have reason to believe that the system of patrolling in the district was sufficient and efficient.

In reply to Mr. Healy,

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that in the accounts of the outrages which had been published there were doubtless occasionally exaggerations; but he was sorry to say that in an enormous number of cases the accounts were neither exaggerated nor untrue.

Mr. FITZPATRICK said, that the right hon. Gentleman had not answered the Question whether an official order had been issued with reference to the right of caretakers to fire to defend themselves.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that but for the fact that the hon. Member was misled by the report he did not think he would have asked the Question. The Government did not think it necessary to issue instructions of any special character for such cases. Caretakers had the right of every Irishman and subject of Her Majesty to defend themselves, and if they acted within that right they would be held to have acted within the law.

Mr. FITZPATRICK inquired if they were entitled to fire in the defence of property they were protecting?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that caretakers in Ireland possessed neither more nor less than the ordinary rights of every citizen of the Empire.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—THE NEW CODE.

Sir MASSEY LOPES asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether, as so much delay has taken place in the issue of the new Education Code, and that thus there will be practically no opportunity of considering its important provisions before Easter, the Government will provide a suitable opportunity for discussing the Code before it becomes Law?

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON asked the Vice President of the Privy Council, At what day the new version of the Code, which has appeared at length in a public journal before being circulated, will become Law; and, if he will undertake that a day shall be set apart for its discussion before it becomes Law, or that it shall not become Law till the House has had an opportunity of discussing it?

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL asked the Vice President of the Council, How it comes that the New Education Code has been reviewed, and its provisions freely discussed in the daily papers, before it has been placed in the hands of Members?

Mr. MUNDELLA: Sir, the delay spoken of is only one of four days. I laid the Paper on the Table on Monday night, and I thought it would have been delivered on Wednesday. The New Code will, unless previously rejected by Parliament, become law on the 5th of April; but as it will not come into operation for payment until the 30th of April of next year, its provisions can be modified by any Minute consequent upon a discussion in Parliament, made within a month of the close of the present Session. I regret to find that, owing to the present state of Public Business, the Government is unable to give any time before Easter for the discussion; but if the House will consent to give a Morning or a Saturday Sitting—["Oh, oh!"]—though I do not ask for it, that will be one means of discussing it, if hon. Members are anxious to do so, before the lapse of the 30 days. The Code is not like an Endowed Schools scheme. It can be altered at the expiry of 30 days by any Minute. It is very desirable that teachers and managers shall not be left in uncertainty as to the course of teaching they are to pursue. In answer to the hon. Baronet the Member for Wigtownshire (Sir Herbert Maxwell), I have to say that I wish to take upon myself all the responsibility and blame that can attach to me in that matter. In the first place, the Code was reviewed before it was ever printed, because substantially the leading provisions of the Code were the same this year as last; but when I laid the Code on the Table on Monday night, I anticipated it would be distributed on Wednesday morning. Owing, however, to some delay of the printers, it was not distributed until Friday or Saturday. On Tuesday I received some rough, uncorrected proofs, and being much pressed by the educational and other papers for copies, and assuming that the Code would come into the hands of Members on Wednesday morning, I allowed these to be sent out. I very much regret if I have done anything irregular, and I shall take care that it does not occur again.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will explain how it came to pass that the Code was reviewed in *The Times* on Monday, the day on which it received the signatures of the Parliamentary Chiefs of the Department?

Mr. MUNDELLA said, the comments in *The Times* were based on the revised proposals for the Code, and not upon an actual copy of the Code.

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON gave Notice that in consequence of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, and with the view of raising a discussion on the matter, he should object to any Vote on Account being passed in support of elementary education until there had been some discussion on the Code.

CRIMINAL LAW—AGGRAVATED ASSAULTS—PUNISHMENT OF FLOGGING—LEGISLATION.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If, as he declines to recommend an alteration of the Law to permit flogging for brutal and aggravated assaults, he will recommend the abolition of flogging in cases of robbery with violence; and whether, in the latter case, the flogging is inflicted in respect of the robbery or of the violence?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I do not propose to recommend any alteration in the law in this respect at the present moment.

POST OFFICE—SEIZURE OF THE "IRISH WORLD" NEWSPAPER.

Mr. HEALY asked the Postmaster General, Whether, during the period when the "Irish World" was seized in Irish post offices, it was allowed to be delivered as usual through English post offices; and, if so, why a distinction was made; if it is correct that, under Article 6 of the Postal Convention, signed at Paris in June 1878, Great Britain binds herself to pay an indemnity of fifty francs to the sender of certain registered articles, including newspapers; whether the senders of undelivered registered packets of the "Irish World" will be entitled to receive the indemnity; and, whether any advice is sent to the addresses that their property has been appropriated, and under what Act of Parliament the Government have seized the paper?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the Government had not considered it necessary to take the same action in this matter in England as they had done in Ireland. The Postal Convention of

1868 applied only to cases of accidental loss, and not to the detention of papers by proper authority. The Government did not think that they were bound to pay any indemnity in respect of the seizure of the registered copies of *The Irish World* which were sent to Ireland from foreign countries, or to send any notification of the fact of the seizure to those who had sent the papers. If the legality of the action of the Government were questioned, it could be challenged in a Court of Law.

Mr. HEALY wished to know whether this rule applied to registered numbers addressed to Ireland; and, if so, under what Act of Parliament they could be seized?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that was a legal question.

Mr. HEALY said, he would ask the Attorney General for Ireland under what Act of Parliament these papers were seized, because he did not believe such an Act was in existence?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) replied that, inasmuch as he had received official notification of the fact that an action had been commenced in respect of the seizure of the paper, he could not answer the Question.

ARMY—"PURCHASE COLONELS."

Colonel MILNE HOME asked the Secretary of State for War, What compensation may be expected by "Purchase Colonels," who on reaching the age of fifty-nine, must, under the Royal Warrant taking effect from 1st July 1881, retire from the Army, and thereby lose all chance of further promotion, as well as in some cases suffer abbreviation of command, and be deprived of other pecuniary advantages awarded for meritorious service?

Mr. CHILDERS: Sir, in reply to the hon. and gallant Gentleman, I have to say that "purchase colonels," who, unless employed, would be in receipt of not above £200 15*s*. half-pay, will, on compulsory retirement at 59 years of age, receive £420 a-year retired pay, and will also be compensated for the loss, if any, of prospective unattached pay as general officer and colonel of a regiment, the amount being assessed by the Army Purchase Commission as provided in Article 978, Section 12, of the Warrant of the 25th of June, 1881. Rewards for meritorious service granted before the 1st of July last will be carried into retirement by colonels, and £60 a-year will be so carried in respect of rewards granted since the 1st of July.

RELIEF OF DISTRESS (IRELAND) — SEED SUPPLY ACT, 1880—THE SEEDS LOAN RATE—RIGHT OF VOTING AT POOR LAW ELECTIONS.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that, in some districts of Ireland, payment not only of the poor rate but of the seeds loan is insisted upon as a qualification for the right of voting at poor law elections; and if this action is not illegal?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): It is enacted by the 7th section of the Seeds Supply Act, 1880, that the special rate is to be added to the poor rate, assessed on the rateable tenement, and collected therewith. Thus payment of the aggregate rate is a necessary qualification for the right to vote at elections of Guardians.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE BASUTOS.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether Her Majesty's Government have consented to the payment of the levies of the Cape Government out of the confiscated lands and cattle of the Basutos?

Mr. COURTNEY: Sir, I thought I had answered the Question last Friday. It is for the Cape Parliament to provide the means for the payment of the Cape levies. All that has passed between Her Majesty's Government and the Cape Government on the question of the future treatment of the Basutos appears in the Blue Book issued last week.

COLLECTOR GENERAL OF RATES (DUBLIN), MR. SCOTT BYRNE.

Mr. GILL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true that Mr. Scott Byrne has been for some time back in receipt of a salary of £200 per annum in the office of his father, the Collector General of Rates in Dublin; that his father placed him in that position without his having passed the usual examination, and without the necessary approval of the Lord Lieutenant; that his salary is much higher than those of many gentlemen who were regularly appointed, and who were in the department several years before him; if the Government Auditor, in his recent Report, has disallowed his salary, on account of the irregularity of his appointment; and, if, in view of these circumstances, he will be removed from the department?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, the Government had asked for an explanation, which was not satisfactory, and was referred to the Treasury Remembrancer in Ireland, who, together with the Auditor, were now engaged in an inquiry, which, he hoped, would be completed soon.

CRIMINAL LAW—CLOTHING OF DISCHARGED PRISONERS.

Sir BALDWYN LEIGHTON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he has issued an order directing that prisoners, discharged from the Government gaols unprovided with sufficient clothing, should be supplied with such clothes by the union authorities in which the prison is situated, although they might belong to other unions or other counties; and, if so, under what authority he has so acted?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, he had further made inquiry into this matter and directed Returns to be made. These came in only that morning, and from them he found that the matter was one of very small pecuniary value. He hoped shortly to make arrangements which would be satisfactory to the local authorities.

RIVERS CONSERVANCY AND FLOODS PREVENTION BILL.

Sir BALDWYN LEIGHTON asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether he has received a Copy of the Resolution unanimously adopted at a meeting of the Central Chamber of Agriculture on the Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill, referring, among other matters, to the injustice of rating the uplands for the benefit of the flooded lands; and, if so, whether the Government will now favourably consider the proposal to exempt the uplands entirely from the operation of the Bill?

Mr. DODSON: Sir, I have received a copy of the Resolution referred to; but I may observe that it does not appear to have emanated from the Central Chamber of Agriculture, but from the Council of that body. I am afraid that I cannot undertake, on behalf of the Government, to exempt uplands entirely from the operation of the Act; but I may point out that under the Bill, as it at present stands, any uplands may be excluded from a Provisional Order, and, further, that the occupiers of uplands will in no case be liable to contribute to the rate.

INLAND REVENUE—INCOME TAX, SCHEDULE B—AGRICULTURAL DEPRESSION.

Mr. FRASER-MACKINTOSH asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in view of the admitted losses universally prevailing amongst those engaged in agricultural pursuits, he will take into his favourable consideration the direct relief for one year of agricultural and pastoral tenants from the Property and Income Tax, Schedule B, taking into account that farmers can at present, though in a circuitous and troublesome manner, get back the tax on proof that no income is earned in respect of the occupation of land?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Gladstone): Sir, the Question of the hon. Member, as I understand it, practically amounts to this—whether I am prepared to propose that for a certain period Schedule B should be dispensed with altogether. I cannot undertake to make such a proposition, which would create a revolution in the tax. At present there is power to obtain relief where there are no profits.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE—THE CHANNEL TUNNEL SCHEME.

Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, considering the fact that operations are being rapidly carried on for the construction of the proposed Channel Tunnel, Her Majesty's Government have any power to restrain such operations pending the decision of Parliament on the subject; and, if so, whether they are prepared to exercise it?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I understand that the operations in connection with the Channel Tunnel have not reached the point below low-water mark at which any question can be raised. I understand that when they have reached to below low-water mark they will come under the control of the Crown, at least as long as they are within the three-mile territorial limit. At present they are between high and low-water mark, and I am not sure that they are under the control of the Crown. That is a question which is being contested between the Crown and the Company, the Company contending that they have purchased the title from the owner of the foreshore. I apprehend it is obvious that, under these circumstances, the Company proceeds at its own risk.

INLAND REVENUE—THE RAILWAY PASSENGER DUTY.

Mr. BUXTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether he can hold out any hopes that it may be found practicable, in the financial arrangements for the next year, to abolish the Railway Passengers' Tax, and thereby remove that burden on trade and free locomotion in the Country?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Gladstone): I am afraid, Sir, my reply to this Question must be a very short one. There is no prospect of the financial means of next year being sufficient to enable us to repeal so important a tax as that to which the hon. Gentleman refers.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ADAMS *v.* DUNSEATH.

Mr. HEALY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If he will lay a Copy of the Judgment in Adams *v.* Dunseath upon the Table; and, whether the Government have yet been able to consider the effect of the decisions therein given?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, the rule is that these Judgments should not be produced, and I am not aware of any sufficient reason for departing from the ordinary usage in this matter. But, whether that be so or not, the time has not yet arrived for considering the question, because we have not yet received any authentic Copy of the Judgment; but, of course, after it is known it may be made matter of discussion like every other subject. We cannot pledge ourselves to lay a Copy of this Judgment on the Table.

Mr. HEALY asked whether, during the last Administration of the right hon. Gentleman, a Copy of the Judgment of Mr. Justice Keogh, in the Galway case, was not laid the Table?

Mr. GLADSTONE: That is quite a different case. The Judgment was one on an Election Petition.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—THE PURCHASE CLAUSES.

Mr. W. H. SMITH asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If the Government will take into consideration the urgent necessity for the introduction of a measure to extend the Purchase Clauses of the Land Act, and to make effectual provision for facilitating the transfer of the ownership of the land to tenants, who are occupiers, on terms which would be just and reasonable to the existing landlords?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am afraid, Sir, I cannot answer this Question in an adequate manner within the limits which ought to be observed in a reply. I am not quite certain whether I understand its exact gist. There are two points of view from which the Purchase Clauses of the Land Act may be looked at. One is the enactment of the clauses in themselves, and the other is the financial arrangements which have been made in order to insure that there would be no financial bar to their operation. As regards the first Question, I am of opinion that we have as yet no experience at all to enable us to judge of the adequacy of the clauses, or to pronounce an opinion upon the question whether they can in any respect, or ought in any respect, to be amended. As regards the financial question, however, the House will doubtless recollect that the arrangement which was made under the Act of last year was avowedly a limited and a provisional arrangement; and the whole of that part of the subject will require careful consideration, which we are now engaged in giving it, and which undoubtedly will be made the subject of provision during the present year.

TURNPIKE ROADS (SOUTH WALES) BILL.

Viscount EMLYN asked the President of the Local Government Board if he would postpone the consideration of this Bill until some days after it had been circulated, so as to give Members an opportunity of considering it?

MR. DODSON, in reply, said, he had postponed the Bill to Thursday. He would, however, endeavour to ascertain the wishes of the other Members for the counties concerned; and if they concurred with the noble Lord in desiring that the Bill should be deferred to a later day, there would be no objection on the part of the Government.

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Secretary of State for War after what hour that evening he did not intend to proceed with his Statement on the Army Estimates?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, I intended when the Order was called to have made a statement to the House on this subject; but I may as well embody it in my answer to the hon. Gentleman. What I was going to say to the House is this —It is absolutely necessary, in order to comply with the requirements of the financial system—and those who have held Office at the Treasury will know exactly what I mean—that the first two Votes in the Army Estimates and in the Navy Estimates be reported not later than next Monday. If this is not done, it is difficult to say how illegality can be avoided. There are only two days in this week on which the Government could by any possibility take these Votes—namely, Monday and Thursday; and it has fallen to my lot to take the Army Estimates on the first of those days, and to the Secretary to the Admiralty to take the Navy Estimates on the second. Therefore, I put it to the House whether it would not be for their convenience that we should go into Committee to-day on the Army Estimates at as early an hour as possible, and on the Navy Estimates early on Thursday? It is absolutely necessary that we should go into Committee at some hour to-night, however late it may be.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for War if the extreme urgency of proceeding with the Army Estimates to-night was present to the mind of the Government when they invited the House to engage in a fortnight's abstract discussion on the House of Lords?

MR. GORST wished to know whether, in the event of those who had Notices on the Paper waiving their right that evening, the Government would undertake to put down Supply for Monday week, in order that these Motions might then be brought on? He asked this because he had himself an important Motion on the Paper.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am afraid, Sir, it is not in my power to do so.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the Secretary of State for War to give them an assurance that there would be ample opportunity for the discussion of the questions concerning the Army. If the Vote was allowed to be taken at a late hour that night there would be no opportunity for full discussion.

MR. CHILDERS: I have great pleasure in giving that assurance in the fullest and most unequivocal terms. The Votes for men and money must be taken to-night; but I will take care—as I did last year—that a future opportunity shall be provided as soon as possible for discussing the Estimates.

MR. W. H. SMITH: Will there also be a full opportunity of discussing the Navy Estimates? Last year, although an engagement similar to the present was entered into by the Government, there was no discussion of the Estimates until August. It would be discreditable, in view of the serious subjects to be considered in this connection, if that example was to be followed this year.

MR. GLADSTONE: The general assurance of my right hon. Friend refers undoubtedly to both branches of the Service. The right hon. Gentleman opposite says, with great truth, it would not be creditable that the Navy Estimates should not be discussed until August. I entirely agree with him; but I go further, and say that the entire state of the arrangements for the discharge of Public Business are as far as possible from being creditable to the House.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I rise to ask the Prime Minister, as he cannot undertake to put down Supply for next week, what Business he will then proceed with?

MR. GLADSTONE: With the adjourned debate on the Resolution which I have submitted to the House.

MR. GORST: At what specific time will the opportunity of discussing the Army and Navy Estimates be given?

MR. GLADSTONE: I will give Notice of that opportunity before it arrives.

COLONEL ALEXANDER: I cannot agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War that sufficient opportunity was given last year for discussing the Army Estimates. All the opportunity we got was a Morning Sitting after Easter. [*Cries of* "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. and gallant Member is not in Order in making this matter a subject of debate.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT: I am not at all satisfied with the assurances given as to the discussion on the Army Estimates. The Prime Minister must know that we are entirely at his mercy, and——

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. and gallant Gentleman has already spoken on this question. [*Cries of* "Move!"]

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT: Then, Sir, I will venture to ask for a definite assurance that we shall have a fair opportunity of discussing the Estimates before Easter. Otherwise we cannot undertake that the Votes will be passed this evening.

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN: I would ask the Prime Minister whether, in view of the state of Public Business, he could not adjourn the Resolutions regarding Procedure? [*Cries of* "Order!"] I am only asking a Question—whether he would not postpone his Procedure Resolutions till after Easter, so as to allow the Army and Navy and some of the Civil Service Estimates to be proceeded with in the meanwhile, and then go on with the Procedure Resolutions continuously?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I cannot, Sir, entertain the proposal of my hon. Friend.

Mr. GORST said, he rose for the purpose of moving the adjournment of the House for the purpose of eliciting, if possible, from Her Majesty's Government some more satisfactory assurance than they had yet condescended to give as to the opportunity which would be afforded to Members to do their duty to their constituents. He had been for many years a Member of that House representing a Dockyard constituency; and he regretted to say that, both under the late Government and the present, the Naval Estimates had not come on for discussion until August. He ventured to say that in the present condition of the British Navy, it was important that questions should be raised on the Naval Estimates; and it was not creditable to the business capacity of the House that the discussion of those questions should be relegated to so late a period as July or August. He and other Members were there especially to watch and criticize the action of the Government in those matters. The Secretary of State for War had stated that it would be impossible to take the Army Vote to-night. He had asked the Prime Minister whether, if he and others gave way, he would give some further opportunity of bringing forward those questions. The Prime Minister answered that he would not. Then the Secretary of State for War and the Secretary to the Admiralty had both stated that further opportunities would be given for discussing the Army and Navy Estimates. When, however, he asked the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government when those opportunities would be given he received an extremely curt reply, to the effect that at some indefinite future time he would be kind enough to inform the House when those opportunities would be given. Before hon. Members gave way they were entitled to be distinctly told when those opportunities would be given. If the right hon. Gentleman told them that he would allow that important discussion to be taken next week, he, for one, would be perfectly ready to offer every facility to the Government. Members opposite below the Gangway thought they had nothing to do but vote with the Government. But those who took a different view of their duties and were interested in examining the naval and military expenditure of the country were not to be put off as they had been. He was not exceeding his rights as a Member of the House when he asked the Government to give them some assurance as to the time at which an opportunity would be given of discussing those Votes. He begged to move the adjournment of the House.

Mr. WARTON, in seconding the Motion, said, he did so in no Party sense, but to show the Government that the House was not to be trifled with. Ministers had already wasted five Government nights in succession, four in an attack on the other House, and one in an attack on the Procedure of that House, and now they came down and implored the House to help them out of the mess they had got themselves in. He wished to remind the Prime Minister that of all the vices in this world the most expensive was that of temper.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Gorst.*)

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that it seemed to be the deliberate intention of Gentlemen opposite to throw every obstruction possible in the way of Public Business. ["No, no!"] He was not alluding to hon. Members from Ireland, but to the Conservative Party. Everybody knew their object. It was to go to their constituents at the end of the Session and say that the Liberals had promised grandly, but done nothing. But whose would be the fault? It would belong to the Conservatives themselves. How was it possible to go on with the Business when every day time was consumed by Motions? [An hon. MEMBER: Bradlaugh.] An hon. Member hinted that he (Mr. Labouchere) did the very thing that he complained of. He had never brought forward a Motion like the present one, with the object of Obstruction, and with no desire to see it passed. The Motions proposed by himself had had specific objects, and he had always wished to pass them. He hoped the Prime Minister would stand to his guns. What had just occurred proved better than any argument that it was necessary, as soon as possible, to carry those excellent Resolutions respecting the Business of the House which the Prime Minister had moved. If, after the statement made from the Treasury Bench that it was absolutely necessary to pass certain Votes to-night, hon. Gentlemen chose to take the responsibility of postponing those Votes by the use of obstructive tactics, let them accept that responsibility before the country. He hoped the Prime Minister would next week insist on taking the debate on *clôture* and the other Procedure Resolutions from day to day until they were disposed of.

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I do not intend to enter into the contentious part of this discussion, and I shall be satisfied to pass by in silence the various taunts that have been thrown out against the Government with respect to the debate which, on account of their responsibility for the maintenance of law and order in Ireland, they thought it necessary to give occasion for by submitting a Resolution to this House, although I do not say that they have any responsibility for the extent of four nights of this debate. I rise to show, as I think I can, the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) that there is good cause why his Motion should be withdrawn, and that he has not exactly apprehended the position of affairs with regard to the Question that has been put to me. But I may observe that there is, at all events, some merit in this—that whereas it has been very common during recent weeks to find fault with the answers given by Members of the Government to Questions for being too long, I am now taken to task by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham for making my answer too short. We shall endeavour, on all occasions, if we can, to hit the golden mean which lies between the extremes of prolixity and undue brevity. The hon. and learned Gentleman has, perhaps inadvertently, stated the circumstances not quite accurately. He said that he had asked me whether we should offer any time for the discussion of Motions, in which he seems now to have had in view his own Motion, and that I said I could not name any time. What the hon. and learned Gentleman did was this. He made himself the sponsor of no less than 11 Motions; and he then asked me if, in the present state of Public Business, not "would I be disposed to give time for any of these Motions?" but "are you prepared to name a day when these Motions may be proceeded with?" These two things are entirely different. The Motion of which the hon. and learned Member has given Notice to-night is one with regard to which he has a right to see that it should not be subjected to unnecessary disappointment. I hope he will, therefore, see that I have not met his Motion in the spirit which he has stated. The whole of my statement amounts to this—that I am not prepared, at the present time, to name a day when Supply could be postponed, in order to give facility for the Motion. We have got the full work of the week before us, and the full work, I apprehend, of next week before us. Under these circumstances, I do not think the House will be of opinion that I should hold out expectations which I might not be able to redeem. We are of opinion that, subject to matters of primary necessity, it is our duty to proceed with those Resolutions of which we have given Notice, with regard to the Procedure of this House. When we are told that it is not desirable to postpone the discussion, in detail, of the Army and Navy Estimates until July or August, there is no one who feels the truth of the proposition more keenly and acutely than we do. We are now in the beginning of March, and we believe that by taking the judgment of the House on matters of procedure, and by endeavouring, if we can, to arrange a good system, both with regard to procedure, so called, and with regard to the devolution or delegation of labour, we are really offering to the House the best security that we can offer them for the discussion of Estimates in proper time. Nothing could be more improper than the postponement of these measures to a late period of the Session. When I decline now to name a day, it is because it is not customary, and would not be convenient, to name days for what is not in immediate prospect. It is with a view to the proper disposal of Supply that we are about to submit our Resolutions to the House. One of the principal objects we have in view, whatever may be the form which those Resolutions may ultimately assume, is the effective and early discussion of matters in Supply. I hope I have explained that I by no means intended to make light of the subject of the Motion of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham, which I think is one that appeals very strongly to us, and I certainly should be very sorry if we were not able to suggest to the House some method by which that Motion should be discussed.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he wished, as far as possible, to save the time of the House; and he hoped, therefore, that the discussion would not be continued, and that the Motion of his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham would not be pressed. At the same time, he desired to point out that the matter did not entirely lie as the Prime Minister would lead them to suppose. According to him it would seem as if the Business of the day were properly the Army Estimates, and that any opposition in the nature of a Motion on going into Committee of Supply was abnormal, and stood in the way of the regular Business. It was, however, an admitted principle that questions of grievance preceded Supply; and, of course, those hon. Gentlemen who put down Notices of Motions had *primâ facie* a perfect right to expect to have an opportunity of bringing them forward. Then an appeal was made by the Government to those hon. Gentlemen to waive or curtail their privilege on this occasion, in order that the Government might proceed with the Army Estimates. All hon. Members were anxious that the Army Estimates should be proceeded with in proper time, and were willing to accept the statement that they must be dealt with to-night. But the Gentlemen who waived or curtailed their right to bring forward Motions were hardly to blame if they asked when an opportunity would be given to them. He did not think they had been treated with that consideration which ought to have been shown to them under the circumstances. Those hon. Members had been told what they could not have, but they had not been told what they could have. He would urge the House not to waste any time in a discussion on the Motion for Adjournment, but to go on with the Business. They must all see where the responsibility would lie. At all events, hon. Members on that side of the House had a pretty strong opinion on the subject. Nothing could be more unedifying than to continue a discussion of this sort; and, therefore, he hoped that his hon. and learned Friend would not press his Motion.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, that he happened to have the first Motion on the Paper that night. Nothing would be further from his desire than to stand in the way of the Army Estimates, or in the way of the debate regarding Procedure, and he should be most happy to withdraw his Motion unconditionally, if that would serve the purpose which the Government desired; but it manifestly would be totally useless to withdraw his Motion in order to allow the Government to fall into the hands of the other Members who had Motions.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, the prospect before them was that they were not to have an opportunity of discussing important questions at all until the *clôture* was passed, and then the *clôture* would prevent them from discussing important questions. That prospect was not inviting. At the same time, he admitted that a discussion of this character might, under ordinary circumstances, have been usefully postponed; and, therefore, he regretted that the Prime Minister had initiated the discussion. The statement volunteered by the Prime Minister as to the arrangements for Public Business was far from being creditable to the right hon. Gentleman, and the remarkable confession that fell from his lips was quite unprecedented. It was impossible for them to regard with indifference the accusations made by the sitting Member for Northampton. Of course, he fully recognized that the sitting Member for Northampton was under a deep debt of gratitude to the Premier for having been his champion, and now the hon. Member thought it grateful to become the right hon. Gentleman's champion. It was by no means fair, however, for the hon. Member for Northampton to convert an ordinary discussion on the facilities to be given to private Members into a medium for a Party attack upon the Gentlemen sitting opposite to him. It could not be the case that Members sitting on that side of the House could entertain any such intentions as were imputed to them by the hon. Member for Northampton. What they complained of was that the Government measures were not being brought forward; but that, from day to day, the regular Business of the House was being interfered with. The right hon. Gentleman said that he would not stop to reply to taunts in regard to the conduct of Public Business. His own opinion was that it would not be at all desirable for the right hon. Gentleman to reply to those taunts, he having no reply at hand. They were now asked by the Premier to hurry forward, in a by no means decent fashion, the discussion of the Estimates on the ground of shortness of time, simply because the Premier had wasted the time of the House since the commencement of the Session upon grounds now acknowledged to be utterly fallacious. The right hon. Gentleman said he was not responsible for four nights being taken up by the discussion on the House of Lords. Did the Premier really believe that the discussion on his important Motion—or what promised to be an important Motion, although it came to nothing particular at last—would end in a few minutes after his fiery abjuration to ride rough shod over the decision of the other House of Parliament? Not a minute more than was necessary was spent in the discussion of the right hon. Gentleman's proposition. If it came to the small end to which it did come, the reason was that the discussions showed how groundless were the accusations brought by the right hon. Gentleman. As regarded the accusation against the Conservative Party of wasting time, he was sorry to say that the Conservative Party most unduly abbreviated the discussion on that Motion. It was the action of the late Attorney General for Ireland that prevented the Irish Members from completely discussing the operation of the Land Act. He hoped the small amount of gratitude which the Conservative Party received for that good turn would be remembered by them when they again attempted to curtail the opportunities of Irish Members.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL.

MR. COURTNEY: Before the Orders of the Day are read I wish to inform the House that the following has been received from Sir Hercules Robinson by telegraph:—

"12th.—Yours 11th. On 27th February, Rutherford, in absence of Hudson, reported as follows:—'General Joubert, with 60 mounted police, left some days ago to coerce Skalafyn, a Kaffir Chief, residing within Transvaal territory, on the western borders, who had given trouble, and raised wall defences. Meanwhile, Skalafyn had come to Pretoria by another route, and given explanation to the Government which had led to instructions being sent after Joubert to stay proceedings, subject to Skalafyn paying expenses of expedition, which he had promised to do. There had been extensive commandeering in Potchefstroom, and a large number had left the district to follow Joubert; but it is understood all will be recalled.' On 6th March Rutherford reported having received on 3rd a letter from Government, stating that affairs on the west border continued unchanged; within Transvaal line all quiet, but outside daily fighting and bloodshed, and Government apprehended conflict will extend and last long."

The telegram contains some observations on the possible mode of dealing with the difficulty, which it would be premature to mention at present; but I may state that Sir Hercules Robinson adds, on his own part, that the Transvaal Government seem doing what they can to maintain the neutrality of their territory.

MR. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked whether the fighting and bloodshed inside the Transvaal borders was caused by the leader of the Boers having previously attacked the Natives outside the borders?

Mr. COURTNEY: No, Sir; the two things are distinct.

RELIGIOUS DISSENSIONS (GIBRALTAR)—DR. CANILLA.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any information had been received by the Government with reference to 47 arrests said to have been made at Gibraltar by order of the Governor, acting under directions from the Government, or whether Lord Kimberley had telegraphed to obtain a Report on the subject?

Mr. O'DONNELL asked whether the action of the Governor had any connection with the reported mission of Mr. Errington to the Vatican?

Mr. COURTNEY: There is no connection whatever between the two—whatever that mission may be. We have no fresh intelligence with respect to the arrests at Gibraltar.

Mr. MACARTNEY asked whether this was an admission that there was a mission?

Mr. COURTNEY: No, Sir.

ORDER OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

EGYPT (INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNALS).

RESOLUTION.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL rose, in accordance with Notice, to call attention to the ultimate effect of a continuance of the International Tribunals in Egypt on the present footing; and to move—

> "That it is inexpedient to make, or renew on expiry, engagements by which Foreign Governments may have a claim to insist on the enforcement of private debts against natives of Egypt, the transfer of lands, vexatious sanitary regulations, and other demands, in supersession of the autonomous legislation and government of the country; excepting only provision for the free use of the Suez Canal as an International commercial waterway."

He was unwilling, he said, to touch much on the burning and critical questions which now existed with regard to Egypt. He wished to confine himself mainly to economical and social questions. It was his impression that it might be said, and with some truth and justice, that the troubles which now existed in Egypt were, to a certain extent, raised rather by the upper classes than by the lower classes; but they must take care lest, in the future, circumstances should arise which would cause discontent in the midst of the people of Egypt. He was quite free to admit that the mixed or International Tribunals were a great improvement on many tribunals which had existed in Egypt, and justice was usually done by them. But there were circumstances with regard to the constitution of these tribunals to which it seemed to him, in the interests of the people of Egypt, some attention should be paid. They were, no doubt, good and able tribunals; but it seemed to him that they were the rich man's rather than the poor man's tribunals. They were popular with Europeans who were rich, and who, having debts to enforce, could afford to go to great expense in enforcing them. They were placed only at a few centres of European residence, and they were expensive tribunals, before which a poor man could not afford to appear, although they were international and for the disposal of debt. Owing to their international character they were very large—even cumbrously large. There were 25 Judges of these tribunals in Alexandria alone. Although they were found only in the European centres, they exercised jurisdiction over the whole of Egypt. Good as they were, they were enormously expensive; consequently absolute justice was not being done to the people of Egypt in the matter. They, moreover, possessed very extensive powers in the country, as to which he had great apprehension. They could enforce their decrees against the Natives by the sale of their lands; and it was to be feared that in consequence of the difficulties experienced by the Natives in complying with those decrees, large quantities of the land would gradually fall into the hands of the money-lenders. Then these tribunals were constituted in a peculiar manner, which was almost unique in the history of tribunals, being, in reality, placed above the Government and the Legislature of Egypt. It was the fact, because the Government of the country was subject to them, that European interference had taken place which had led to the critical position of affairs which was now existing. Our present troubles were the result of control and interference of Europeans in Egypt, and the Control was a direct result of the action of these judicial tribunals. The present situation was, that by the action of these tribunals the enormous debt of some £90,000,000 sterling had been decreed against Egypt, and that was being enforced by the joint action of two of the European Powers. But he most wished to call attention to another effect of these tribunals, which was to establish an enormous private debt, which would have an ultimate political effect, very great, and, he thought, very dangerous. Those who took an interest in such matters knew that there had been numerous financial institutions, both in London and in Paris, established for the purpose of "exploiting" Egypt and lending money to the Natives. Why was it that these financial institutions were formed to lend money to the Egyptians? He imagined that it was not out of benevolence towards the Egyptians. It was because they expected to get a high interest for their money, upon extremely good security. That security was the land of the Egyptians, which was known to be valuable. The Natives had thus entered upon a course of mortgaging their lands, which, it was to be feared, would ultimately fall into the hands of these associations. Finding such facilities afforded them of obtaining money, the Egyptians, in common with other Oriental peoples similarly situated, were living in a sort of fool's paradise. It was pleasant for the time to have accommodating money-lenders; but a day of reckoning would come at last, and we might have not only social and commercial ruin, but a political difficulty in the case of debts due by the Egyptian cultivators. The same state of things existed in India, when the people were encouraged to acquire complete rights of property, although they were as ignorant how to use those rights as children; for they became only too ready to receive loans and accumulate debts. But the day of reckoning eventually arrived, and the result was that great disturbances took place, just as in Russia at the present moment. A Commission was then appointed to inquire into the condition of the Deccan ryots, which led to the disclosure of a very dangerous state of things. Great sympathy was extended by the Government of India and of this country to the ryots of India, who had been deprived of their lands at a price very much below their value. If the present state of things were allowed to continue in Egypt, it was a matter of almost absolute certainty that serious disturbances would take place in that country; for these financial associations were pushing and aggressive. As regarded India, the Deccan Ryot Act was passed, by which a considerable amount of protection from the money-lenders was afforded to the ryots; but who had power to overrule these associations and these tribunals in Egypt? It had been held that the Government had not the power, by an Egyptian decree or Egyptian legislation, to overrule the decisions of the tribunals established by the European Concert. If that were so in regard to public debts, his apprehension was that it would be so in regard to private debts. There were a number of other nations, besides France and England, interested; and without the consent of all the Powers who were interested in these arrangements they could not alter the power of these tribunals. As the thing now stood, if the tribunals went on on their present footing the creditors would be entitled to their pound of flesh, and it would be impossible to make any satisfactory arrangement. The reason why he was desirous to call the attention of the House and the Government to the subject, at this moment, was that the agreement under which these tribunals were established was a temporary agreement, that it had expired, and was being renewed year by year. What, he asked, should be the result when it was again renewed? Such arrangements should be made that it would not be possible for any foreign tribunal to override the action of the Legislature of Egypt, to enforce on the people of Egypt private debts which would have the effect of creating great disturbance and great political danger. As an instance of the difficulty of these international arrangements, he might notice that there was now in Egypt an institution called an International Sanitary Board, at which were represented almost all the nations of Europe, small and great. The result was that in that Sanitary Board were represented many of the petty European Kingdoms which had practically no interest in Egypt. It was a somewhat dangerous state of things that the gentlemen upon the Sanitary Board were not gentlemen specially appointed for the purpose, but were local gentlemen carrying on the trade and commerce of the country. That Board of 18 members, of whom France and England had only two, had instituted regulations which appeared to the merchants and shipowners of London to be vexatious in the very highest degree; and it was impossible to get rid of those regulations without consulting all those petty Powers. The consequence had been that the traffic of the Suez Canal had within the last few months been seriously interfered with, to the detriment of trade and commerce; and he understood that a very great deal of profit to the local community of the Europeans established in Egypt had resulted from the detention of vessels in the Canal, and the enormous prices which had been paid for tugs and pilots and things of that kind. Therefore, it might happen that the members of the Sanitary Board might find themselves in a position in which their private interests were arrayed on the same side as the public prejudice. There was a strong feeling among the mercantile community here that this should rather be dealt with by an autonomous Government than by one of those complicated tribunals. He wished to avoid the burning political questions which had arisen; but would just say one word on the question of European Control, which, in the hands of the Controllers, had been rapidly becoming a European administration of Egypt. This was said to be a satisfactory state of things; but he confessed he had very considerable doubts upon it, because they found, when they dealt with foreign countries in different parts of the world, that it very often happened that the Natives would rather be ill-governed by their own people than well-governed by foreigners. The late Lord Lawrence once instituted an inquiry into the relative advantages of European and Native rule in India; and it was found that the Natives were not at all clear that the advantages were so decidedly on the side of European rule as one was apt to suppose. And if there could be any doubt on that point in the case of a country like India, how much greater must the doubt be as to Egypt, where the circumstances were very different and very much more dangerous, especially as there was this enormous disadvantage—that they had not one Power trying to do their best for the people of Egypt, but a cumbrous Joint Control, which rendered good administration infinitely more difficult? He was not prepared to say that jobbing had been carried on to a great extent in Egypt; but, looking at the enormous amount of patronage, and remembering how much human nature was given to nepotism, he should not be surprised if there was a considerable degree of truth in the allegation that there was a good deal of nepotism and jobbing in regard to the *personnel* of the European Administration. Again, there was an uncertainty with respect to the stability of the European Control in Egypt. The Natives of India were accustomed to our rule and believed in its stability; but the case was very different in Egypt, where, owing to its peculiar character, the combined Control which existed to-day might be upset to-morrow by some divergence of view arising between the European Powers. They were sometimes told that under the European Control the Natives had great advantages in respect to taxation; but he was not so sure of that. He was aware the taxes had been regulated, and that new brooms usually swept clean. He had no doubt that had been well regulated; but he was not so sure that the taxation had really been diminished, seeing that an enormous revenue was raised from the people, more than double that which was required for the administration of the country, and more than half of it was paid away to foreigners. He thought they must all feel that there was a danger to ourselves and our neighbours in this system of Joint Control. It was said there was nothing so dangerous as two friends travelling together, as they were almost certain to quarrel before they reached the end of their journey. He thought this country and France had undertaken a somewhat hazardous Egyptian tour together. He hoped the newspapers were right in their interpretation of the action of the Government of France, it having been announced that morning that the French Controller had been withdrawn, and the inference being that the French proposed to interfere as little as possible; and he trusted the Government of this country would do the same. He hoped the Government would regard interference as at best a necessary evil, and that it would be only temporary, and as little as possible. He particularly urged that great social and political evil was likely to result if the great private debts to which he had referred were allowed to be superadded to the public Debt of Egypt which already existed. It might be that the Government of France was at present peaceable and reasonable; but another man of heroic mould, like Gambetta, might by-and-bye prevail on France to pursue a different policy. Other nations might demand a share in that policy; indeed, they had a share already in the international tribunals, and the difficulties might increase. When we interfered with foreign countries, we said it was for the benefit of the Natives; but there was a good deal of hypocrisy in that. It was the interest of the money-lenders of this country and of France that had prevailed in the case of Egypt, not the interest of the Natives. Now, he should like to see Egypt as autonomous as possible. He did not see why the Egyptians—an acute, peaceable, and moderate people—should not be allowed to govern themselves. It might be that they would have a revolution now and again. Why should they not have an occasional revolution, as other States had? He did not see why they should not. We had had a great many revolutions before we attained our present state of peace and quiet, and he did not see why they should not have a trial of autonomy on one condition, that being that the freedom of the Suez Canal, as a great international highway, should be maintained. But was it the case that there had been any anarchy in Egypt which interfered with the international interests of Europe in that Canal? On the contrary, had that Canal not been made for the benefit of Europe, very much with Egyptian money and altogether with Egyptian labour? The lives of thousands of Egyptians had been sacrificed in making it, and, as far as the Egyptians were concerned, we had enjoyed perfect freedom of commerce through that Canal up to the present. He believed that every international agreement was an evil, it might be a necessary evil; but on the single point of the Suez Canal he was free to confess that the object of maintaining it as an international concert was so great that some international system for that purpose should be maintained. There was an international system with regard to the Danish Sound, and another with respect to the navigation of the Danube. But as far as we were concerned, if things came to the worst, we had got a great highway to India round the Cape. He begged to move the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

MR. CROPPER seconded the Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "it is inexpedient to make, or renew on expiry, engagements by which Foreign Governments may have a claim to insist on the enforcement of private debts against natives of Egypt, the transfer of lands, vexatious sanitary regulations, and other demands, in supersession of the autonomous legislation and government of the country; excepting only provision for the free use of the Suez Canal as an International commercial waterway,"—(*Sir George Campbell,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. M'COAN said, that, although he apprehended this discussion was likely to be rather academical than practical, he would like to say a few words on the other side of the question. The speech of the hon. Member opposite (Sir George Campbell) would be regarded in Egypt as an attack upon the international tribunals; and as he (Mr. M'Coan) knew something of the manner in which those Courts had worked in Egypt up to the present time, he wished to say that they had been the one reform in the history of the East during the present generation, which commanded universal approval in Egypt. They were, in fact, almost the only effective and successful reform which had been achieved by European influence in that country. In the administration of justice they had created nothing less than a revolution. Seven years ago, before these Courts were established, such a thing as justice was unknown in Egypt, and more especially in the cases where Europeans were interested. The prosecution of a claim against an Egyptian Native by an European plaintiff was formerly managed through the foreign Consulates, and the process almost invariably led to great corruption. The late Khedive carried on a long negotiation with a view to reform these abuses, with the result that these institutions were established, composed of nominees of the principal Powers, presumably the best men their respective Foreign Offices could recommend. And, although there were varying shades of ability and learning in the Judges thus selected, the Courts as a whole had given great satisfaction, and the men composing them had discharged their duties with honour, integrity, and efficiency. The hon. Gentleman had spoken of it as a ground of offence that they made the Natives pay their just debts. However much he (Mr. M'Coan) might wonder at such a fact being made ground of complaint, he could say, that whenever judgment was so given against Native defendants, it was invariably just. The result was that these tribunals were popular even with the Natives themselves; and the scale of fees being exceedingly moderate, justice could generally be had for a few piastres. The hon. Member for Kirkcaldy had further complained that they were above the Government; but that in his (Mr. M'Coan's) opinion was one of their greatest merits. They were thus able to do justice as it had never been done before between the Khedive and the humblest plaintiff or defendant. Hon. Members could hardly realize how little authority the so-called Egyptian Legislature really possessed. Its Members were ignorant peasants, most of whom had been bastinadoed at one time or other for non-payment of their taxes. It was true that a large proportion of the Judges of the international tribunals were Natives; but secure in their position, and with the example of their European Colleagues before their eyes, they had become, as a rule, equally fearless and upright. If any improvement in the condition of the people of Egypt were needed it would be best effected, he believed, not by curtailing, but by extending the power of those tribunals and bringing all classes, both Native and foreign, under their jurisdiction.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, that the speech of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) had touched upon three special subjects, the question of Control, the question of the national movement, and the question of international tribunals. He (Mr. Goschen) did not intend to discuss the advantages or disadvantages of the Control, or to venture upon the exceedingly delicate ground of the political situation in Egypt. That situation seemed to him to present every kind of difficulty, and, knowing, as he did, the attention paid in the East to everything said in that House—for hon. Members could scarcely exaggerate the interest with which their debates were followed at Constantinople and at Cairo — he trusted they would be exceedingly careful in the remarks they might make upon that subject. Before expressing any opinion, he thought they would do well to wait till they had Papers before them, showing what information was in the hands of the Government; for, with their present information, it would not be safe for them to express any opinion whatever as to the attitude of one party or the other in Egypt. There were many inaccurate statements appearing in the newspapers, among many, no doubt, that were accurate, and it was at present impossible for them to discover the truth. In the letters he himself received from Cairo there were the most contradictory views expressed as to the character both of Arabi Bey and Mahmoud Pasha, and of the "National movement," so that it would be unwise on their part if they were prematurely to pronounce against the possibility of there being a National movement in Egypt. He hoped, therefore, they would reserve their opinion till they had more light, and that the opinions expressed by the hon. Gentleman (Sir George Campbell) would not be understood in Egypt as being the opinion of the House of Commons. With regard to the international tribunals, he should have thought that, if there was one institution in the East introduced from the West which had proved more than any other a success in the eyes of Europeans and Natives, that institution was the international tribunals in Egypt. The objection, however, taken to them by the hon. Gentleman was in reality that they were too strong and too efficient. To abolish the international tribunals would be to strike at the very basis and foundation of civilization—namely, the pure administration of justice. He entirely agreed with the hon. Member as to the possible dangers of the land of Egypt being absorbed by foreign money-lenders; but considered that the hon. Member had committed himself to rather an extravagant mode of giving vent to his opinions when he wished to re-introduce Turkish or Arabian in the place of European tribunals, in order to frighten capital away. The hon. Member had spoken as if the introduction of European capital into Egypt was almost a curse, and as if the good administration of justice was an evil because it encouraged capital. He (Mr. Goschen) trusted the Government would not assent to the Resolution; but that when the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs came to speak, he would state that the maintenance of international tribunals was a matter of great importance not only to England, or to the European Powers and capitalists, but that it was essentially of value as teaching the Egyptians and Mohammedans generally the value of pure and incorruptible justice. The selection of the Judges and the probity of their conduct had generally been praised; and, notwithstanding the many failures which had been encountered in the endeavour to regulate the affairs of Egypt, and the jealousies which naturally existed between different nationalities, these tribunals had worked together in such a manner as to command the esteem of the whole community—he might almost say without exception—in Egypt. He hoped that Her Majesty's Government would agree that the international Courts ought to be maintained, and he considered that a great debt of gratitude was due to Nubar Pasha for the force and for the courage with which he had introduced those institutions into Egypt.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, he did not think that, after the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), there was much left to be said on the part of Her Majesty's Government, who were, moreover, very anxious that some progress should be made in Supply that night. He agreed with much that had fallen from the hon. Member for Wicklow (Mr. M'Coan), who had done great service to the House in the way in which he dealt with international tribunals, and also with what had fallen from his right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon. His hon. Friend the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell) had warned the House against the dangers that would arise in the event of these international tribunals not being put an end to. But the abuses of the old system had been clearly pointed out by the present Lord Derby in a despatch written in 1868, and that despatch so admirably contrasted the state of things prevailing before the existence of these tribunals, and foreshadowed so excellently the state of things existing now, that he could not do better than refer hon. Gentlemen interested in the subject to it. Lord Derby, at that time, pointed out that the system then existing had become a great abuse, as the whole authority of local tribunals had been usurped by the extra-territorial jurisdiction; and his suggestions were marvellously accurate as to the effect which tribunals similar to those now existing would have on the people and the country. His hon. Friend had not proved any portion of his case. In the first place, he had asserted that there was great danger that the whole of the land in Egypt would pass into the hands of the foreign money-lenders; but, in the course of a long speech, he had failed to show any reasonable ground for that apprehension. For his own part, he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) ventured, upon the best authority, to deny that there was any reason to expect that such would be the case. Looking at the whole of the speech of his hon. Friend, he felt it necessary to ask what he was driving at, because, if the international tribunals were merely to be got rid of, the whole of those abuses against which Lord Derby had protested would be revived. It must be remembered, moreover, that throughout the whole of his speech his hon. Friend did not put forward any alternative scheme in place of that which was now being worked with success in Egypt. The quinquennial period for which the Courts were established in the first instance expired at the beginning of this year, and a renewal for one year had been agreed upon. In the interval, inquiry was being made, and an exchange of views was taking place between the Powers and the Egyptian Government as to the results of the system up to the present time, and as to the conditions under which it might be renewed. His hon. Friend seemed to be unacquainted with the history of the establishment of these mixed tribunals, the services they had rendered in a greater degree probably to the Native than to the foreigner, and the absence of an independent judicial system in Egypt outside these Courts. The immediate result of a lapse of existing arrangements would be a revival of all the old Capitular prerogatives of 17 different Consular jurisdictions, and of the system of enforcing foreign claims by diplomatic pressure, abuses which, before 1876, were exercised to the enormous detriment of Egyptian interests, and were surrendered most reluctantly by certain of the Powers, mainly by the insistence of the British Government. The idea of Nubar Pasha, the author of the reform, was to apply it to the Native population as well as for foreigners; but he was unable to carry his point in this respect. He intended, side by side with the international tribunals, to establish Native Courts affiliated to the former, presided over by a certain number of competent Judges selected by the Egyptian Government in foreign countries. He desired gradually to accustom the people to the notion of independent judicial procedure, and felt that he could only do it by having recourse to foreign assistance in the first instance, with the ultimate expectation of arriving at a purely Egyptian institution. Only half his scheme was, however, adopted, and the policy of all well wishers of Egypt should be to complete it, and not to undo what had been effected. His hon. Friend seemed to think that the tribunals were unpopular with the Natives; but all the evidence went to show that the exact opposite was the case. The Government were informed on all sides that the Courts were just as popular with the Natives as with Europeans; and he might state also that there was a very strong Native movement in Egypt in favour of placing the whole of the cases between Native and Native under the control of these tribunals. There had been undoubtedly in the speech of his hon. Friend a great begging of the question, because he had argued that there were great defects in the present system, and that he was prepared to return to the old system, the vice of which he admitted, rather than continue to bear the evils of which he complained, and of the existence of which evils he had given no proof whatever. No question as to any one of these Courts had ever been raised by the Native population in Egypt, or by the Egyptian Government. Another proof of the confidence these tribunals inspired was to be found in the fact that property was now registered in their land offices, in preference to the Native land offices, to the amount of about £8,000,000. The sole charge which had been made against the Courts by his hon. Friend, which, however, was unsupported by any evidence, was that they served too much as debt-collecting machines for the money-lenders, and that their procedure facilitated the forced sale of land; but at least two-thirds of the business of the tribunals had nothing to do with the money-lenders, by whom was meant the class which lent money on the security of land. It was a class which had always existed in Egypt, where there was heavy taxation and an improvident people. The effect of the Courts had been, by the greater security they afforded, to invite capital into the country and to lower the rate of interest. Money used to be advanced by petty usurers at the rate of 4 per cent a-month. It was now lent at 9 per cent per annum by large financial establishments. Debts used to be collected through the intervention, first of the Cadi, who sold his justice, and next through the Mudir, or Provincial Governor, who alone could execute the sentences, and whose services were equally venal. If the peasant could not or would not pay, he was imprisoned and flogged. That had been abolished, and debts were now collected by a tribunal according to law. There was no imprisonment for debt, and, it was needless to add, no flogging. In cases of mere debt collection, the mixed tribunals exempted from seizure goods and chattels which were necessary to the maintenance and occupation of the debtor. No such rule existed formerly. As regarded land questions, the Courts had worked good. For instance, by a series of decisions, they had laid down the principle of undivided or family ownership, which obtained under Mahomedan law, and had never recognized a mortgage placed on the family land by its head as binding the property, unless the head of the family had obtained the consent of all whom he represented. Very frequently the money-lender had thus lost what he thought a good security, and he began now to recognize the superior value of a title registered at the land office even as against possession and apparent ownership. The procedure of these Courts was extremely simple and within the reach of everyone, and such reforms as were really needed they might hope to be accomplished before the existence of the Courts was renewed for a further term of years. The popularity of the Courts was shown by the amount of work they did, and the increase had been extraordinarily rapid. The three tribunals of First Instance had given judgment on an average on 5,000 cases every year. The Court of Appeal had decided an average of 300 cases annually. The work done had steadily increased, as was shown by the following statement from the Court of Appeal:—In 1875-6 there was 87 cases decided; in 1876-7, 213; in 1877-8, 327; in 1878-9, 388; and in 1879-80, 405. It was to be regretted that the third tribunal at Mansourah had recently been suppressed. There was always much to be done, and it was especially useful from its position in the heart of the Delta to the Natives of Egypt, who now for their cases had to come either to Alexandria, which was practically outside Egypt proper, or on to Cairo, which was away on the confines of the desert. The mixed tribunal more than paid their own expenses by the judicial receipts; but the fees of Court were too high, and the Court of Appeal was now preparing a new tariff, which would reduce the fees 50 per cent in all smaller cases where the fellaheen were most concerned. The tribunals and the Appeal Court were all in arrears with their work. This arose from the large number of Judges required to sit in every case, from the limited jurisdiction of the summary justice or small causes Court, and from the cumbrous procedure. His hon. Friend had also said a few words about the Sanitary Board and the Board of Control. With regard to the question of Control, he should follow the advice of his right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), and say nothing on the subject at present. He not only thought it was dangerous to speak on the subject, but he also thought it was unnecessary, because in that respect, as in others, he would say that the Introducer of the Motion brought forward no evidence whatever to support his contentions. His hon. Friend spoke of the Sanitary Board; but the same remark applied to that as to the remainder of his speech—namely, that he did not say what he proposed the Government should do. On the proper occasion he (Sir Charles W. Dilke) could speak at length on that subject. The action of the Board was, no doubt, vexatious in the highest degree, and they had placed serious obstacles in the way of the commerce of all countries, and especially upon the large commerce of England. That Board, however, was not within the reach of the Government. The Government could, however, protest and take certain steps to induce the Board to see things as Her Majesty's Government saw them. He could assure the House the matter was receiving the most constant attention at the hands of the Government. His hon. Friend asked them to pronounce in favour of autonomous government in Egypt, a country which, until now, had possessed very little autonomous government. He did not think there were any grounds shown which ought to induce the House to adopt so sweeping a Motion, or to retrace the steps which had been taken in the establishment of the international tribunals, which formed one of the best institutions in the Eastern world. He must, therefore, meet it with a negative.

Mr. O'DONNELL, in supporting the Amendment of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Kirkcaldy (Sir George Campbell), said, that the discussion seemed to have travelled wide of its terms. He did not understand that the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy denied the advantages of the international tribunals, but that he drew attention to the fact that it was inexpedient to make a new expiry engagement by which foreign Governments might have the claim to insist upon enforcement of all private debts against Natives of Egypt and the transfer of lands. He could not agree with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), that the loans and capital were identical. It depended on the application of the loan whether it became capital or not. The essence of the objection of the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy was that a large portion of the loans would not prove reproductive, and that a crisis would sooner or later arrive similar to that which occurred in the Deccan, and that, therefore, there ought to be means established of effecting a compromise between the money-lenders and the fellaheen, so as to prevent the occurrence of like evils. Usurious speculators were now finding in Egypt an opportunity of placing loans to an immense amount amongst a primitive population, and on terms that would be found not less crushing, considering the wide extent of the borrowing, than that which had been before experienced. Farm after farm would be sure to come into the hands of European creditors, and unless an equitable arrangement was made a revolt would be the consequence. He admitted that the international tribunals were a great improvement upon the existing system, and that they gave judgments that were technically just; but there was a point in Egypt, as in Ireland, where it might be necessary to interfere with contracts in connection with the tribunals. As regarded the European Control, the National party at present in Egypt did not declare that such Control was useless. It recognized that within a large sphere it was most useful. But that party objected to the exaggerated salaries paid to Europeans, and to the endless multiplication of those officials. The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had said that there had been no complaint by the Egyptian people or Government. But it was only during the last few months that the people had any voice in the matter, and the Egyptian Government had been entirely in the hands of the international tribunals. Those who were conversant with the matter could testify to the hate and detestation that was universally felt throughout the Egyptian population against the swarm of highly-paid European officials. He hoped that improvements would be made in the constitution of the international tribunals, and that some provision would be made for equitable as well as strictly legal provisions, for really what was wanted was a Court of Equity in dealing with the question raised by the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy. The hon. Member had complained that the Egyptian National Government was composed of mere fellaheen—bastinadoed fellaheen; but it was a very illogical conclusion to come to, that because these men had suffered from oppression they would do nothing to lessen the oppression of others.

SIR GEORGE ELLIOT said, that he had only recently returned from a visit to Egypt; in fact, during the last 15 years he had annually visited that country. In that period he had travelled the whole length and breadth of the land. During the last six or seven years the improvement in the condition of the people had become most apparent, indeed so striking that no one could have possibly failed to notice it. With respect to that improvement, he believed that nothing had exercised a more beneficial influence than the international tribunals which formed the subject of the hon. Member's (Sir George Campbell's) Motion. They had worked admirably, and the rich pasha was treated with no more favour than the poorest fellah. He hoped their influence would extend throughout the whole country; but he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), that there was great need of caution and for a conciliatory spirit towards those with whom we did not altogether agree. He hoped nothing would induce Her Majesty's Government to relax the position which they had taken in Egypt, because our influence had been of the greatest benefit to the people. He thought the less said about the National party and Arabi Bey the better, and he hoped that no language would be used in that House which would give offence to any body of people in Egypt. With regard to the Control, it might be admitted that a large number of Europeans were employed, and that the salaries were high; but he did not believe that the Control cost the country more than £50,000 or £60,000 a-year. He thought that the evil was of no great magnitude, and would remedy itself. There was a growing opinion in favour of the greater employment of Native Egyptians, who were very steady and trustworthy; and wherever a Native could be substituted for a European in the service that had been done. He hoped there would be as little interference as possible with the Control, which had worked well with the country.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," again proposed.

ARMY—DRESS OF THE ARMY.

OBSERVATIONS.

Colonel **BARNE** rose to call attention to the dress of the Army, and said, that, had the Forms of the House permitted, he should have been glad to have moved the following Resolution:—

> "That the present conspicuous colour and tight-fitting Dress of the Army interferes with the efficiency of the soldier and causes the unnecessary loss of many valuable lives."

He had brought forward the subject last year, when the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War admitted that a change ought to be made in this respect, and suggested that he should bring the matter on when the Estimates for Soldiers' Clothing were discussed. He regretted that he had not done so; but when the time came two-thirds of the House were absent, and he deferred bringing the subject forward, in the hope that it would receive a more satisfactory discussion than it could have obtained last year. Nothing had yet been done in the matter, and he should like to know whether the right hon. Gentleman really intended carrying out what he had said? He did not complain of want of alteration in the uniform of the Army, because those changes had been frequent, and he knew that some of the small alterations which had been made had been of a vexatious character, and had been the cause of great expense to officers. Last year the right hon. Gentleman ordered the stars to be removed from the collars of the officers to their shoulder straps, and this slight change, which did no good whatever, cost each officer in the Guards about £20. The other day he was talking to an old Militia officer, who told him that since the year 1852 his headdress had been changed no fewer than eight times. His (Colonel Barne's) complaint was that the alterations were made in an entirely wrong direction. First, with regard to the colours worn, it had been found by the Emperor Napoleon that the most conspicuous were white, black, gamboge, and then scarlet; thus, the dress of our Army was composed of the most conspicuous colours that could be found. The Rifles, for instance, who ought to be the least visible, were clothed in black, which was the second most conspicuous colour. Moden warfare consisted largely of battles between two lines of skirmishers, each armed with weapons of precision, so that the loss of life was necessarily conspicuous amongst the more conspicuous body. This was proved by the experience of our men in the conflict with the Boers in South Africa, and more recently by the testimony of the Austrians in Herzegovina. Our losses in the Transvaal War were, generally speaking, due to the superior marksmanship of the Boers, and their ability to pick out our men, whereas the English soldiers complained that they could see nothing of the enemy except their heads. It was found that the grey dress of the Rifles was far less conspicuous. That colour was also advocated by Military and Volunteer officers who had tested the point. He also advocated a change of colour on the ground of economy, for the scarlet dye took the oil out of the wool and impaired its durability. He objected to the tight-fitting tunic, because it did not allow the lungs to expand in a natural way when a man began to ascend a hill, or to do any kind of hard work. The regulation trouser was also objectionable, because it gave an immense drag at the knee, especially if it got wet through. He should like to see the British troops dressed in a Norfolk jacket, breeches loose at the knee, and gaiters, with a light helmet, which would not impede the men in their work. He could not move the Resolution of which he had given Notice; but he had ventured to bring the subject under the notice of the right hon. Gentleman, in the hope that he would consider it, and make a move, if possible, in the direction indicated.

Lord **ELCHO** said, he entirely agreed with the hon. and gallant Member who had just sat down (Colonel Barne), that an unnecessary expenditure had been thrown upon officers by the alteration in the collar and shoulder straps, also that soldiers should wear a dress thoroughly adapted to the work they had to do, and did not think he could add anything to what he had said. As to the question of expense entailed by the changes in the uniform, such as altering the mark of rank from the collar to a shoulder strap, he believed the cost to an officer involved by the renewal of uniform in accordance with the changes was about £20, which he was bound to say was a very unnecessary expenditure. As regarded the question of convenience and comfort in the matter of uniform, he was an advocate of easy clothing, as the movements of a soldier should not be constrained by his uniform. The clothing of the hard-working navvies was loose, and they wore a strap under the knee to prevent the dragging of the trousers. He believed it was a fact that if two men, equal in all other respects, were set to walk, one dressed in knickerbockers or a kilt, and the other in the present uniform of a soldier, in course of the day the former would very considerably outwalk the other; and, besides, trousers were not so fitted for work as other descriptions of clothing. The Secretary of State for War was the person really responsible for the efficiency of the uniform; and he wondered how his right hon. Friend the present Secretary of State for War, who was a most kind and indulgent man, and about as sensible a one as he (Lord Elcho) was acquainted with, when he went down every day to his office could bear to see the sentries with trousers so tight at the knees and baggy below, that it seemed impossible for them to go up and down hill without splitting them. The trousers were, in fact, the very reverse of what they ought to be. It was the custom to ridicule the "peg-tops" worn by the French troops; but they were much more sensible than the trousers of the English soldier. Then, in the Cavalry, the clothes were so tight that the men could hardly mount, and only did so at imminent risk of splitting their trousers. He hoped his right hon. Friend would give his attention to these matters, which were by no means trivial, but essential to the welfare and efficiency of the Army, and would see especially that good and efficient leggings were supplied. He would now turn to the question of colour. As regards the colour, the War Office Volunteer Committee had reported in favour of the Volunteers being clothed in red. He had on his right his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Berkshire (Sir Robert Loyd Lindsay), who was a Member of that Committee. He was a great advocate of scarlet, and, having won his Victoria Cross in red, naturally thought there was no colour like scarlet for the British soldier. But he (Lord Elcho) did not share in that partiality, and he therefore obtained permission for the regiment he commanded to retain their old grey uniform; and he hoped that, instead of the whole Force being put into red, they would be turned into grey. When the Army went to India, the soldiers were dressed in a uniform khaki or dust-colour, and in the Ashantee campaign the dress of the London Scottish was adopted. At the time of the Edinburgh Volunteer Review, he met Sir Frederick Roberts, after he had been round looking at the troops as they were drawn up, and that officer said—

> "I only wish an order would come out that within five years every Volunteer should be clothed in grey instead of red. I am so struck with grey as being a very much better colour than red."

He (Lord Elcho) had great hopes that, instead of all the Volunteers becoming red, there was some chance from something he had heard—and perhaps his right hon. Friend would tell the House if he was right—that the working dress of the Army would be made grey. He was told that experiments were being made at the present with a view of testing what really was the effect of colour at distances in Woolwich marshes and elsewhere. With the small Army we were able to put into the field these were matters of the greatest importance, for it simply meant whether in action a greater or less proportion of our men were to be hit or not. Recently, wishing to try some experiments with a range finder, and sighting a Martini-Henry rifle, he had a target erected at 2,000 yards distance. Had that target been grey, he would not have seen it at the distance; but he covered it with red Turkey twill, and saw it flaming at the other end like a danger signal on a railway. To give them an idea of the accuracy of the weapon, every shot from that distance would have gone into a space not larger than the Palace Yard, or into a regiment in column. Whether they could see men or not at that distance, would depend on the colour of their dress; and with the view of effecting a saving of life, as well as on the score of convenience and comfort, the question of uniform was one which should be thoroughly gone into.

Mr. CHILDERS said, he was sure no Member of the House would complain of the character of the remarks which the hon. and gallant Gentleman (Colonel

Barne) and his noble Friend (Lord Elcho) had made. He must, however, take exception to one of the remarks of the hon. and gallant Member about small alterations of uniform, and especially about the change made above a year ago in the marks on the collar and shoulder strap denoting rank. For these he (Mr. Childers) was not responsible; but he had clearly informed the House last year that henceforward the Secretary of State would be responsible for changes in uniform, and to this declaration he adhered. As to the particular object of the hon. and gallant Gentleman, he quite agreed in his general position that, putting colour aside, the fighting uniform of a soldier should be as appropriate for fighting as the shooting dress of a sportsman or gamekeeper was for the pursuit of game. In one respect the authorities were hardly responsible for undue tightness of dress, which they did not encourage, and which was the result often of commanding officers wanting their men to look smarter, and tightening their tunics. On the question of colour, he proposed to offer some explanation, when they were in Committee, as part of his general statement. He would only say now, that there was more to consider than the mere question of greater or less visibility, important as that was as a factor in the case.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PRISONERS UNDER THE ACT.—OBSERVATIONS.

MR. REDMOND, who had the following Resolution on the Paper :—

"That this House regrets the action of the Irish Executive in enforcing a rule whereby the suspects detained in various prisons in Ireland under the Coercion Act are locked in solitary confinement within their cells for eighteen out of every twenty-four hours, and is of opinion that such a rule constitutes a violation of the pledges of Ministers last Session, that no hardship which was not necessary for their safe custody would be entailed upon the suspects,"

rose to address the House——

MR. WARTON rose to Order. A Motion of his had precedence on the Paper.

MR. SPEAKER said, that the hon. and learned Member for Bridport could not now proceed with his Motion as he had not risen in time.

MR. WARTON said, he stood up when the last subject before the House was disposed of.

MR. SPEAKER said, the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond) was the only Member that rose when he put the Motion "That the Speaker do now leave the Chair." He was, therefore, entitled to proceed.

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present,

MR. REDMOND said, he regretted that the Forms of the House did not permit him to move the Resolution which he had upon the Paper. In calling attention to the subject to which that Resolution had reference, he did not propose to discuss the policy or impolicy of the Coercion Act, but the manner in which it had been carried out, and the undue hardships inflicted on men arrested under its provisions. The object of the Coercion Act, as stated by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, was to reach men engaged in the perpetration of outrage; but he did not think any defender of the Government would contend that that was the object the Chief Secretary for Ireland had in view in the recent administration of the Act. Under the Coercion Act hundreds of men, without any form of trial whatever, had been imprisoned, and had actually undergone longer imprisonment than they would have been sentenced to if they had been tried and found guilty. He was sure that all the Members of the House would agree with him that in administering such an Act great care should be taken not to inflict unnecessary hardships. There were many causes of complaint of the present treatment of prisoners in Ireland. But he proposed to call the attention of the House and the Government to one cause only, and that was that out of every 24 hours the men who had been arrested under the Coercion Act were locked in solitary confinement, were in their cells, 18 hours. Last Session Ministers frequently stated that the object of the Coercion Act was not to punish men, and that it would be used solely for the purposes of prevention. If that was the spirit in which this Act was to be administered, then it was the duty of the Government to take care that no undue hardship should be inflicted on the men in prison. The Chief Secretary for Ireland on many occasions last Session, when the Bill was in Committee, assured Members that no hardship would be inflicted which was not absolutely essential to safe custody. He (Mr. Redmond) ventured to appeal to the House, whether it was necessary for the safe custody of the "suspects" that they should be locked in solitary confinement in their cells 18 out of every 24 hours? He contended that the present regulations in this case should be so modified that, without the slightest danger to the safe custody of the prisoners, very much of the hardships which they at present suffered might be mitigated or done away with altogether. In considering the effect upon men of 18 hours' solitary confinement out of every 24, we must remember first the character of the men imprisoned, and next the sort of cells in which they were imprisoned. He was convinced that there were many men, even in England, who would be horrified to hear that for 18 hours out of every 24 the "suspects" were locked up in solitary confinement in cells, without either fireplace or windows, having only wretched little gratings the size of a man's hand. They had none of the cheerfulness or comfort which might be given to them by the presence and companionship of a fire; and as early as half-past 5 in the evening the "suspects" were locked up within these cells, where they were secured until a late hour the following morning. What must be the feelings of these men when they were locked up for the night on a spring day, when the days were lengthening? No words could exaggerate the hardship of such a punishment; and all he asked was that the prison regulations might be so modified that the prisoners might be allowed an extra hour or two of association with one another after half-past 5 in the evening. Surely this might be done without in any way endangering the safe custody of the "suspects," or causing any inconvenience or trouble to the prison officials or the Government. This was his only request, and he was convinced that if it went forth to Ireland tomorrow that it had been scouted by the Government and refused, if it were possible to do so, that fact would further embitter the feelings of the Irish people against the coercive government of the right hon. Gentleman, and prove to them that the Chief Secretary's words last Session were spoken in vain and in insincerity, when he assured the House that his object was not to inflict punishment upon the "suspects," but simply to prevent the perpetration of outrages. He challenged the right hon. Gentleman to show how he could consistently refuse this moderate demand. It would be no consolation to him to be told that the "suspects" were treated like untried prisoners, for while untried prisoners could only be kept waiting trial for a limited time, those who were incarcerated in Kilmainham were in the clutches of the Government, and might be kept in durance vile for an indefinite period. He might, in passing, allude to the manner in which men usually convicted of crimes in this country were treated. Mr. Valentine Baker was convicted of a crime, and was sentenced to a term of imprisonment to prevent his doing harm in the future; but as punishment for the heinous character of the offence which he committed was he treated as the "suspects" were to-day? He understood that Mr. Baker had his suite of rooms, and a constant flow of visitors from morning till night to pass away the tedious hours of imprisonment. He had every luxury that could be given him. Yet these men in Ireland, unconvicted and unaccused of any crime, and who enjoyed the confidence of the Irish people, were treated infinitely more harshly than those who had been convicted of heinous crimes. Did the Chief Secretary believe that it was necessary to confine them in their cells for 18 out of 24 hours? Such a regulation was not necessary for their safe custody, and would not be tolerated by a Government possessing the ordinary feelings of humanity. The regulations of the Act of 1877 for untried prisoners had been modified by the Lord Lieutenant in favour of the "suspects," who were allowed to associate for six hours in the day. He asked for an extension of this time for association, wishing that the prisoners might be given one or two additional hours for the same purpose after the evening meal and before bedtime. Many of those imprisoned under the Protection of Person and Property Act were not literate men, and in their case the long, solitary evening could not fail to be very wearisome. He did not ask the Government to assent to his request as a favour. He proffered his demand as a right, being of opinion that, in enforcing the regulations under which the "suspects" were now suffering, the Government were breaking the pledges which they made last year.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I have only two remarks to make to the hon. Member for New Ross. In the first place, I cannot admit that any of the "suspects," excepting those imprisoned for treasonable practices, have been arrested without being, in my opinion, at least connected with outrages—that is, if intimidation be outrage, as I think it is. [Mr. REDMOND: Father Sheehy.] Well, I consider Father Sheehy was connected with outrage, and I think that the man who instigates to outrage is very often quite as guilty, and sometimes more guilty, than the man who perpetrates it. When the hon. Member says that many of them are imprisoned much longer than they would have been under the Common Law, I will repeat what I have said before this Session, that they might have been prosecuted under the Whiteboy Act. I suppose no one at the present time would think of resorting to some of the punishments of the Whiteboy Act, such as flogging; but they certainly would resort to imprisoning, which, under the Whiteboy Act, is very long. It amounts to penal servitude; and therefore the statement of the hon. Member that they are imprisoned for a longer time than they could have been under the Common Law is not a correct one. Now, with regard to this rule, the hon. Member says we have broken the pledges which we gave last Session. I think it is impossible that the hon. Member can recollect what happened last year when he makes such a statement. It is not as if this rule had not been thoroughly debated. There were debates for hours, almost for days, on the length of time which prisoners should be allowed exercise. The hon. Member says we are taking the punishment for untried prisoners. That was the basis of the rule; but it was objected that the rule for untried prisoners would give 22 hours' confinement out of the 24—a very strong objection. Well, I felt the force of that objection, and stated that we would modify the rules and put them on the Table of the House. Hon. Member after hon. Member went on to the supposition that there was only to be two hours' exercise. The rules were put on the Table of the House, and they contained what has been the case in the Westmeath Act, which has worked, I suppose, as well as any prison rules can work — namely, six hours. I had a question asked me by the noble Lord the Member for North Northumberland (Earl Percy), who thought that too much indulgence was given. At the time I stated there would be 18 hours of confinement out of the 24; therefore, when the hon. Member speaks of breaking pledges, nothing can be more contrary to the fact. The understanding of every person connected with the Act was that the rule would allow six hours' exercise out of the 24, and no Member objected to that. That is my simple answer. I may remind the hon. Member that six hours out of 24 is a great deal longer than is given to untried prisoners; and I may state that proper arrangements have to be made for the due management of prisons, and for the safe keeping of the prisoners, as well as for the prevention of what, I am sorry to say, we do find to be the case—namely, the prisoners making use of their liberty for communication outside, and for carrying on some of the very projects for the furtherance of which they were imprisoned. We cannot be blind to that fact while it exists. The hon. Member speaks of the advantage that would be enjoyed by giving the "suspects" time after half-past 5. I can only say that I will communicate with the prison authorities and see whether these hours cannot be spread over such parts of the day as would be more acceptable to the prisoners themselves, though I may state that the complaint comes simply from the hon. Member, and that I have heard of no complaint from the prisoners themselves. Therefore, I should, first of all, wish to know what they really thought about it with regard to variation of time before I could make a regulation. I am afraid that is all I can say on the subject.

MR. MOLLOY said, there was not one word uttered by the Chief Secretary for Ireland against conceding what his hon. Friend had asked which might not also have been employed against giving the "suspects" any recreation whatever. It seemed that the Prime Minister, and indeed the entire Liberal Government, felt more for political prisoners undergoing incarceration in foreign countries than they did for the 600 of Her Majesty's subjects who in a portion of the United

Kingdom had been thrust into prison on suspicion. If it were necessary, he might quote from the humane writings of the Prime Minister with regard to the imprisonments in Naples. But what good would it be to do so, since the Government had disappeared? He considered it was almost waste of time to appeal to the Chief Secretary for Ireland; and if any proof were required he would only point to the short and "pert" answer just given to his hon. Friend. The right hon. Gentleman having replied to a question which so much concerned his administration, immediately walked out of the House, leaving the Irish Members to discuss the subject amongst themselves. He, for one, was not prepared to put up with such treatment as that. He believed that the imprisonment of these "suspects" was one of the most gigantic mistakes the Government had ever made—nay, it was worse than a mistake, it was an absolute crime against the peace of Ireland. He wished to draw the attention of his countrymen to the fact that while this important question was being debated the entire Government had walked out of the House. He could conceive nothing more disgraceful or discreditable to the Irish administration of Her Majesty's Government—the Ministerial Benches empty, the whole of the Liberal Benches deserted; not one of those Radical Members present who had made such splendid promises when they wanted to catch the votes of the Irish electors. They had all gone, and the question then before the House was being discussed by a dozen Irish Members and three or four Conservatives. Under these circumstances, he would say no more; and he thought the most dignified course for the Irish Members to adopt would be to leave the subject where it then stood, and to let the country see how far the Government took charge of matters they professed to have in hand, and the treatment the Government was prepared to offer those who simply went to that House to perform their duty.

Mr. SEXTON said, he was sorry to be obliged to agree with his hon. Friend who had just sat down, that it was futile to discuss that or any Irish question in that House. The brief and curt reply given by the right hon. Gentleman to the moderate speech of the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond), was sufficient proof of the folly of Irish Members making objections to anything with the hope of receiving consideration or attention from the Government. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had assured the House that during the passage of the Coercion Act no objection was made to the limitation of six hours for association and exercise. He had a right to reply that the six hours' rule had not then been tested by experience. He, at least, had tested it in his own person, and the relatives of others were testing it now, and they all could assure the House that the six hours' rule amounted to nothing short of positive daily torture. It had been contended that many of the "suspects" were undergoing, on suspicion, longer terms of imprisonment than they could receive at Common Law after conviction. The right hon. Gentleman, driven behind the only Statute which a Constitutional Minister could acknowledge, was forced in reply to fall back upon that hateful compendium of tyrannical practice which was called the Whiteboy Act. That Act provided that persons found guilty after trial before a Judge of certain grave offences might be sentenced to be flogged three times and transported beyond the seas for seven years. The mere mention of this sentence was enough to prove that a Statute which provided so barbarous a sentence after trial and conviction ought not, in the latter part of the 19th century, to be applied to untried prisoners arrested on suspicion. He had intended to express regret that the Forms of the House prevented his hon. Friend taking a Division; but when he remembered the observations of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and the curt, unsympathetic, and inhuman manner in which he had treated his hon. Friend's appeal, and when he saw the Benches which, on a common Party question would be crowded to repletion, completely empty to-night because it was only a question of humanity that was before them, he could not say the words he had intended. He could not regret that his hon. Friend was not permitted to take the sense of the House, because he could not feel that from the sense of the House there was any hope for Ireland upon this question. The 11th rule of the regulations made by the Lord Lieutenant under the powers conferred upon him by the Coercion Act was—

"Prisoners may be in association during exercise, and for any further period not exceeding six hours each day, subject to such regulations as the General Prisons Board, with the approval of the Lord Lieutenant, may from time to time make."

It was with the hope that the Government might be moved to modify this rule that the hon. Member for New Ross gave Notice of his Motion. If they wished to realize the daily torture inflicted on 600 untried prisoners under that rule, they had to reflect upon the classes of persons imprisoned. He supposed no person would say that the persons called "suspects" in the hateful jargon of the Government belonged to the ordinary criminal classes. They were men upon whom prolonged imprisonment would produce serious effects as regarded both health and intellect. They belonged either to a class which could, when they wished, enjoy fresh air and healthful exercise, or they were farmers who lived mostly in the fields at work. To those men confinement for 18 hours in small and narrow cells—damp by day and dismal after dark—was positive torture. Since he had the honour of being a prisoner in Kilmainham he had received many letters from men of sensibility and refinement still in prison, and he could see from those letters that the writers hesitated to confide even to him the sufferings they had to endure. One person said that the confinement from an early hour in the afternoon till an advanced hour in the succeeding morning amounted to this, that many men were obliged for the greater part of that interval to live in a poisonous atmosphere. He supposed he need not go into any explanation. This was not the only indignity. They were weighed and searched like common criminals, and restrictions were placed upon visits from their friends which were galling to any man of natural affection. His personal experience might serve to throw some light upon the treatment of the prisoners. Though he was not in a condition to leave his bed his cell door was kept locked night and day. The ordinary cells were only locked during the night. His personal experience would illustrate the effect of the regulation upon men of even good health. He remembered having had on two occasions either to cry for assistance or to leave his cell. On the day of his arrival at Kilmainham the warders told him they would place in his cell a bell or some other means of communicating with the prison authorities. But during 18 days a bell was not placed there. He was thus left without any means of communicating with the prison staff, and on two occasions when it was necessary for him to call assistance he was obliged to leave his bed and crawl to the cell door and knock his fingers against the iron until he attracted the attention of a warder. He had to remain there shivering on each occasion for an hour, and one time almost fainted. When he had to undergo that ordeal a second time, it occurred to him that the Chief Secretary for Ireland — the Philanthropist he wished to be called—had an idea in his head that he might get rid of him (Mr. Sexton) by a more summary process than by a charge of high treason. He was compelled to suffer the annoyance of having another person—his nurse—confined in his cell with him. The prison officials had promised to procure him a separate cell, but forgot to keep their promise, and he (Mr. Sexton) was, in consequence, subjected to irritation and sleeplessness. He was not aware that the man had been guilty of any other crime except that of having nursed him; but he was allowed only one hour's exercise in a small yard filled with a poisonous atmosphere. The remaining 23 hours he was locked up in his (Mr. Sexton's) cell. One evening the nurse was taken ill, and he (Mr. Sexton) was compelled to suffer the additional discomfort that fact entailed. The door of the cell was locked, and as no communication existed the poor fellow was compelled to crawl to the door, as he (Mr. Sexton) had done, and to knock with his fingers against the iron door for a time that certainly seemed interminable. At length a warder came, and the man's request to be allowed out was replied to with unnecessary insolence. But the keys of the cell were not procurable, and he then learned for the first time that all the keys of the various cells were carried off to the Governor's house at 5 o'clock every evening; and the unfortunate man and 70 or 80 others had to exist under those conditions until 9 o'clock next morning without any opportunity of leaving their cells. Such conduct was barbarous. He could find no other word to apply to it. That was the treatment he had received, and it was probable that the prison officials were more careful not to exceed the regulations in his case than they were with other prisoners. Other men had not the opportunity of lifting up their voices in that House, and therefore he was compelled to refer to his own experiences, though he exposed himself to risk of receiving all sorts of anonymous and insulting letters, presumably from prison officials, for so doing. He could go at greater length into the matter; but he would only express a hope that if not from some Members of the Government Bench, at least from some Members on the other side of the House, they would hear something to show that they did not all postpone the claims of humanity to the claims of Liberalism, or, rather, mock Liberalism. He hoped they would hear from someone condemnation of such a system of cowardly and barbarous outrage. He asked the Government to put an end to tyranny and barbarism, which was contrary to their assured policy, and to the explicit letter of the Chief Secretary for Ireland last summer. The Chief Secretary for Ireland was using the Act, not for the purposes of repression, but of punishment. Why else were the prisoners—men accustomed all their life to live in the open air—not permitted more freedom, not allowed more intercourse with one another at least till 7 or 8 o'clock, instead of being shut up at half-past 5? There could be no danger in allowing them to talk with one another with the large number of warders present. They had been told that any inquiry into an Act of Parliament would be injurious to the prosperity and good government of Ireland; but more danger was to be feared from the exercise of this arbitrary power, which was opposed to the instincts of civilization, and repugnant to the common interests of humanity.

Mr. CAINE said, there was a strong desire on the part of many of the supporters of Her Majesty's Government in that House, as well as out of it, that every leniency should be shown to the "suspects" now in prison in Ireland. During the passage of the Coercion Bill he voted for every Amendment which he thought would safely ease the pressure which was being put on the "suspects;" and he sincerely trusted the Government would take into their earliest consideration whether they could not ameliorate the condition of the misguided and unfortunate men—whom they felt themselves bound to imprison—in the direction in which they had heard so eloquently described that night.

Sir JOHN HAY confessed he had heard with great regret the account given by the hon. Member for Sligo of his sufferings, and he never imagined when he voted for the Coercion Act that any such results would have occurred. He understood the Government to say that a few persons would be imprisoned, and that every case would be properly inquired into. He certainly did not imagine that the result of the measure would be that Ireland would go from bad to worse, that 4,000 outrages would be committed, and 600 men who had not committed them thrown into prison, while the 4,000 men who were guilty of them remained at large undetected. He did not think the hon. Member for Scarborough (Mr. Caine) went half far enough in his remarks. Had he been a Liberal of the old type he would have voted for a searching inquiry into the whole question. As a Scotch Member, he felt bound to lift his voice against the injustice that was taking place in Ireland. On another occasion he would express his conviction that another mode of policy was the only one by which Ireland could be made a country habitable by civilized men; but meanwhile he maintained that Irish Members had just cause for complaint that a certain number of men were in prison on suspicion, while the men who had committed the 4,000 outrages were still at large. Men were being called out of their beds to be shot at and maimed for fulfilling their just obligations, while the Government were helpless to put an end to such things. The Government made no sort of suggestion that the persons who were in prison were the same ones who committed the outrages, and yet they went on issuing *lettres de cachet* for their Irish bastiles.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY thanked the right hon. Baronet who had just sat down for his warm-hearted support. He did not regret the absence of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, nor did he desire to appeal to the sympathy of the House, but rather to that of the people outside. He would ask those who had heard the speeches made by his two hon. Friends, whether they would not come to the conclusion that the Government were using their powers in a manner which was not calculated to keep order, but merely intended to punish individual men? The statement made by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) was as impressive as it was simple and straightforward. Liberals must think they lived in strange times when punishment of that kind could be inflicted on men who admittedly did not belong to the criminal classes. The Chief Secretary for Ireland spoke of the fact that the Government, if they chose, could have prosecuted the "suspects" under the Whiteboy Act; but he forgot to mention that before punishment could be awarded under that Act the man must be tried and convicted, and that was not the case with the "suspects." A humble countryman in his own county had been arrested on a warrant charging him with being

> "Reasonably suspected of having instigated other persons unlawfully to intimidate other persons with a view to prevent their buying or selling to some other persons."

Did the House understand the crime for which that man was sent to gaol? How could the Whiteboy Act affect him? That was a very fair representation of a large number of men imprisoned under the Act. All the prison rules were harsh, and especially that which gave each prisoner 18 hours of solitary confinement every day in a stifling atmosphere. The House might imagine the ill effects of such a regulation on a man accustomed to plenty of fresh air and exercise. For himself, as a man of literary pursuits and more sedentary habits, he could only say that he had rather be tried by some more severe Act than be condemned to such a punishment. Whatever might be said in favour of such severity, it was idle to allege that it was necessary in the interests of order and good government, or to prevent communication with the outer world. He supposed the men, if they were so disposed, could send in six hours enough communications out of doors to create rebellion all over the Kingdom. They were the enemies of government and good order in Ireland who maintained such a system by force, and they were to some extent enemies of good government and order in Ireland who, knowing that system to be going on, did not boldly raise up their voices against it.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN was aware that there must be a good deal of iteration in a discussion of this sort, but the question was one that pressed itself upon the attention of the House. Besides, the arrests themselves furnished an instance of iteration, and justified a tolerably frequent renewal of protests from the Irish Members. When complaints were made of the treatment to which the prisoners were subject, the Chief Secretary for Ireland said it was all in the bond—all in the Act of Parliament. That was true, no doubt; but the House, when it passed the Coercion Bill, was unquestionably given to understand that the measure was aimed at criminals and perpetrators of midnight outrages, and not men of quite another character. Certainly, the declarations of the Government were that such was the object of the Act, and yet the persons arrested under it, or, at any rate, the majority of them, were men of reputation and respectability. There was a "Captain Moonlight" in Dublin Castle who was doing worse work than any of the others, whether he worked by moonlight or by gaslight. He worked in secret, and the trials he conducted and the sentences he passed were the work of himself and his gang of political conspirators. He did not see how the Government could denounce Ribbon trials or sentences in Ireland in view of their own secret tribunals. The Government talked of outrages, but committed outrages every day; for what greater outrage could there be than to deprive a man of his liberty on suspicion and, by imprisoning him, to impoverish his unoffending family? Outrage produced outrage, as surely as one blow led to another; and he therefore held the Government primarily responsible for the crimes that were now of too frequent occurrence in many parts of Ireland. A few days ago this country was startled by the perpetration of a very shocking crime. The country was startled by the crime of a madman or a miscreant, as the case might be, who had shot at Her Most Gracious Majesty. If it had happened, as it might have happened, that the perpetrator of the wicked crime had been an Irishman and not an Englishman, born in Oxford Street, London, what would not have been suffered in Ireland?

and it was probable that the prison officials were more careful not to exceed the regulations in his case than they were with other prisoners. Other men had not the opportunity of lifting up their voices in that House, and therefore he was compelled to refer to his own experiences, though he exposed himself to risk of receiving all sorts of anonymous and insulting letters, presumably from prison officials, for so doing. He could go at greater length into the matter; but he would only express a hope that if not from some Members of the Government Bench, at least from some Members on the other side of the House, they would hear something to show that they did not all postpone the claims of humanity to the claims of Liberalism, or, rather, mock Liberalism. He hoped they would hear from someone condemnation of such a system of cowardly and barbarous outrage. He asked the Government to put an end to tyranny and barbarism, which was contrary to their assured policy, and to the explicit letter of the Chief Secretary for Ireland last summer. The Chief Secretary for Ireland was using the Act, not for the purposes of repression, but of punishment. Why else were the prisoners—men accustomed all their life to live in the open air—not permitted more freedom, not allowed more intercourse with one another at least till 7 or 8 o'clock, instead of being shut up at half-past 5? There could be no danger in allowing them to talk with one another with the large number of warders present. They had been told that any inquiry into an Act of Parliament would be injurious to the prosperity and good government of Ireland; but more danger was to be feared from the exercise of this arbitrary power, which was opposed to the instincts of civilization, and repugnant to the common interests of humanity.

Mr. CAINE said, there was a strong desire on the part of many of the supporters of Her Majesty's Government in that House, as well as out of it, that every leniency should be shown to the "suspects" now in prison in Ireland. During the passage of the Coercion Bill he voted for every Amendment which he thought would safely ease the pressure which was being put on the "suspects;" and he sincerely trusted the Government would take into their earliest consideration whether they could not ameliorate the condition of the misguided and unfortunate men—whom they felt themselves bound to imprison—in the direction in which they had heard so eloquently described that night.

Sir JOHN HAY confessed he had heard with great regret the account given by the hon. Member for Sligo of his sufferings, and he never imagined when he voted for the Coercion Act that any such results would have occurred. He understood the Government to say that a few persons would be imprisoned, and that every case would be properly inquired into. He certainly did not imagine that the result of the measure would be that Ireland would go from bad to worse, that 4,000 outrages would be committed, and 600 men who had not committed them thrown into prison, while the 4,000 men who were guilty of them remained at large undetected. He did not think the hon. Member for Scarborough (Mr. Caine) went half far enough in his remarks. Had he been a Liberal of the old type he would have voted for a searching inquiry into the whole question. As a Scotch Member, he felt bound to lift his voice against the injustice that was taking place in Ireland. On another occasion he would express his conviction that another mode of policy was the only one by which Ireland could be made a country habitable by civilized men; but meanwhile he maintained that Irish Members had just cause for complaint that a certain number of men were in prison on suspicion, while the men who had committed the 4,000 outrages were still at large. Men were being called out of their beds to be shot at and maimed for fulfilling their just obligations, while the Government were helpless to put an end to such things. The Government made no sort of suggestion that the persons who were in prison were the same ones who committed the outrages, and yet they went on issuing *lettres de cachet* for their Irish bastiles.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY thanked the right hon. Baronet who had just sat down for his warm-hearted support. He did not regret the absence of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, nor did he desire to appeal to the sympathy of the House, but rather to that of the people outside. He would ask those who had heard the speeches made by his two hon. Friends, whether they would not come to the conclusion that the Government were using their powers in a manner which was not calculated to keep order, but merely intended to punish individual men? The statement made by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) was as impressive as it was simple and straightforward. Liberals must think they lived in strange times when punishment of that kind could be inflicted on men who admittedly did not belong to the criminal classes. The Chief Secretary for Ireland spoke of the fact that the Government, if they chose, could have prosecuted the "suspects" under the Whiteboy Act; but he forgot to mention that before punishment could be awarded under that Act the man must be tried and convicted, and that was not the case with the "suspects." A humble countryman in his own county had been arrested on a warrant charging him with being

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Did the House understand the crime for which that man was sent to gaol? How could the Whiteboy Act affect him? That was a very fair representation of a large number of men imprisoned under the Act. All the prison rules were harsh, and especially that which gave each prisoner 18 hours of solitary confinement every day in a stifling atmosphere. The House might imagine the ill effects of such a regulation on a man accustomed to plenty of fresh air and exercise. For himself, as a man of literary pursuits and more sedentary habits, he could only say that he had rather be tried by some more severe Act than be condemned to such a punishment. Whatever might be said in favour of such severity, it was idle to allege that it was necessary in the interests of order and good government, or to prevent communication with the outer world. He supposed the men, if they were so disposed, could send in six hours enough communications out of doors to create rebellion all over the Kingdom. They were the enemies of government and good order in Ireland who maintained such a system by force, and they were to some extent enemies of good government and order in Ireland who, knowing that system to be going on, did not boldly raise up their voices against it.

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Would not hon. Gentlemen opposite have pretended to find between the lines of some of the speeches made in Ireland an incitement to the outrage? He was perfectly certain that it would have been so, and that hundreds of arrests would have been made under that pretence. The whole system was unfair and unjust, and when the law itself was iniquitous evil begat evil, and all chance of peace was thrown away. Could the Government assert that the Act had had a good effect in any single particular? If not, they clearly ought to admit the logic of events and abandon coercion. Until this was done there would be no peace or tranquillity in Ireland.

Mr. LEAMY said, that although he did not now, and never did, expect very much good from the Government, he certainly was disappointed at the reply given by the Chief Secretary for Ireland to the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond). He did not think he would have lost the opportunity of making at least some slight concession. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that when these rules were under discussion in Committee they were debated for a considerable time. That was so, and one of the results of the discussion was that under the 3rd section of the Coercion Act power was given to the right hon. Member to modify and mitigate these harsh rules if he thought fit. He wished also to refer to the great difficulties which had to be encountered in visiting the prisoners confined under the Coercion Act in various prisons in Ireland. Under the existing arrangements at Kilmainham no more than half-a-dozen visitors could see the prisoners on any day. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had stated that the prisoners were allowed six hours a-day for communication with each other; but a Return forwarded to him (Mr. Leamy) by a "suspect," confined in Dundalk Gaol, showed that in the 21 days from 14th February to the 8th March the "suspects" in the gaol had been cheated out of nine hours and 31 minutes, or nearly half-an-hour a-day. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had promised that every facility would be given for visiting the prisoners; but, as a matter of fact, those facilities were not given. He had himself gone to visit his hon Friend the Member for Sligo in prison on two consecutive days, when the warder told him, in an insolent tone, that he could not see his hon. Friend, and shut the grating in his face. On the third day he went again and saw the Governor, or the Deputy-Governor, who told him that his hon. Friend was ill and unable to come to the visiting cage, and that he should not be allowed to see him. He ventured to say to the Governor that that was solitary confinement, and he appeared to be very indignant. For 21 days the hon. Member was thus confined in that prison and not permitted to receive a visit from a friend, when such a visit would have been about the best consolation he could obtain. The prison rule was that every prisoner should be allowed to be visited by one person, or, if circumstances permitted, by two persons at the same time, for a quarter of an hour on any week day during such hours as might be appointed. That rule had been deliberately broken to his knowledge over and over again. The 18 hours *per diem* of solitary confinement were also often exceeded, although, in the case of poor, illiterate men, who were unable to read, a far shorter period of solitary confinement in a miserable, cramped, and ill-lighted cell, more like a vault than anything else, must amount to absolute torture, and be enough to drive a man mad. He knew there were several in durance at present who were suffering seriously from the effects of this barbarous treatment. What could the Government gain by persisting in such a course of severity as that? The Irish people saw the men whom they trusted and elected as their Leaders and Representatives put into the gaols of the country and treated with needless cruelty. The House had been told that the mere introduction of the Coercion Act would drive away the men who were committing outrages. Well, the Coercion Act was passed, and 700 or 800 men were flung into prison, and yet outrages were still going on and increasing. Liberal Members who had supported the Coercion Act, as they alleged with reluctance, ought now to show their sincerity by insisting that the Act should not be administered with unjust harshness. He was inclined to believe that if they could only see the miserable little cells these men were confined in, even their loyalty to the Liberal Administration would not be sufficient to prevent them from joining with the Irish Members in any protest they might make against the action of the Government in this matter. In conclusion, he trusted that the hon. Member for New Ross would on the first opportunity take the sense of the House on the manner in which their present exceptional powers had been exercised by the Irish Executive.

Mr. MACFARLANE said, he joined most cordially in the appeal made to Her Majesty's Government for some mitigation of the severity of the Act. The appeal was a most reasonable one. He understood that the object of the Act was the prevention of intimidation, and not the punishment of the individuals arrested. He would have a much lower opinion of Irish Members than he had if they sat down contented with their own personal liberty without raising their voices on behalf of the men who were in prison. The power of detention had been given to Her Majesty's Government; but it was not intended that the power of torture should be given at the same time. The shutting up of men for 18 hours in a cell, which, as had been said, was little better than a stone coffin, was more than was necessary for detention. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had stated that one of the reasons why their hours of liberty had been restricted was because they made use of them to communicate with their friends outside. But if the prisoners must not communicate with their friends at all they had better be kept in solitary confinement the whole 24 hours. The exasperation of these men, nearly 600 in number, and the feeling of disloyalty engendered in the breasts of themselves and their friends, must be a far greater evil than any which would result from occasional communication with persons outside. He was quite willing to say, although he knew his hon. Friends behind him would not agree with him, the evil that had been done had been done with a good motive. [Mr. Biggar: Oh!] Indeed, it had been said that all evil was done with good motives. He did not impute a bad motive to any hon. or right hon. Gentleman sitting upon the Treasury Bench, especially the right hon. Gentleman representing the Irish Government; but he believed they were perfectly and hopelessly deluded upon the subject of the working of this Act. He believed that the action of Her Majesty's Government in its treatment of the prisoners tended to perpetuate outrages, and he said so deliberately. He believed it, because the feeling of exasperation in the country in the minds of the people was so great, not only by reason of the seclusion of their friends, but on account of the unnecessary sufferings inflicted upon them. He was glad to see the Chief Secretary for Ireland now in his place. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman would not imagine he had the slightest sympathy with outrage or disloyalty of any kind; and he would appeal to him to mitigate as far as possible the sufferings of the prisoners, who, if tried and found guilty, would not be punished more severely than they were now. He had appealed to the Government when the Land Act was passed to open the prison doors; but they did not do so, and what was the result? The feeling of disloyalty was growing every day, and if Her Majesty's Government saw the end of it all it was more than he did. Things were going from bad to worse. It appeared as if Her Majesty's Government had committed themselves to a war from which they could not withdraw. He regretted this with all his soul, because he was elected as a friend of Her Majesty's Government; but the action of the Government had compelled him to go against them, because his duty to his constituents was much higher than any claim any Party could have upon him.

Mr. GILL said, he agreed with his hon. Friends that the punishment felt most by the prisoners was their solitary confinement. On Sunday, if they went to their devotions, the time so spent was counted among the six hours. If such things were done by a foreign Government they would be called acts of petty tyranny. He believed that on Sunday the time spent by the prisoners at their evening meal was also deducted from the six hours. When the Coercion Act was being passed the Government were warned that the effect of it would be to drive the people into secret societies, and it was in that way that the enormous increase of outrages was to be accounted for. Was not the "Moonlight" Society a secret one? The Land League was an open association that spoke in the face of Heaven, with newspaper reporters present, and the Government reporters on the platform. But since the Land League had been put down the outrages had enormously increased, It was said that the "suspects" were different from untried prisoners; but he believed the bulk of the "suspects," conscious of their own innocence, would be glad to be put upon their trial before any jury that could be empanelled. Mr. Rorke, who was arrested the other day—his hon. Friends around him said because he was Mr. Egan's business partner—wrote a letter, in which he stated that he would be willing to be tried even by a jury of landlords. He was convinced that had the severity with which the Government administered the Coercion Act been foreseen they would not have obtained the support of many hon. Gentlemen who had followed them into the Lobby when the Bill was before the House.

Mr. ONSLOW said, that, as a Conservative, he had supported Her Majesty's Government in their coercion policy; and although in general a strong opponent of the Government, he could not, as an Englishman, listen without protest to the remarks which hon. Members from Ireland sitting on that side made against the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He was sure that no one felt more bitterly than the right hon. Gentleman the cruel necessity of what he had to do; and when he was told that the right hon. Gentleman was acting under bad advice he was bound to say that if he did not believe that the right hon. Gentleman carefully examined every case, as he had constantly assured the House he has done, he, for one, would no longer support the policy of the Government. If the Chief Secretary for Ireland had not been outvoted in the Cabinet in the autumn of last year, as they all knew was the case, Ireland would never have required so strict a Coercion Act. It was not the duty of Members on the Conservative side to sit in silence and hear abusive remarks concerning the Chief Secretary for Ireland, because he carried out the provisions of an Act which they themselves had been a party to. He wished to say this as a matter of fair play, for he believed the right hon. Gentleman was doing his very best to carry out the Coercion Act, hateful as it must be to him, and to every Member who sat on this side of the House also, and he did not like to hear these constant charges of inhumanity.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I have no right to speak again; but I understand the hon. Gentleman the Member for Westmeath (Mr. Gill) to say that the hour for worship was taken out of the hours of association.

Mr. GILL: I was informed so.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I was not aware it was so, and if it is the case in any prison it shall cease to be the case.

Mr. GILL: And about the evening meal on Sunday?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: That is another matter; but as regards the attendance at worship, that ought not to be considered part of the hours of association, and if it be the case I will take care that it shall cease.

Mr. BYRNE said, he must congratulate the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond) on the ability and moderation of his speech. Having visited Kilmainham more than once, he was quite able to endorse the description given by the hon. Gentleman. The cells in which the "suspects" were confined were small, badly ventilated, and badly lighted, with, in many cases, no fireplace. It was his firm belief that prolonged confinement, under such circumstances, must prove exceedingly injurious to the physical and mental health of the unfortunate prisoners, many of whom had been as gently reared as any hon. Member in that House. He appealed to the Government to reconsider the matter, and grant to the prisoners every reasonable indulgence.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he differed entirely from the view taken by the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow), when he said the Chief Secretary for Ireland felt bitterly the task of having to administer the Coercion Acts. His own opinion was that the right hon. Gentleman felt the most intense delight in having to administer those Acts. ["Oh!"] If he could guess from the demeanour of the right hon. Gentleman, whenever he replied to any question connected with the Coercion Act, it seemed to him that the Chief Secretary for Ireland always rose with the most profound pleasure and satisfaction from the thought of the sufferings which it was in his power to inflict upon the Irish people under his charge. [*Cries of* "Oh, oh!" *and* "Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Cavan is again imputing unworthy motives to the right hon. Gentleman. I must caution the hon. Member that, if he proceeds in that course, I shall have to bring his name before the House.

MR. BIGGAR said, he had not wilfully infringed the rule. He should be very sorry to impute unworthy motives to the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Still, he felt bound to say that the hon. Member for Guildford had expressed opinions very different from his. With regard to the question more immediately before the House—namely, to what extent the prisoners should have solitary confinement, he felt bound to say that the right hon. Gentleman, in the very few remarks which he deigned to offer in reply to the hon. Member for New Ross, seemed to regard the matter from a very mean point of view. The excuse which the right hon. Gentleman made for not extending the recreation hours seemed to him to be very mean. He might have said—"I have now got these prisoners in my power, and I mean to do what I like with them;" or he might have said, which would have been more respectable—"Nothing can be suffered by anyone if I extend the recreation time of these poor people by two hours." Instead of that he quibbled. ["Oh, oh!"] He quibbled with regard to the part of the day when this recreation should take place, and gave a most ungenerous reply to the appeal of his hon. Friend. He contended that the Coercion Act was not being administered in any respect in the way in which the House was led to believe would be the case. They had proved by many cases that it was being used for purposes of punishment. They had a further proof of it that afternoon when the Chief Secretary for Ireland refused to release certain prisoners, although he admitted the district in which they lived was now quite peaceable. If the Government could not rule Ireland except by the total absence of Constitutional government, they had better let it alone.

MR. GRAY said, that sufferings endured by those who were subjected to the long periods of solitary confinement inflicted upon them very grievous hardships. He could not see on what grounds that Government inflicted this terrible punishment. The more intellectual the character of the prisoner, the more he was accustomed to society and the occupations of society, the greater the suffering from being locked up for long periods in the prison cells. The punishment of political prisoners in some civilized countries was not greater than that inflicted on these unconvicted and untried men. He could not conceive why the relaxation of rules which had been asked for should not be granted. It could not be refused on the ground of expense, for the Government had been saved expenditure by the voluntary contributions made by the Irish people for the purpose of mitigating the severity of the prisoners' incarceration. The Government could, therefore, well afford a small extra sum for the warders, who would have to perform some additional work if the prisoners were given more time in which to associate together. Did the Prime Minister appreciate what 18 hours' solitary confinement in a cell 12 feet by 8 feet meant? Surely the slight concession now asked he might make to Irish public opinion without any danger.

MR. HEALY said, he agreed in the remark of the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray), when he said that the only hope of Irish Members lay in exposing the acts committed in Ireland, so far as they could, before the world. He believed there was no use appealing to the majority in that House, for the majority would rejoice if, as *The Times* once expressed it, "Ireland were sunk under water for twenty-four hours." The Irish Members could, therefore, only hope to expose the Government to the small extent to which their complaints were reported in the English papers. The Prime Minister, upon a memorable occasion, appealed to the world regarding the prisoners confined under King Bomba. The right hon. Gentleman was not then in Office, and was enabled to exercise his ripe English sensitiveness in writing about the penalties inflicted upon people in Neapolitan dungeons. He invited the right hon. Gentleman to subtract a little time from the duties of his Office to visit a few of the prisons in which Irishmen were now confined for offences less heinous than those for which the Italian prisoners were confined. During the imprisonment of the Fenians, when asked to remit some portion of their sentences, the right hon. Gentleman said the difference between the Italian and the Irish prisoners was that the Italians were confined by men who had broken their oaths to the people, and that they had been imprisoned without trial or the hope of trial. He submitted that the present condition of affairs with regard to the Irish prisoners was exactly similar. The Irish prisoners had been arrested and imprisoned by the action of men who had broken their oaths to the people. Mr. Justice Fitzgerald, for whom Irishmen spilt their blood that they might put him into Parliament, did little less than break his oath, and was one of the principal members of the Privy Council in carrying out a policy under which men, much honester and more respectable than he, were enduring 18 hours' solitary confinement of every 24 they were imprisoned, without trial or the smallest hope of trial. Yet the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister permitted that state of things which he condemned in Italy to go on in Ireland. Much as he disliked the Prime Minister's public action in Ireland, there was no man he, if he were an Englishman, would have a higher respect for; but he hated, abhorred, and detested the way in which the right hon. Gentleman permitted his Colleagues to rule Ireland. When the right hon. Gentleman stated that he had grown grey in the public service, and that he might not continue to administer public affairs much longer, although he (Mr. Healy) hoped he might, the right hon. Gentleman ought to remember that many of his Colleagues would have to deal with Ireland for a very long time. The tide of affairs might turn some time, so that, under a Home Rule Government, the despised Irish Members sitting below the Gangway might have the upper hand. Therefore, he invited the right hon. Gentleman to consider the possibility of some of his Colleagues being suspected of treasonable practices against the *régime* then existing in Ireland. With the large Liberal majority that now seemed impossible; but things might change in Europe, and England might be compelled to grant to Ireland some vestige of local government, and then Gentlemen sitting on his side of the House and Gentlemen now in gaol might become the chief Legal Advisers of Her Majesty. How would the Solicitor General then like to be reasonably suspected and placed in solitary confinement for 18 hours out of every 24? His hon. Friend the Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) had been reproved from the Chair for stating that the Chief Secretary for Ireland delighted in personal suffering. He (Mr. Healy) should be sorry to say so; but Professor Huxley had remarked that there must be a working hypothesis for everything; and upon what working hypothesis could they explain the fact that the Chief Secretary—humane and benevolent as they were compelled by the Forms of the House to believe him—kept men in solitary confinement for 18 hours out of every 24? This was a conundrum which the right hon. Gentleman would find it difficult to answer. The Bible-loving Chief Secretary for Ireland should remember that a certain city was not to be destroyed if it contained 10 good men. Perhaps there were a few innocent men among the "suspects." Therefore, he asked the right hon. Gentleman to act upon the Book he was so fond of quoting. He invited him to listen to a description of what some of the "suspects" had to undergo. He held in his hand a letter from one of the "suspects," who had experience of two gaols, and the description he gave of the cells was perfectly horrifying. The furniture was of the coarsest character, their beds were narrow and thin, and made of oakum, supported on canvas a few inches from the ground; and they had to use the combs they had inherited from the criminals who had been lodged in those cells before them. Those who were not inclined to pay a penny a-day for attendance had to sweep out the cells for themselves. Such a regulation as that was hardly fair for men who had committed no crime whatever. ["Hear, hear!"] He was glad to see that some of their remarks were appreciated by Gentlemen on both sides whose consciences were not controlled by Caucuses. The gentleman whose letter he had referred to also said that in the yard where the "suspects" took their exercise there were closets, the offensive effluvia of which were distinctly perceptible in the yard. That was philanthropy.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, the hon. Member spoke of a complaint made by one of the "suspects." He had received no complaint. In what gaol did this state of things exist?

Mr. SEXTON: It was so in Kilmainham when I was there.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Then the hon. Gentleman's remarks apply to Kilmainham.

MR. HEALY said, he was reading from a letter from a gentleman who was first in Kilmainham and then in Naas. This letter was marked "Per underground." If it had been sent in the ordinary way it would never have reached him. He did not know what "underground" meant; but the letter would never have reached him in a legitimate way. He was not surprised the right hon. Gentleman had received no complaints. Complaints were not allowed to come out of the prison, and no one dared to complain. If the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had the heart of a man he would get up at that Table——

MR. SPEAKER: The language of the hon. Member is really not to be tolerated. He addressed himself to the Prime Minister, and asked him if he had the honour of a man. [*Cries of* "No, no!" *and* "Heart of a man!"]

MR. HEALY said, that Mr. Speaker had misunderstood. That right hon. Gentleman had said that his language was not to be tolerated. He (Mr. Healy) would venture to say, in reply, that the system he was denouncing was not to be tolerated. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, if the words were Parliamentary — he must leave Mr. Speaker to judge if they were or not—if he had the heart of a man in him, to come to this Table and—[An hon. MEMBER: "Name!"] Would the hon. Member allow him to conclude his observation—to defend the atrocities described in the letter just read? And yet they, whose friends were suffering under conditions such as these, were supposed to be able to keep their hearts so tame that they should not be provoked into any heated expression. That was too much to expect in such circumstances. Visitors, too, came to gloat over the sufferings of the prisoners. Some ladies had sent chess and balls and marbles for the amusement of the prisoners; but they were not permitted. Would the British Constitution tremble if political prisoners were allowed such a solace? Letters, too, were stopped on the most trivial grounds. One was stopped, for instance, because the writer said he wanted some new clothes; another because mention was made of one of the prisoners having been released. In one letter which he had received the writer said he must stop because the light was failing, as the room was surrounded by walls 30 feet or 40 feet high. Even at night the prisoners were not left quiet, as they were disturbed by the sentries calling every half-hour. How would the right hon. Gentleman relish being disturbed like that in his slumbers? The food, too, was described as objectionable in the extreme. The coffee and cocoa were thick, and the bread of the coarsest description. One meal was supplied by the self-denial of the Irish tenants, or the prisoners would, indeed, fair badly. The beef was so tough that one of the "suspects" said that it must have come from a cow that had lived in the days of Cromwell. It got its happiest description from the term "corduroy beef." When freshly cut it looked red, but before a portion could be masticated each part on your plate assumed a uniform darkness of colour. It seemed to have every characteristic of rottenness except tenderness. The meal was laid at the door of the cell, and the order was called out by a warder—"Come forward and take your victuals." This did not take place at Naples under King Bomba, or the House would have resounded with the complaints of hon. Members on the other side. It was sickening for Irish Members to address that House. They knew that their action there was abhorred by Liberal Members, and that they were looked upon as their enemies. They were their enemies. They were the enemies of the English Government in Ireland in every shape and form, and they did not bring forward these complaints because they expected justice. They did not expect justice. They knew that, as far as Ireland was concerned, the hearts of hon. Members were as hard as the nether millstone. Still, in spite of the prejudice of the English Press, which tortured and distorted the observations of Irish Members whenever it suited its purpose, they hoped that some faint glimmer of the *exposé* of the sufferings of these men would reach America and foreign countries, which would thus have a chance of knowing the horrors and iniquities of the men who had formerly denounced the iniquities of King Bomba in Naples.

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, I am very sorry to be compelled to say a very few words after the speech of the hon. Gentleman, as we are extremely anxious if we can to economize a portion of the time that may still remain to us for an important part of the Business of the evening. I do not, however, like to pass by—I do not feel able to pass by—in absolute silence the speech which the hon. Gentleman has delivered. But I do not mean to make any complaint of the language that he has used—as far as I am myself concerned especially, I do not mean to make any complaint of it. So far as regards the Members of this House in general, I own I think he is intemperate and unjust when he says that in respect to Ireland their hearts are as hard as the nether millstone. Many hon. Members have laboured much and striven much, and even suffered something in the cause of Ireland. I am very sorry the hon. Gentleman weakens his position by the vehemence of his language, which at the same time arises from the action of his own sympathies, which in this case are naturally strong. But my main purpose in rising is a practical purpose; I hope he will supply to my right hon. Friend a copy of the letter which he has read to the House. I do not say with the name of the writer—that is a matter entirely for his own discretion—but specifying days and date and place, so far as to enable my right hon. Friend to make an examination of the statements made therein. My right hon. Friend has let me have the advantage of his observations on the various points noticed in the letter, and with regard to one that he mentioned—namely, the means of recreation—a chess-board, I think, in particular—my right hon. Friend is in a condition to say that he did hear of a case of that kind where there had been some difficulty, and that he gave immediate orders. [Mr. W. E. FORSTER: No; I heard there was a wish——] Ah! my right hon. Friend heard a wish had been entertained, and upon hearing of that wish—not opposition to the wish—he gave immediate directions to have the wish gratified. Now, Sir, two things only I wish to say, in the first place, do not let the hon. Member rest himself under the delusion, and therefore propagate the delusion, which I am sure he would not do unless he rested under it himself—let him not rest under the delusion of believing that in this country and in this Parliament he ever will be regarded as an enemy of the State for making known to the public of this country and of the world any real hardship—real injustice suffered by those who are unhappily detained in prison. On the contrary, the British nation, whatever the hon. Gentleman may think of it, the British nation and the House of Commons, which still represents the British nation, will feel themselves the debtors of the hon. Gentleman for bringing before them accurate and well-sifted statements of that nature. That is one thing I wished to say; but I wish to say another thing on account of the repeated and not unnatural reference which the hon. Gentleman has made to the case of Naples. He appeals to me in regard to the course which I pursued many years ago in connection with that case. I must venture to point out to him that the course pursued by me was different in the most essential respects from the course pursued by him, because every statement I made against the conduct of the Government of Naples, and every account I gave of the sufferings of the persons imprisoned there, was carefully by me, through sure channels, submitted to the eye of the Government of Naples many months before one word was spoken by me on the subject, so that the fullest opportunity was given to the Government of Naples either to contradict what was wrong, or to amend what was truly alleged; and I make this observation, that both in the interests of justice and in the interests of those for whom the hon. Gentleman feels a natural and a laudable sympathy, it would be well if, when he hears allegations of this kind, he would give to my right hon. Friend and us precisely the same measure of justice as I endeavoured to secure for the Government of the King of Naples—namely, that they might have an opportunity of challenging my statements where they were incorrect, or investigating proceedings of their agents, and setting them right where they were cruel or where they were wrong. I do not think these are unreasonable demands, and I must say I live in the hope that if the hon. Member would only give that opportunity, he would find that the effect would be very materially to restrict the circle of his complaints, and that, upon the whole, the result would be much more favourable to the establishment of a unity of sentiment and of affection between our respective countries, which we must, after all, all of us, desire to bind together in unity of sentiment if we can—than the production of unsifted statements in which, without any fault of the hon. Gentleman, there may be a very large proportion of error combined with, after all, but a moderate proportion of what is true.

MR. CALLAN said, in his opinion the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) was following exactly the course taken by the Prime Minister in the case of the prisoners of Naples. The right hon. Gentleman said he brought the case of the Naples prisoners before the Naples Government. The hon. Member for Wexford was bringing the case of the prisoners under the Coercion Act before the Irish Government. The silence of hon. Members opposite fully corroborated the statement of the hon. Member for Wexford as to their hard-heartedness in regard to the sufferings of the Irish prisoners. With only one exception, the false Liberals below the Gangway remained silent—not one of them had the courage to rise in his place to express his disapproval of the treatment of the Irish prisoners. He challenged the Chief Secretary for Ireland to show that there remained some sincerity yet in the Government by getting up and informing the House that they intended to make some modification in the rule which compelled the "suspects" to spend 18 hours out of 24 in solitary confinement. He believed if the matter was clearly put before the Prime Minister, and if he had an hour to think on the condition of these prisoners, that he would, as far as in his power lay, ameliorate their condition. But it was hopeless to expect any concession or any friendly act at the hands of the Chief Secretary for Ireland. The manner in which he had, for the past two months, treated every representation with respect to these prisoners forbade the idea that he would in the smallest degree improve their condition. He had deliberately violated the pledges given during the debate on the Coercion Act. He stated last Session that the prisoners would be, consistently with their safe custody, allowed to transact their daily business —had he done that? In the case of a gentleman from Co. Louth, imprisoned in Dundalk Gaol, a representation was made to the Chief Secretary for Ireland in favour of his release. Guarantees were given that he would not interfere in politics after his liberation; but in what way did the Chief Secretary for Ireland treat the representations? Within two days after they were made the man was actually sent to Naas, 200 miles away, and to aggravate the hardships of his removal it occurred on Christmas Day. If that was not done for the deliberate purpose of ruining the man and his family, he challenged the Chief Secretary for Ireland to get up and deny it. He charged the Irish Executive with a total disregard of their pledges, disregard of the commonest feelings of humanity in their administration of the Coercion Act. But St. Patrick's Day was just coming, and he trusted that on that day, in every Irish centre throughout England, the conduct of the Chief Secretary for Ireland would be shown up to Irish audiences, and that a vow would be registered that when the time came no supporter of the Chief Secretary for Ireland would receive a single Irish vote.

MR. O'DONNELL said, he did not intend to pursue the discussion of this very painful subject. He hoped that the declarations of the Prime Minister that evening, made as they had been with every mark of interest, and even of emotion, would lead to the better treatment of the prisoners under the Coercion Act. Numerous endeavours had already been made to call the attention of the Chief Secretary for Ireland to the discomforts inflicted on the Irish political prisoners. As far back as December last detailed statements were published in *The Freeman's Journal* of the uneatable character of the food in Kilmainham, and of the unhealthy and gloomy nature of the cells; but no attention was paid to that complaint. He himself, in a communication to *The Freeman's Journal*, ventured to suggest that as a modification of the darkness, from which the prisoners suffered so much, reflectors might be introduced with advantage into the cells, so that the small amount of air that filtered down from high roofs might not be diminished in the process. Not one of these recommendations had been attended to, although published in the Irish papers so far back as December. The Chief Secretary for Ireland was surrounded by influences of so peculiar a character that he was unable to gauge the true facts of the state of Ireland. Why, judging from the communications which appeared in that day's *Freeman's Journal*, the Chief Secretary for Ireland seemed to be wholly unaware that half the audience which he addressed at Tullamore consisted of policemen in plain clothes, and that a large number of soldiers were drawn up in the neighbourhood. Of course, those who took these elaborate precautions wished to obtain for the Chief Secretary for Ireland the luxury of courage coupled with the comfort of safety. The right hon. Gentleman had moved in an enchanted atmosphere; but nothing that was favourable could be said of the spell which surrounded him.

SOUTH AFRICA—BASUTOLAND.

OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. O'DONNELL, who had upon the Paper a Motion to the following effect:—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, no encouragement ought to be given to any projects for rewarding assailants of the Basuto people by the confiscation of land and cattle,"

said, he had intended to move his Motion with regard to the very dangerous crisis in Basutoland; but he was prevented by the Forms of the House from doing so. Any remarks that he would venture to address to the House would be very brief indeed; but he did not think that he ought to lose altogether the opportunity of calling the earliest possible attention of the House to a matter with which he believed it was deeply interested. He complained of the action of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the Basutos as being dangerous in the extreme, for the reason, above all others, that it was uncertain and vague. He need do no more than remind the House of the disasters which followed in the Transvaal from the uncertain character of the policy pursued by Her Majesty's Government. If the Government had been then held to the doctrine of putting down the rising in the Transvaal, or if they had held to the doctrine that the annexation was unlawful, the country would have been saved from the wretched *fiasco* and deplorable bloodshed of Majuba Hill and Laing's Nek. What was it, as far as could be gathered from the most recent Blue Books which had issued from the Cabinet, the Liberal Government was engaged in but a sequel to the policy of Sir Bartle Frere in Basutoland? If there was one policy which was condemned by the Resolutions of the Liberal Party it was the policy of Sir Bartle Frere. The original quarrel with the Basutos was of Sir Bartle Frere's seeking. His policy was that of land speculators on the one hand, and of exaggerated and unscrupulous Imperialism on the other. The Basutos were made use of to support that policy; they were encouraged to acquire arms and to assume a warlike attitude; they were loyal in the extreme, and as a reward for their loyalty they were required, in the most offensive and threatening manner, according to their view, to deliver themselves helplessly into the hands of Sir Bartle Frere. It was quite natural for them to readily believe that the intention was to make slaves of their women and children, many of whom had been reduced to a condition which was practically one of slavery by being indentured out to compulsory servitude. A Circular issued by the Cape Secretary refused permission to Native prisoners of war on their release to visit their families, who were held has indentured servants by Colonial farmers. After that we could easily understand the apprehension with which the Natives would receive a demand that they should give up their arms. The House was aware that the Basutos successfully defended their freedom; their mistake was that they trusted the British Government as distinct from the Cape Government. They imagined that the British Government would give them a just and equitable award, which would free them from the Cape Government. It was admitted by the magistrates and the Secretary for Native Affairs of the Cape Colony in the Correspondence before the House that the fines placed upon the Basutos were exorbitant, and, as regarded Masupha, the ringleader, that he had eaten up his own people in order to pay the fine, and that even by depriving them of nearly all their cattle he would hardly be able to do so. He would ask the House to bear those facts in mind in connection with another fact—that it was purely upon the ground of their defalcation in paying the fines that the goods and cattle of the Basuto nation were to be confiscated. While the original aggression of the Basutos was unjustifiable, yet the fine placed upon them was exorbitant, and active agents had been set to work to prevent any settlement. Had it not been for the intrigues of persons in Cape Colony interested in promoting a renewal of hostilities a settlement would have been effected. The Cape Colony had admitted that it could not put down the Basutos by the ordinary measures of warfare. Perhaps the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies might say the Government had not authorized in express terms a confiscation of Basutoland; but Lord Kimberley had sent a number of messages which might mean the wholesale confiscation of Basutoland. He wished the Government to say whether or not they would allow Basutoland to be confiscated. The same policy that had characterized the English rule in Ireland had characterized that rule in the Cape Colony. All the terrors of the English law were to be called in aid against the unhappy Natives; but none of the rights of English citizens were extended towards them. If this policy were to be continued a large number of Native fugitives would be driven across the border, who would go to swell the growing mass of hate for British rule. Nothing could be better than that we should take the control of Basutoland into our own hands, and protect the unhappy Natives from the land speculators, the lower class of politicians, and from the brutalities of the so-called Volunteers, who thirsted for the lands and cattle of the Natives, in order that they might spend their property in the rum shops that always accompanied a Volunteer expedition. He ventured to point out to Her Majesty's Government that in the condition of things which now prevailed, when the vast majority of the White population of South Africa held on to British rule by a more than doubtful allegiance, it was high time for Her Majesty's Government to go back on the policy which they seemed to have had for a short time of being the independent and loyal protectors of the Native races. This was desirable even from the point of view of Manchester. The Basutos were eminently susceptible of civilization; they stood in need of better buildings, better food and clothing; and he said that, from the point of view of commerce alone, the attempt should be made to secure them as the best customers of British manufacturers in South Africa. He reminded the House that the party of Whites—the Dutch element in the population—was bitterly hostile to British trade, and that special arrangements had been, and were being made, to "Boycott" British trade in South Africa through the great export houses of Holland. If fair justice had been dealt out in Zululand and the Transvaal, the South African wars would not have taken place; and if justice were dealt out to the Basutos, he said there was still a *locus penetentiæ* for the British Government. He said if Her Majesty's Government fairly and honestly took up the defence of the Natives a permanent settlement might be arrived at; but if they failed to discharge the great responsibilities of the situation, and sought to escape from the difficulty which presented itself, by leaving the matter to be dealt with by the Cape Government, then there could be no satisfactory termination to the disturbances now prevalent in Basutoland; and he called upon every Member of that House to set his face against the confiscation of the country. It was the riffraff of Colonial society, the desperadoes of Natal, who would swell the ranks of the Volunteers, and they alone would be benefited by the heartless despoliation of the Basuto people.

Mr. COURTNEY said, he very much regretted that the hon. Member for Dungarvan was unable to put to the House the Motion which stood in his name upon the Notice Paper, because it seemed to him that had he been able to do so, he would have been confronted with the question which he had not dealt with in the course of his speech. The hon. Member appeared to have forgotten that they had given to the Cape Colony the privileges and responsibilities of self-government; and he had altogether omitted to consider in what way, and in what degree, they could interfere with the Cape Government or the Cape Parliament within the limits of the Colony. That was really the question that had to be dealt with, and unless the hon. Member was able to give a solution of it, he confessed that the contribution he might make towards the settlement of the present difficulty was a very small one.

Mr. O'DONNELL wished to point out that the Cape Government itself admitted that the ordinary kind of warfare would not be sufficient in Basutoland. He suggested that Her Majesty's veto should be exercised against the Colonial policy.

Mr. COURTNEY said, this was a domestic question within the limits of the Cape Colony; and it was no answer to that to say that the Cape Government were only to solve the difficulty in the way which might commend itself to Members of that House. The question being a Cape question, he would ask hon. Members who called upon the Imperial Government to interfere in its solution to consider what were the limits of action which they were disposed to advocate in interfering with the self-government that had been conceded to the Cape Colony, and the responsibility which had been thrown upon it. That was a question to which the hon. Member for Dungarvan had not given that attention which he (Mr. Courtney) should have thought the hon. Member would have paid to it. The hon. Member called upon the Imperial Government to supersede the action of the Cape Government in this matter. But the Cape Government were in this difficulty—namely, that after considerable delay; after referring the disputes between themselves and the Basutos to arbitration, an award had been delivered. The hon. Member for Dungarvan said that the conditions of the award were exorbitant. But he could not assent to that statement. Hard and heavy they might be, but that they were exorbitant he could not admit; and he did not think there was any phrase used within the scope of the award which would justify that expression. Although the conditions were hard and heavy, it must be remembered that they had been and were still accepted by the great majority of the Basuto Chiefs. He could not too strongly praise the action of the Cape Government in endeavouring to secure the execution of the award, which had only been resisted by a small minority. They had, undoubtedly, been resisted by a small minority of the Basuto Chiefs, and that resistance was still continuing. Under those circumstances the Cape Government stated their difficulty to the Imperial Government, and the reply which they received was with respect to a limited portion of the Basuto territory. The Imperial Government said with regard to those who resisted the award that they would not consider as inadmissible the action of the Cape Government, in the form of confiscation if necessary. If the Government were to interfere with the Cape Government in carrying out the measures which they deemed necessary to securing the execution of the award, they would raise the very difficult question of the extent to which they were to revise or amend the action of the Colonial Government. He was glad, with regard to the case now before them, in the interest of the Basutos, that the responsibility for its actions rested with the Cape Parliament, and for long past history had shown them that any attempt to control Colonial institutions from home was injurious to the Native people. [*A laugh.*] The hon. Member laughed at this. He did not know to what extent the hon. Member was versed in the history of South Africa, but if he was acquainted with it, instead of laughing at the statement just made, with regard to the effect of Home interference in Native affairs, he would agree that it was simply and literally true. The hon. Member had complained of the vagueness of the answer made to the telegram sent from the Cape; and he seemed to think that Lord Kimberley ought to have assumed to himself the responsibility of dictating the course of action to be followed by the Cape Parliament. But what had Lord Kimberley done in this matter? He said he would have no solution of this question by Proclamation; that whatever was done would be done by the action of the Cape Legislature; but with respect to that he very properly refused beforehand to say he would advise Her Majesty to accept that action. The hon. Member had spoken of what was in prospect as the result of the action, which would be taken by the off-scourings of the different parts of South Africa—the desperadoes of Natal and the lawless Boers of the Transvaal. But what was done would not be the action of these men, it would be the action of the Cape Parliament—as respectable and honourable a body of gentlemen as might be wished for in any Colony, and with regard to whose proceedings Her Majesty's Government were not disposed to anticipate any evil. They had dealt with this difficult matter in a spirit of the greatest conciliation. It was not of their creation; it was their inheritance, and they had been reluctant to take any steps whatever towards coercion of the Basutos. He believed that those who had watched with sympathy and intelligence the action taken in this matter were of opinion that Her Majesty's Government had adopted the only possible course in refusing to pledge themselves beforehand to object to the action of the Cape Government.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he had listened with considerable regret to the opening remarks of the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, in which he deprecated the discussion of this subject at the present time. Considering the grave importance of the question, involving as it did the lives and property of a large portion of Her Majesty's subjects in South Africa, and in view of the fact that unless it was discussed then it would be left over until after Easter, he certainly thought the hon. Member for Dungarvan had done good service to the country and to the cause of humanity by calling attention to the position of affairs at the Cape with regard to the Basutos on that occasion. He was well aware that there was a large amount of urgent Business with which the House had to deal; but he also regarded this question as one of so urgent a character that it was due to the House and the people of the country that its discussion should not be put aside. Having listened to the speech of the hon. Member for Dungarvan with great interest, it appeared to him that, by the case as put by the hon. Member, three courses were open with regard to the affairs of Basutoland. There was the course of leaving the matter to be dealt with by the Cape Parliament; there was the course of Her Majesty's Government dealing with it themselves; and, finally, there was the course of abandoning the country altogether, which meant, practically, handing it over to the authority of the Free State. He reminded the House that 12 years ago, or rather more, when the Basutos were threatened by the Government of the Free State, Moshesh, at that time the paramount Chief in Basutoland, urged upon the Representative of the Queen to take over the government of the country. That course was approved in the House of Commons by many Members, who at that time took an interest in South African affairs. It was approved and strongly urged upon the acceptance of the House by one Gentleman who, although not a Member of the Government of the Prime Minister, was a Colleague of the right hon. Gentleman in a former Government—the late Mr. Charles Gilpin. Well, Basutoland was taken over by the Government, at the head of which, he believed, was the present Prime Minister; and in consequence of that circumstance this country had contracted certain obligations towards the Basutos. Those obligations having been contracted, he certainly thought this country was bound in honour not to allow the Basutos to be oppressed. He thought it was the duty of the British Government to take an interest in the affairs of Basutoland. With regard to the question whether it was for the Queen's Government or the Cape Government to deal with this matter, the Under Secretary to the Colonial Office seemed to throw some doubts upon the capabilities of his Department to administer the affairs of Basutoland. But he (Mr. R. N. Fowler) could not but remember that the Colonial Office was now presided over by Lord Kimberley, a very able statesman; it was represented in that House by the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Courtney); and it had the advantage of being represented at the Cape by one of the ablest Colonial statesmen that this country had ever possessed—Sir Hercules Robinson, who, he learned with great pleasure from a statement made by the Prime Minister some weeks ago, Her Majesty had been recommended to place among the Members of the Privy Council. The Under Secretary for the Colonies went on to say that he had the utmost confidence in the Government of the Cape Colony. He (Mr. R. N. Fowler) was not there to say one word against the Government of that Colony. On the contrary, he believed that the statesmen at the Cape were as anxious to do their duty to their Sovereign and to the country, and to act in the cause of humanity, as any statesmen in the world. He had great confidence in Mr. Scanlan, the present Premier at the Cape; but hon. Members would remember that he succeeded a gentleman whose policy was strongly deprecated in that House and by this country at large. He believed there was a general consensus of opinion that the policy of disarming the Basutos was a very great mistake, and that was the policy which had undoubtedly led to the present difficulties. The question was this—Were those difficulties likely to be best adjusted by the Queen's Government or by the Colonial Government? It appeared to him that the course which was most likely to produce peace would be that Her Majesty's Government should authorize Sir Hercules Robinson, as Chief Commissioner of Native Tribes, to administer the affairs of the country; and in saying that he did not overlook the fact that, in case of interference with any award he might make, they must be prepared to support him with Her Majesty's Forces. But it appeared that the Government had arrived at the conclusion not to allow any interference on the part of the Commander-in-Chief at the Cape, while the Cape Government were to follow whatever course they pleased. In the language of the hon. Member for Dungarvan, they were about to permit an army composed of the riffraff of the Cape population to despoil the Basutos. The language of his hon. Friend (Mr. O'Donnell) might be too strong; but, at any rate, Her Majesty's Government were going to allow an army to be levied, which would, of course, include in its ranks all the more fiery spirits to be found at the Cape, and who would certainly not look upon the unfortunate Natives with feelings of humanity; and this army was to invade and conquer the country of the Basutos in any way they thought proper. The result of this would be a cruel and bloody war. War, under any circumstances, was a terrible calamity; but he regarded it as less terrible when carried on by civilized troops under a civilized commander like General Smyth. That would not be the case with a war carried on by the Volunteers at the Cape, who would number in their ranks the worst characters to be found in South Africa. A war so conducted would, indeed, be an unmitigated evil. For the reasons he had stated, he regretted to hear that Her Majesty's Government had determined to hand over this question to the decision of the Cape Government; and he strongly believed it would have been better had they faced the responsibility of settling the difficulty themselves.

RELIGIOUS DISSENSIONS (GIBRALTAR) — DR. CANILLA. — OBSERVATIONS.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he regretted that the Under Secretary for the Colonies had already spoken, because he felt it his duty again to bring before the House the very grave disorders which had taken place at Gibraltar. If the hon. Gentleman would listen but for a very short time he would explain why he brought on the question on that occasion. It was because there were at that time 47 persons under arrest in Gibraltar, under what he believed to be an illegal act on the part of the Governor of the Colony. He was glad that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was in his place, and he invited his attention to the circumstances. He had privately appealed to the Under Secretary to telegraph to Gibraltar to know if it was true that these persons were under arrest, which the hon. Gentleman had declined to do. On Friday last, when he called attention to this matter, he was told by the hon. Gentleman that the next mail would bring the information; but to-day he learned that no information had arrived. At that moment there were men at Gibraltar in exactly the same position as used to be the case in the Ionian Islands under the police; they had been arbitrarily arrested, and some of them had been sentenced to six months' imprisonment. He would read an extract from the order of the Governor to the police, giving instructions with regard to arrests. It began by saying that where offences were committed the police were at once to arrest the people; but it went on as follows:—

> "Even where no offence has been committed, but where a breach of the peace is likely to occur, the police are authorized to take into custody those whom they may reasonably suspect of being about to commit a violation of the law."

Hon. Members would observe that the language of Her Majesty's Government seemed to travel widely; but the powers which, in Ireland, were intrusted to the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, were, in Gibraltar, intrusted to a policeman. He thought it right to defer any general discussion of the question until the Papers were laid upon the Table of the House; but he would point out that the circumstances arose out of a difference which existed between the Roman Catholic community in Gibraltar and the Vicar Apostolic named by the Pope. The Roman Catholic community had always had the management of the Church of Santa Maria Coronada, and they considered that they had the right to have jurisdiction even against the proceedings of the Vicar Apostolic. Instead of raising the question in the Law Courts the Governor took the matter into his own hands, filled the town with troops to the number of 2,500, brought out field - pieces, and arbitrarily arrested some people, who were sentenced to three months' hard labour without the option of a fine. He had asked the Under Secretary for the Colonies if he had any information upon this subject; but it appeared that on Friday last the Colonial Department knew nothing about it. He therefore begged to repeat his question; and in order to afford the hon. Gentleman an opportunity of replying he would, *pro formâ*, move the adjournment of the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff.*)

MR. GLADSTONE said, the hon. Member for Portsmouth had made a Motion for the adjournment of the House in order to enable his hon. Friend to break through the debate. He was not sure whether he was himself also entitled to speak; if not, he hoped to be instructed from the Chair.

MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman is enabled to speak a second time, as is also the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, by the action of hon. Member for Portsmouth—a mode of action which I am bound to say I deprecated the other night as highly irregular.

MR. COURTNEY said, at a late hour on Friday night last the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) had called the attention of the House to what he called the arbitrary arrests which had been made at Gibraltar, and the imprisonment of a certain number of the persons arrested. He told the hon. Gentleman at half-past 5 o'clock that afternoon that no information had arrived, and as he had not returned to the Colonial Office he was not aware that any had been received since that time. He would point out to the hon. Member that his statements were rather self - contradictory. Arbitrary arrest, as he (Mr. Courtney) understood the term, was the arrest of persons, and the keeping them under arrest, by the mere will of the Executive. But the hon. Member complained simultaneously that in connection with these arrests proceedings took place before the police magistrate. No doubt a number of persons were arrested. That he did not deny. And no doubt certain persons were brought before the police magistrate; but there was nothing whatever in the statement of the hon. Member which would lead Her Majesty's Government for one moment to suspect that any person had been taken into custody without being brought before a magistrate.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, one paragraph stated that the police would keep strict order, and do the utmost in their power to prevent any breach of the peace; but, should such breach of the peace occur, they would at once arrest any person by whose conduct the peace was broken or endangered. Such person would at once be taken before the police magistrate, who would be present in Court to try such case immediately. There was an end of the magistrate in the matter; but then the order provided that where any offence was committed, and a breach of the peace seemed likely, the police should take into custody those whom they might reasonably suspect of being about to commit a breach of the peace.

MR. COURTNEY said, the second part was precisely the same as the first; the order to the police was the same in each case. People committing, or about to commit, a breach of the peace, were arrested and taken at once before the police magistrate; and there was nothing to suggest that there were any persons in custody who had not been taken before a magistrate. If they had been arrested and taken before a magistrate for committing a breach of the peace, then, if they were in custody, it might be supposed that they had been tried and properly sentenced; and there was nothing in the intelligence which had been brought before them to lead the Government to suppose that anything of an irregular character had occurred, or that anything the Executive had done was not justified by the law. There was nothing to show that any person had been kept in custody beyond the power of the law; but if the particulars of these matters did not arrive in the regular course, the Colonial Office would send for full details of the proceedings before the magistrates, though it was not very respectful to imagine that a breach of the law had been committed, when all the intelligence produced by the hon. Member led to the supposition that all that had been done was perfectly regular.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked leave to withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—ARMY ESTIMATES.

DEPARTMENTAL STATEMENT.

Supply—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Mr. CHILDERS: Mr. Playfair, before I make the Statement which it is my duty to address to the Committee, with reference to the Army Estimates, I must explain that to-night I shall only ask for the Votes for the Men and their Pay, and that we propose to resume the consideration of the Army Estimates at an early day; so far as I can judge, on the first day after the Easter Recess. We will not allow any matter of legislation to interfere with our taking the Estimates on that day, nor do I anticipate any other impediment; but, should any unforeseen impediment arise, we will devote to the Army Estimates the first day afterwards that circumstances may permit.

To come to the business in hand, I would ask the House to observe that the form of the Army Estimates, as presented this year, is somewhat different in one important respect from that adopted hitherto; and this change extends to the Navy Estimates also. The Estimates as we have presented them to the House give the net expenditure for Army Services which will form the charge upon the taxpayer. In former years the Estimates have been presented in gross, certain sums which form what are commonly called Extra Receipts, whether of the Army, Navy, or Civil Service, going into the Exchequer, and constituting a portion of the Miscellaneous Revenue. That form of Statement, to which, I confess, I have always entertained an objection, and which I did my best, when at the Treasury in 1865 and 1866, and also as Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee in the two following years, to change, is now, I am happy to say, changed with the assent of all parties interested. I may say that this beneficial reform is greatly due to the exertions of my noble Friend (Lord Frederick Cavendish), who has devoted great attention to the subject. The Committee, therefore, as I have said, will be asked to vote for the Army and other Services the real charge upon the taxpayer for those Services; and the Extra Receipts connected with the Army and Navy will no longer swell the Miscellaneous Revenue.

I would ask the Committee now to allow me to give a rough comparison, on that basis of the net charge, between the Army Estimates of the present year and those for a few past years. The Estimates for the year 1882-3 amount to about £15,500,000; last year—and the actual expenditure will pretty nearly correspond — they were £16,000,000; for the year 1880-1, the expenditure for which we were responsible, though the Estimates were drawn by our Predecessors, was £15,100,000; and for the two preceding years, 1879-80 and 1878-9, when the sums expended were considerably swollen by special War Charges, the amount was in each case £17,900,000. For the purposes of comparison, the last two years must be regarded as exceptional; but I thought it convenient that the Committee should see the net expenditure of the past five years. Now, coming to the particulars of the expenditure as estimated for the year 1882-3, I would refer the Committee to an explanatory statement which appears in the Paper called "Variation of Numbers and Explanation of Differences" accompanying the Estimates, and which is also printed at page 3 of the Estimate itself. That statement I thought it would be convenient to place in the fore-front of the Estimates, in order that the Committee may not be led into confusion by the difficulty of comparing the Estimate of this year, which is net, with the Estimate of last year, which was gross. I have also given that explanation for another reason. In several Votes, it has been necessary to make a certain amount of re-arrangement, in consequence of our having, as recommended so frequently, shown the total of their pay, called "consolidated pay," in the case of all military officers employed at the War Office or on the Staff. The Committee will thus be able to see in one of the salaries received by these officers on the new basis, instead of having to refer to two different Votes. That re-arrangement interferes with several Votes, and, therefore, if hon. Members will be good enough to keep this explanatory statement in their hands, they will be able to tell at a glance what the difference is between the present Estimates and those of last year, without having to go tediously through the items themselves; and they will also see that there are only some dozen cases in which there is any considerable alteration.

Keeping this explanation in view, I would ask hon. Members to notice the following changes, which are the only ones of importance in the present Estimates, as compared with those of the previous year. In the first place, it will be seen that the Estimates for the present year no longer include a charge for special expenditure in South Africa, which amounted last year to £1,066,000. On the other hand, there are certain special items of increase. The first of these is the additional provision for naval guns and projectiles. Owing to the great advance of artillery science during the last few years, we are engaged in carrying on a gradual re-armament of the Navy which had been commenced by the late Government. The Estimates for 1880-1, prepared by my Predecessor, provided £303,000 for this purpose; those of 1881-2, for which we were responsible, provided £369,000, and those for 1882-3 provide £616,000, showing an increase of £247,000 over last year, and of £313,000 over the Estimates of the previous year. Guns ranging from 43 tons downwards have been for some months under trial with satisfactory results; but so many points of detail arise, not only as to guns, but as to carriages, projectiles, and stores, that progress must be gradual. In addition to the re-armament of the ships themselves, we have to supply reserves both at our arsenals and depôts at home and abroad. This item is a very important one, as accounting for half the increase in the Army Votes. I will say no more upon this point, because my hon. Friend the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Trevelyan), in moving the Navy Estimates, will go in great detail into the policy of the Admiralty in re-arming our ships.

The next item to which I need refer is that which relates to the additional pay of non-commissioned officers, amounting to £15,000. We provided in last year's Estimates for increase during only three quarters of the year, and this year we have also to provide for the fourth quarter. Last year we also somewhat reduced the numbers of the Cavalry, and, therefore, it was not necessary to provide so large a Vote for purchasing horses; but this year that source of economy will no longer exist, and we have provided £20,000 more for the purpose of keeping up the full establishment of horses. The next items of increase are £16,000 for the Militia Service, £22,000 for the Volunteers, and £10,000 for the Army Reserve, the details of which I propose to give further on. We then take £30,000 for what are popularly called the Autumn Manœuvres, which, after an interval of some years, we propose to have again this year; and on that Vote it will be my duty, on another occasion, to give some detailed information. All I need say now is that both the Militia and Volunteers will take some share in those Manœuvres, in which also the Artillery and Engineers will bear a more prominent part.

The next item of increase is that for Forage and Fuel, caused by higher prices; and the following one for the Movement of Troops in Ireland. The increase in Non - Effective Charges amounts to £70,000, which may appear im excess of the increase as shown in the Estimates; but the difference is accounted for by a saving having been effected in the Purchase Vote of about £50,000, leaving only an apparent increase on the amount of the Non-Effective Votes of £20,000.

The last item of increase is one of £10,500 for Huts, £17,500 being taken as against £7,000 provided last year. We have determined to proceed vigorously with the re-construction of the camps at Aldershot, the Curragh, and Shorncliffe, and those who have seen them will agree that this measure is of urgent necessity.

There is one Vote to which I ought to refer, and it is the last. That is the apparent increase in the Vote for the War Office. It would appear on the face of the Estimates, and the circumstance has been commented upon, that there is to be an expenditure of £16,000 more on the Establishment in Pall Mall and its branches. That is not the case. The fact is that £13,200, or thereabouts, is an increase in this Vote and a decrease in others, being due to the fact that the whole consolidated pay is charged upon this Vote. The usual annual increments of salary amount to £5,500. That makes a total of £18,700; but, in point of fact, we have made reductions in the Establishment to the extent of £2,700, resulting in the apparent increase of £16,000, as shown in the Estimates.

The Civil Establishment of the War Office has lately been revised, and it is not my present intention to undertake again that critical and disagreeable task; but the Head Quarters Staff has not been revised for some time, and I am in a position to state that the revision which is now being undertaken will end —though it is not yet formally concluded—in a reduction of two General Officers, at least, on that Staff. These reductions will take place as vacancies occur in the list of Staff officers.

These, Sir, are all the figures with which I propose to trouble the Committee as to the detail of the present Estimates; but, before leaving the mere financial question, I think it may be convenient to make some comparison between the charges for this and the sister Service at the present time and in past years. I take the liberty of making that comparison, because it has been my lot in former years to be responsible for placing before the House, not only the Civil Estimates, as Secretary to the Treasury many years ago, but also during two years the Navy Estimates. I may, therefore, without unduly taking up the time of the Committee, say a few words as to the relative total charges for the great Services.

I have always held the same language in preparing and moving Estimates, that our object should be that, where new charges occur in one direction, we should seek economies in other directions. When abnormal charges have to be met, we should postpone, if possible, others which, though desirable, are not absolutely necessary; and the time for these will come when the special expenditure ceases. The Estimates of this and last year illustrate this principle. While, therefore, I think that, whoever occupies my place ought to do his utmost to keep down unnecessary military expenditure, I do not consider that it is any the less incumbent upon him, from time to time, to see what relation that expenditure bears to the progress of the country and its Revenue, so that he may be in a position to meet some of those allegations as to inordinate or extravagant Estimates which are often made here and elsewhere.

I have, with some pains, undertaken an examination of the Army and Navy expenditure in past years, and compared it with the expenditure at the present time, comparing, also, the population and certain features of the Revenue at the same dates. I will take, for the purposes of comparison, two years in addition to the present year, both of which are reasonable years for that purpose. I will take 1858-9, which was the year of lowest expenditure between the Crimean War and the increase of charge which arose subsequently in Lord Palmerston's second Administration, and 1865-6, which was the year of Lord Russell's Government, when the high Estimates of Lord Palmerston's Administration reached their lowest point, and just before the great increase in Lord Derby's Government. I find that, whereas in 1858-9 the net Army and Navy expenditure amounted to £21,300,000, or at the rate of 15*s.* per head of the then population, and in 1865-6 to £22,700,000, or at the rate of 15*s.* 2*d.* per head, the net expenditure for the Army and Navy, as shown under the present Estimate of £25,940,000, is only 14*s.* 8*d.* per head of the present population of the country.

I have also made a comparison between the net Army and Navy expenditure and the Revenue arising from one or two principal sources of receipt. Now, it is a remarkable circumstance that, over a long series of years, from which I omit years of war or military expeditions, the Army and Navy expenditure always exceeded by a measurable amount, although not very large, the total amount of duties received on fermented and spirituous liquors—that is to say, spirits, wine, and beer. For instance, in 1858-9 the duties received from these sources amounted to £18,500,000, and the net Army and Navy expenditure to £21,300,000. In 1865-6 the duties amounted to £21,600,000, while the net Army and Navy expenditure was £22,700,000. Later on, however, this race between these duties and the Army and Navy expenditure was won by the duties; and, at the present moment, the Army and Navy expenditure, amounting to close upon £26,000,000, falls more than £2,000,000 below the amount of the duties on spirits, wine, and beer, which are over £28,000,000. Again, if you make a comparison between the expenditure for the Army and Navy and what will be produced by the Income Tax, you have this interesting result. In the early days of the Income Tax, and even after it was extended to Ireland, the Army and Navy expenditure amounted to an Income Tax of just 1*s.* 6*d.* in the pound. It has gradually fallen till, in the Estimates of this year, the Army and Navy expenditure is just equal to 1*s.* 2*d.* in the pound, or 4*d.* in the pound less than it amounted to for many years. These figures, I think, afford some food for reflection.

Passing from matters of finance, I now come to strictly military questions. Some of the matters to which I am about to refer are such as cannot be traced in the Votes themselves; and I am not, therefore, surprised that those who have cursorily criticized the Estimates have not discovered them there. I will, therefore, give the Committee some explanations on these questions without referring in detail to the items of the Estimates. First of all, I should like to explain what has been the result of that change which I proposed last year; and to which, I confess, I attach almost higher importance than to any other change in our military arrangements; I mean what I proposed to do in order to meet, as far as we could, the want of preparedness for small wars about which so much has been said, and which, to a certain extent, must be admitted to have existed during previous years. It is quite true that when we had, in the August of the year in which we first took Office, very suddenly to send out a considerable force to India after the battle of Maiwand, and, again, when in the early part of the following year we had to send out a considerable force to South Africa, we succeeded in despatching both those bodies of men without incurring the remarks and the censures which had been made on former occasions; but I am bound to admit that we succeeded at the expense of a serious dislocation of our Roster; and that measure of success did not warrant me in abstaining from submitting to Parliament such changes as I thought should be effected in order that we might be always able to send to distant parts, if necessary, a sufficient force for one of these minor wars without the dislocation which we had experienced. And I proposed to effect this by adding nearly 3,000 men to the Infantry, by which means the regiments at the top of the Roster might be so strengthened as to give us always a complete Army Corps ready for service.

The Committee will remember that when we took up this question last year we were warned that the moment was not a propitious one, looking at the number of battalions then on foreign service; but, nevertheless, we did undertake the task, and I will now state how we executed it. Previously there stood first for foreign service 6 battalions, each numbering 800 rank and file, followed by 6 other battalions, each numbering 720 rank and file, the battalions in the Mediterranean only numbering 600. What we proposed was to raise the first 12 battalions to 950 rank and file, 8 of these with large depôts of 150 each, and to raise the battalions in the Mediterranean and the Colonies to 800; and in this way we expected to have 18 Line battalions always ready for service, with 3 battalions of the Guards and the proper complement of Artillery and Cavalry. I do not pretend to possess a wizard's wand, or to be able to convert a battalion of 720 men into one of 950 at a stroke of the pen. You can only do this in one or two ways, either by adding to each battalion a certain number of recruits, or by transferring to it a certain number of men from other regiments. There are objections to either course, and we had to be very careful to steer between the difficulties which we should have brought upon us by using either method too freely.

I think the Committee will be interested to hear what is the result which we have attained. As far as the 6 battalions in the Mediterranean are concerned the operation has been successful; they have been raised to 800 men each of fair service. As far as the 12 battalions at home are concerned, we had to bring them up to 950 men each, or a total of 11,400 men. I am happy to tell the Committee that on Friday last, while of those 12 battalions some were a little over strength and some a little under, as against the 11,400 to which it was necessary to raise them, they contained 11,264 rank and file. Therefore, in a few days we shall have completed in point of numbers the operation designed. Of these 12 battalions at home 8 are in camp—6 at Aldershot and 2 at the Curragh: and 4 are still in barracks, some of them I hope soon to be transferred to camps, where they will get the greatest benefit in drill and training. The depôts, which, on the average, are about 20 under strength, are also increasing from day to day. Therefore, as regards numbers, we have succeeded in our operation; but it is only right that I should say that there is still much to be done before these battalions can be considered in a thoroughly satisfactory state. There is still a larger proportion of younger troops than one could wish; but in that respect every month will show improvement. For instance, the battalions going abroad next year will not be depleted this year by drafts to other battalions abroad; and, therefore, they will daily contain an increasing proportion of seasoned troops and a diminishing proportion of recruits.

And now let me state to the Committee what are the facts as to the necessary number of recruits in the ranks. I showed last year that the Army could not be recruited except under short service; and though I raised that service from six to seven or eight years, it still necessarily involved a very large annual enlistment; and at the present time, roughly speaking, the number of Infantry recruits is something over 19,000 per annum. The number of Infantry battalions at home may be taken as 71, and, with few exceptions, all recruits go to them, generally through the depôts in the first instance. If you divide the number of Infantry recruits by the number of battalions at home, it follows that there will be in each of the battalions at home, on the average, nearly 270 recruits; and as the average strength of the home battalions is just under 600, it follows that nine-twentieths, or, allowing for the depôts, two-fifths of the rank and file of the battalions at home must consist of recruits in any circumstances. Of course, the proportion will not be the same in all battalions; but if there are fewer recruits proportionately in some, as, for instance, in the 1st Army Corps when fully built up and in its normal state, there must be more in others; and those who see a series of regiments in the various home garrisons, with what appears to be a disproportionate number of young soldiers, must remember that this is the case because, as a rule, no recruits are sent abroad, it being our policy to maintain in India, our Colonies, and the 1st Army Corps efficient battalions always fit for service.

Here, Sir, I ought to say something about the practice of calling for volunteers from one regiment to another. I have explained that we hoped to reduce this to a minimum, and, at any rate, not to employ it for filling up the ranks of regiments leaving on foreign service. I am happy to say that in this we have been successful. Although to build up the battalions in the 1st Army Corps it has been thought best to use this means to a certain extent, and not to increase their numbers solely by recruits, I am in a position to say that no volunteers went to any of the Infantry battalions which proceeded this season to relieve others on foreign service, and also that the drafts to this date and up to the end of the season will have contained no volunteers. I may add that the battalions going abroad as reliefs next year are also full, and will require no volunteers from other regiments. I trust, Sir, that this statement will be satisfactory to the House, and will relieve the minds of those who have doubted whether we should be able to fulfil the promises about the 1st Army Corps which we made last year.

This, Sir, brings me to the system of relieving Infantry battalions abroad, which I explained to the Committee last year. We have most carefully discussed the proper details of the arrangements for this purpose, and there are now in the War Office exact rules under which it is laid down of what men each draft is to be composed. By that means we shall be enabled to keep the promise we have made to India, that every man sent there will have a prospect of serving six years. Some will serve a little longer, but the average service will be six years.

I may say, also, that we have not neglected the other arrangements necessary for the despatch of an Army Corps in case of emergency; an Army Corps comprising not only Infantry and Cavalry, but Engineers, Artillery, Ammunition Reserves, Commissariat, and Siege Train. We are now in such a position that, if it were necessary to despatch abroad an Army Corps with all its equipment, it could be despatched as soon as the transports were prepared.

The Committee will also be glad to know to what extent, in point of men, we are prepared for an expedition requiring more than a single Army Corps. In the event of our being engaged in a great war, it would be necessary, in the first instance, to fall back upon our Reserves, and I think the Committee would wish to be informed of the present condition of the most important of those Reserves—I mean the First Army Reserve. This Reserve has made great progress during the last year. The Committee will remember that early in the year we invited a certain number of men to volunteer from the Reserve to join the Colours in South Africa, and many of these joined in April and May. This, of course, checked the progress of the Reserve. But, starting from the 1st of May and down to the 1st of the present month of March, a period of 10 months, I find that there went to the Reserve from the Army 7,126 men; that, on the other hand, 2,266 were discharged from the Reserve; so that there was a net increase to the Reserve of 4,860 men, or nearly 500 a-month—that is to say, at the rate of 6,000 a-year. And I must remind the Committee that up to the present time, in consequence of the short-service system in the Artillery and Cavalry commencing later than in the Infantry, and the short service itself in those arms having been somewhat longer, we have as yet no considerable number of men in the Reserve from these two sources. They will begin to join the Reserve in greater numbers next year, and we may then anticipate that the Reserve will be increased more rapidly. And perhaps I may say that since the 1st of July we have added to the Reserve, out of the number of men that I have stated, about 2,300 who were allowed, under the arrangements of last year, to join it before completing their six years' Army service. The present strength of the Reserve is 25,121 men. These would make up 71 battalions, the ordinary number of Infantry battalions at home, to 1,000 men, without calling on the depôts or on the Militia Reserve. I do not say that this is the exact way in which they would be employed; but it shows how rapidly the ranks could be filled up on an emergency.

Before I pass from the Military Establishments I will state one or two proposals which are indicated in the present Estimates, and as to some of which Papers will be distributed to-morrow. It may be remembered that last year we proposed that the 12 battalions of 950 men should be followed in the Roster by 4 battalions of 850 men each; 4 of 650 men each; 8 of 500, and 43 of 480. We have made a change of some importance in this scale. It was practically found that the jumps from 500 to 650 and from 650 to 850 were inconveniently large. We have, therefore, altered the Establishment by making no jump of more than 100 men, so that, instead of the numbers as I have given them, we shall have 4 battalions of 850 men each, 4 of 750, 4 of 650, 4 of 550, 7 of 500, and 37 of 450. The result is that as four battalions go abroad every year, each battalion, after it reaches the 550 strength, will annually be increased by 100 men, until by a gradual ascent it reaches the number of 950 men.

With regard to the Cavalry, we have had to consider how we should meet the inevitable effect of short service, which begins to operate this year, or will do so, at any rate, next year. The result of that change will be that a larger number of recruits will be required to keep up the Cavalry strength. There are several ways by which we might secure this. We might leave the present system intact, but with larger depôts; and, therefore, an increase in the number of men. Or, secondly, we might leave the present organization and numbers, but attach to regiments at home the depôts for regiments abroad. Or we might divide the Cavalry into brigades of three regiments, one for service abroad, one in readiness for service, and one devoted to purposes of recruiting and training. Or, fourthly, we might reduce the number of regiments. To the first and last plans I was most reluctant to assent; and we accordingly appointed a strong Committee, consisting of Generals Wardlaw, Fraser, Bulwer, Sir F. FitzWygram, and Mr. Knox, to examine the two other plans. We have considered their Report, which was unanimously in favour of the brigade plan; but the subject is beset with so much difficulty that I think an opportunity should be given for further consideration, especially as it is not absolutely necessary to make any change this year. Next year, however, it will be necessary for us to make some proposal to Parliament.

With respect to the Artillery, it has been necessary to act without delay. There are several concurring causes which have compelled us to consider seriously the question of Artillery organization. The first is that the introduction of short service necessitates a larger number of recruits; the second is the absence of localization; and the third is the decision of the Government of India considerably to reduce the force of Artillery in that country. I appointed a very strong Committee to investigate this question also. On their Report we have arranged that there shall be 11 fixed Artillery depôts in the military districts of the United Kingdom, chiefly at or near the coast, and, if possible, at the same stations as the head-quarters of a regiment of Artillery Militia. They will be assisted in recruiting by the Infantry depôts of the district. All recruits will be retained a short time at the depôts and taught dismounted duties. The field and garrison batteries will be divided into groups, some batteries at home and some abroad, and designated after their district. Recruits will be supplied from the district depôts. The batteries abroad will be supplied by drafts from home, and ultimately be relieved precisely in the same manner as in the Infantry. Batteries in the 1st Army Corps will not supply drafts to the batteries abroad. Thus, although in name enlisted for the whole regiment, so far as possible, men will be kept in their own district batteries. The Militia Artillery will become Royal, and, as in the Infantry, be the junior brigades of the Artillery of their district, their recruits being trained with those of the Regular Force. The Horse Artillery will not be localized, but remain, as now, with a double depôt at Woolwich. I hope, Sir, that the new ties and associations thus formed will unite to their common benefit the Royal and Militia Artillery, and will enable us to secure what is so much wanted—a full and satisfactory supply of recruits.

I will pass now from these questions of organization to one or two others connected with the changes of last year. In the first place, the Committee will remember that we greatly improved the condition and prospects of the non-commissioned officers of the Army. The result of this change has already been eminently satisfactory. I called at Christmas for Reports as to the effect of our measures, both on existing non-commissioned officers, as regards their willingness to extend their service, and on the men as to their desire to become non-commissioned officers. About one-third of the general officers and commanding officers consulted have reported that good results in both respects were already apparent; while, in other cases, sufficient time had not elapsed to enable a judgment to be formed. In no case were the Reports unfavourable.

I wish to refer to another matter—that of the employment in the Civil Service of non-commissioned officers—a subject which was considered by a Committee, of which I had the honour to be Chairman during two Sessions of the last Parliament, and with respect to which I was pressed a good deal last Session to state the intention of the Government. We have made some progress. The matter is now under consideration of other Departments; and I hope, before the end of the Session, to be able to tell the House what will be done.

In reference to the condition of recruiting, I was extremely sorry to be unable to place the last Report of the Inspector General in the hands of hon. Members this evening; but I hope it will be in their possession to-morrow. I will, however, refer to the principal features of last year's recruiting. It must be remembered that in July we raised the minimum age from 18 to 19, and the length of service fron six to seven or eight years. More recruits were raised in purely regimental districts than were ever known before, 51 per cent being appointed to the territorial regiments; and this in spite of the changes in the Roster and re-linking. A larger number has also come from the Militia than during the last three years, and, though there have been some, there have been fewer cases of men passed carelessly. As to the condition of the recruits, there is admitted, on all sides, to be a great improvement, both in physique and in intelligence. General Torrens says he considers the class of recruits who have joined in his district (Cork) from January to December have been satisfactory both in intelligence and physique; in many cases they have had to make long marches in very bad weather, and the percentage that have fallen out is almost *nil.* General Bulwer, in the Report, says—

> "Intelligent and educated young men are beginning to think that the Army holds out a good opening for them, and that many are joining with the hope and intention of becoming non-commissioned officers."

The waste of the Army was 2,000 less than in the preceding year, and the net loss from desertion 724 less. The number of invalids discharged in the year was 287 against 339 in 1880. I may say that, in the machinery of recruiting, we hope shortly to establish a better system than the present one, and already a better system of remuneration has been introduced; but we do not propose to make any other changes this year. I confess I should have liked to have raised, as we almost might have done, the minimum age from 19 to 19½; and I hope we may be able, before long, to raise it to 20 years. That I look upon as one of the most important of all reforms; but it would be a great mistake to carry it out till we are quite certain of success, and I do not think that at the present time we could safely do it. We have, however, been able to introduce one improvement—namely, to require, in certain cases, evidence of character; and this, I believe, will have a beneficial effect. In the Militia the quality of the recruits has greatly improved, the number of absentees fallen off, and the waste diminished.

I pass now from this subject to another very important matter—I mean the recent changes as to the number, the pay, and the retirement of officers. The general features of what I proposed to Parliament last year were a reduction in the number of regimental officers, the almost entire abolition of compulsory retirement at the age of 40, its operation virtually commencing at 55, and a reduction in the number of general officers. The additional cost of this change, as estimated last year, has not been reached. The Estimate was a full one, and it is satisfactory to know that we shall not quite spend the whole of the Vote. The change involves an extremely difficult and complicated operation, one of the most difficult, all things considered, that can be undertaken; but there have been comparatively very few complaints, and many of these will be met by the modification of the Warrant of June last, which received the Queen's approval a few weeks ago. The number of general officers on June 30th of last year, not including Indian Officers and Marines, was 343, and it is proposed to reduce them ultimately to 119, or if the late Indian Artillery and Engineers (which are in progress of amalgamation with the British List) be included, there were 397, to be ultimately reduced to 140. The present number is 170, and the reduced number will be very nearly reached about the end of the financial year 1883-4. The number of regimental officers on June 30th of last year was about 5,600, and ultimately there will be only 5,150; at present they number 5,350. We did not discontinue the entry of officers; but only diminished it, and so spread the whole of the reduction over several years till it will be complete in the financial year 1884-5.

Some remarks were made last year as to the supposed unnecessary first expenditure in connection with so large a scheme for the retirement of officers, and I met the objections then by saying that I had had similar experience in the Naval Promotion and Retirement Scheme of 1870, and that, in that case, though there was an immediate increase of expenditure, great economy would result in the long run. I have obtained, by the kindness of my noble Friend (the Earl of Northbrook), an accurate account of the result of that operation up to the present time. I find that in 1869, the year before the change was made, there were 3,383 executive and navigating officers on the Active List, and 1,589 on the Retired List, making altogether 4,972 officers, whose pay, half-pay, and retirement amounted to £963,000. At the present time the Active List contains 2,218, and the Retired List 1,575, allowing for officers who have commuted, making altogether 3,793 officers; and the annual cost is £895,000, so that there is already an annual saving of £68,000, and when the number of retired officers is normal, it will amount to from £150,000 to £200,000. But while this saving has been effected on the one hand, the change has been of great advantage to the officers themselves on the other; because, while in 1869 the average pay or retired pay of the officers was £194, it is now £236, or an increase of £42 per annum. I give this to the Committee as an illustration of the ultimate effect of carrying out a plan very similar in general outline to that which we adopted last year with respect to the Army.

In connection with this subject, there have been some complaints made as to the supersession of officers of Artillery and Engineers, under the Warrant of June 1881. I inquired into the case with much care, and I was satisfied that there were some grounds for those complaints, but not for the considerable remedy proposed, which would have been unfair to many Line officers. I have, however, made two changes in the Corrigenda Warrant, one making captains of Artillery majors in the Army after 20 years' service, having regard to the 20 years' rule about Engineers; and the other giving the Army rank of lieutenant-colonel after seven years' regimental service to majors of Artillery and of Engineers who reached that rank before October 1877. These two changes will practically meet the grievance that we have in connection with the Artillery and the Engineers.

I have now gone through all the principal changes which I explained to the House last year, and given the Committee the result of those changes. There are a few other matters about which I wish to give some information—questions which have arisen since last year, and about which we are engaged at the present time.

As far as officers are concerned, we have under consideration at this moment, but not completed, improvements in connection with entrance into the Army, bringing into greater harmony the entrance by Sandhurst and by Woolwich, and through the Militia, both as to age and examinations. We have not completed these changes; but before the end of the Session I hope to be able to announce them.

We have given very careful attention to a subject of considerable public interest—I mean the expense of regimental messes. The attention of general officers and officers commanding regiments has been called to the necessity of regulating the mess charges to officers with a view to economy, and in order that those who have not large private means may be able to live within the limits of their income. This refers not only to ordinary mess charges, as to which officers should be able to have their three daily meals for 4*s*., but to incidental expenses and subscriptions. Reports on this subject will be received from every general and commanding officer next month.

We have also appointed a Committee, under Sir Garnet Wolseley, to inquire whether the expenses of officers might not be reduced by furniture and mess property being found by the public, as in the Navy—officers, of course, being charged a percentage. At present, except a table and two chairs, an officer's quarter is bare; and he is bound to carry about with him portable furniture, often of a very expensive kind, beds, chairs, baths, chests of drawers, wash-hand-stands, &c. This is not only burdensome to officers, but entails great expense on the public, every officer being allowed many hundredweights of baggage, from 9 cwt. to a subaltern upwards. So also every mess has to transport plate, crockery, glass, and all the details of an establishment at great cost to Government and the mess itself. All this employs men on fatigue duties, and is a hindrance to quick movements. The chief objection to change is the first cost; but the Committee will, it is hoped, propose a reasonable system.

So far as the men are concerned, the first important change which we have introduced relates to canteens. Formerly canteens were often let to contractors; but some years ago they were generally handed over to regimental charge, the profits being devoted to the amusements and comforts of the men and their families. Recreation rooms and coffee bars have also been generally established, and shops where groceries and other articles can be got. There have been great varieties in practice; but the shops, and often the recreation rooms, have usually been connected with the canteens. It is proposed to separate altogether the shops and recreation rooms from the canteens and attach the coffee bars to the former. The canteen will be almost exclusively used for the sale of beer at a moderate profit, the coffee bar and the shop being merely self-supporting. There will be a committee of three in every battalion, one junior officer supervising the conduct of the canteen; another that of the coffee bar, shop, and recreation room; and a superior officer exercising general supervision. This has been strongly recommended in many quarters, and the arrangement will be very beneficial to the men.

Another matter we have had to consider is the effect of short service on the marriage of men, and on the provision for children and for pensioners. Short service has already produced considerable changes in these respects, and we have thought it right to prepare for still greater changes to come. With this object, we have appointed a Committee to examine into the two pensioner hospitals at Chelsea and Kilmainham, and the Duke of York's School at Chelsea and the Hibernian School; and they will consider the effect of the great diminutions in the calls on these institutions, which must inevitably come before long. With respect to marriage, I hope, when short service becomes universal, that it will not be necessary to provide for the marriage of any considerable number of men, except non-commissioned officers. In point of expense, I believe the probable reduction in the percentage of married men will save the country, in transport and other charges, something like £50,000 a-year. To this subject we are giving our best attention.

Great inconvenience and expense to both officers and men have hitherto been caused by what appears to us the unnecessary frequency in the movement of troops from one station to another. Of course, there are circumstances in Ireland and elsewhere for which no precise rule can be laid down; but we have arrived at the conclusion that where these circumstances do not exist, regiments or battalions ought not to be moved oftener than every two years.

With regard to the efforts for the improvement of the shooting of the Army, we appointed a Committee last year to inquire into the matter; and although a great deal of the Report of that Committee was necessarily confidential, and, therefore, I could not lay it upon the Table, yet we have been able to adopt certain of the recommendations it contained—a proceeding that will, of course, involve some additional charge.

I was asked to-day by the hon. and gallant Member for East Suffolk (Colonel Barne) what had been done with regard to the very important subject of an improved uniform for the Army when on active service, which he has frequently brought forward during the last few years. The first element of the question was to decide whether any change should be made in the colour of the present uniform, and whether that which was the least conspicuous should be selected for general use on active service. We have appointed a Committee to consider the subject, among the Members of which are Professor Stokes and Professor Abel, and they are now making the necessary inquiries with regard to it.

Turning to the Auxiliary Forces, we propose that a portion of the Militia Reserve should be trained this year with the Line battalions of their territorial regiments. We are also going to do what will be hailed with satisfaction by the Militia—namely, to issue to them, for the first time, between 80,000 and 90,000 Martini-Henry rifles, as we have now a sufficient number of those weapons in store. We were pressed to do the same for the Volunteers; but we must begin, in the first place, with the Militia.

We have made a new arrangement with regard to the Militia recruits. Where the Militia quarters are at the depôt centre, the recruits are to go there to be trained at once on enrolment, instead of having to wait until the usual time when their regiments are called out. We hope that this will not only bring more recruits to the Militia, but also strengthen the union with the Line, and bring more men to the Line also. We expect to be able to arrange for six or eight battalions of the Militia joining in the Autumn Manœuvres this year, and we propose to establish two Militia submarine mining companies at Plymouth and Chatham similar to those at Portsmouth.

With regard to the Volunteers, there are two or three improvements contemplated, which I will now explain. First, we propose to increase the camp allowance by £10,000, so as to allow some 20,000 more men to go into camp; and, secondly, we propose to increase the capitation grant for officers passing in tactics from 50*s.* to 60*s.* We intend also to invite 15,000 men to join the Manœuvres; and although we are unable to issue the Martini-Henry rifle to the Force generally, we propose to grant 4,500 instead of 3,000 for match shooting. We are unable to recommend the issue of greatcoats generally to the Volunteers; but we propose that, as regards capes, they may obtain them by payments spread over three years.

It will be remembered that last year the regiments of Infantry Militia were made 3rd and 4th battalions of the territorial regiments, and we took power, under the Army Act of last Session, to make similar arrangements as regards the Volunteers. We do not propose to make any change in the character of the Force, except that, instead of being merely described as located in the territorial districts, the Rifle Corps will become Volunteer battalions of the territorial regiments; and we propose that the officers of their permanent Staff should, as far as possible, be drawn from the regiments to which they will belong.

If I had time—and, at half-past 2 in the morning, I am sure the Committee is tired—I should like to say something about one suggestion in connection with the Volunteers, which we do not propose to adopt at present, but which we should like the different corps to consider. At present the Volunteer is called efficient if he shoots away 60 rounds, and his corps receives its capitation grant accordingly. What we should like to do would be to carry out an arrangement, under which the test of efficiency would not be merely shooting away so many rounds, but obtaining certain points in marksmanship. We do not wish to save anything in the amount of the capitation grant; but I think we may, in the way suggested, greatly improve the efficiency of the Volunteers.

I have now gone through the different heads of the Estimates. I have shown the effect of past proposals, what changes we have determined to propose to Parliament, and what subjects we have under consideration. I fear I may have unduly detained the Committee at this late hour; but the interests at stake are so vast that they justify a full explanation by the Minister. I hope the Committee will accept what I have said as showing a sincere desire on our part to do all we can for the efficiency of Her Majesty's Forces, and will believe that, if we fail in any respect, it will not be from want of will; and for myself I may truly say that it will be my earnest duty, so long as I hold my present Office, to promote the strength, efficiency, and popularity of the Army, Militia, and Volunteers.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 132,905, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883."—(*Mr. Childers.*)

SIR ROBERT LOYD LINDSAY said, he thought it would not be possible for the Committee now to go into the complicated, though clear, Statement of the right hon. Gentleman; but he wished to ascertain the position in which hon. Members would be placed with reference to the future discussion of this Statement. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to inform the Committee on what early occasion they would have an opportunity of going into the Statement. Of course, when the first Votes were taken, £4,000,000 would be at the command of the right hon. Gentleman; and then, to a certain extent, the House would be at the mercy of the Government for the rest of the Session, and so they might not get a discussion until a very late day.

MR. CHILDERS: I may repeat what I said at the very commencement of my Statement. What I said was that we proposed to resume the discussion of the Army Estimates in such a way that every point I have mentioned, and all other points and suggestions, may be fully discussed, so far as we are concerned, on the first day after the Easter Recess; and that we would not allow any legislative matter to interfere with our taking the discussion then, and we do not anticipate any other impediment; but if any unforeseen impediment should arise, we will take the first day after that the circumstances will permit. The exact day cannot be stated until we know when the Easter Recess will be. Taking the first Vote will not preclude the full discussion of any questions arising on the whole Estimates.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL said, he felt very much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman; but he did not think the right hon. Gentleman's Statement removed the difficulty. He was quite certain that the Secretary of State for War was perfectly loyal; but he had not stated upon what any discussion would be taken. When the Committee had voted the Money Vote, they would have put it out of their power, unless the Chairman should rule otherwise, to discuss Army questions. If the right hon. Gentleman would show them out of the difficulty, then it would be for them to consider whether they could accept his proposal. He himself should be happy to accept any proposal; but he would suggest that the right hon. Gentleman should now take a portion of the Vote on Account—say £2,000,000, or any other sum he liked—and then the Committee could have a discussion upon what remained to be voted. He thought that would be in Order, and in accordance with the traditions of the House; but he would appeal to the Chairman for a ruling.

MR. CHILDERS said, he had been a good many years in the House, and he remembered many occasions on which, with respect to both the Army and the Navy Votes, it was distinctly understood that the taking of the 1st Vote did not preclude the discussion of any question affecting it. Although Vote 1 was for Pay, there were the Votes for Provisions, Transport Stores, and Auxiliary Forces, on which every question of organization could be raised. With respect to taking a Vote on Account, he could not imagine a Minister who would not naturally be very much tempted by the idea; but he hoped the House would not recognize the adoption of that course on any occasion. The effect would be to lead a Minister to come to Parliament early in the Session, and say—"Give me a Vote on Account, and we will discuss the Estimates generally later on;" and in that way there would never be any security as to the time when the entire policy of the Army Estimates would be brought forward by the Minister. He had distinctly promised an early day for this discussion, and that, he thought, would give the Committee the fullest opportunity of discussing the Estimates. He strongly deprecated any introduction of the system of voting money on account for either the Army or the Navy.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he thought there was so much objection felt in the House to taking Votes on Account that there would be little likelihood of a future Minister of War adopting such a system; but he put it to the right hon. Gentleman whether, on his own showing, his comprehensive Statement could be answered except upon this Vote for Men? There was no security that the whole of the other Votes would be taken at the time proposed; and, therefore, hon. Gentlemen would be in a position of great difficulty in regard to answering the right hon. Gentleman's Statement. The right hon. Gentleman deprecated the taking of a Vote on Account; but was not this Vote of £4,000,000 practically treated as a Vote on Account for six months' service? In point of fact, as far as the Committee were concerned, the Army Service could be carried on for that period without any further Vote; and, therefore, if the Government desired the discussion to take place without prejudice, they would take a Vote of £2,000,000 now, and complete the Vote on the first day after Easter. He trusted the right hon. Gentleman would acquiesce in that.

SIR JOHN HAY said, the right hon. Gentleman had alluded to the Navy as a subject which might bear upon this question; but last year, as a special permission, the general discussion was postponed for Vote 2, only on the ground that the Victuals Vote would enable a discussion to be raised. With regard to the Navy Votes, that course was also entirely forbidden, and was only allowed in consequence of a special application, which was assented to by the House.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT remarked, that the Secretary of State for War had begun speaking at 10 minutes to 1, and no opportunity could possibly be given to Members of the Committee to make any observations on his interesting and able Statement, upon many new points of which they had not, till then, had any intimation whatever. It would be the most unfair thing in the world to press the Committee to give this Vote of £4,000,000. Never before had the Estimates been brought on at such a time in the morning. He therefore appealed to the Prime Minister to allow, in this instance, a Vote on Account to be taken. Last year the Government got the same Vote for the Army, and then the whole discussion was driven off to the end of the Session, till the month of August, and that was a thing that ought not to be allowed. There was one thing he should like the right hon. Gentleman to answer, and it was a subject of deep interest to the country—namely, the Army Corps, which the right hon. Gentleman had stated was now in an efficient state, nine-twentieths of that Army Corps being recruits of one years' service. That the right hon. Gentleman had stated to be the fact. Nine-twentieths of the men to be sent abroad in a great emergency would be recruits of one year's service. That was a statement which he should like to hear contradicted at once if it was not true. If it was true, the fact would take away all the effect of what the right hon. Gentleman had said as to the fitness of the Army Corps for immediate service.

Mr. CHILDERS: What I stated was that in some regiments there were more, and in some less.

Lord EUSTACE CECIL wished for the ruling of the Chairman. If the Committee passed this Vote, and voted the number of men and the money, would it be possible to raise a general discussion on Vote 2?

The CHAIRMAN: The noble Lord is quite right in his statement that it is the usual practice in Committee to discuss the Statement of the Secretary of State for War on the 1st Vote, and not on subsequent Votes. One or two exceptions to this general practice have been admitted. Thus, in the Navy Estimates, where a like rule prevails, the general discussion has exceptionally been taken, not on the 1st Vote, but upon that for "Victuals," and, I think, upon the Shipbuilding Vote. But in these exceptions a single general discussion only has been allowed. If circumstances do not allow a general discussion on the 1st Vote to-night, it would be possible, at the next meeting of Committee on Army Estimates, to bring forward as the first question a general Vote, such as that on "Provisions," and take the general discussion on that Vote. But it must be borne in mind that only one general discussion is permissible, and that it ought to be, unless under exceptional circumstances, on the 1st Vote.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The hon. and gallant Member (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) appeals to me. I believe it to be a practice totally unknown to Parliament to take a Vote on Account in regard to the Army Estimates; and the only occasions on which it has been assented to has been when there has been a Dissolution of Parliament, or a change of Government in prospect. That constitutes a state of things wholly exceptional, and then the whole of the House of Commons, it may be, has not been in a position to discuss the policy, because it was not known what Government would deal with the Estimates of the year. The case of the Civil Service Estimates is totally and absolutely different, because we have now introduced a principle under which all balances must be repaid to the Exchequer on the 31st of March. The Miscellaneous Estimates are presented at the beginning of the Session, and there is no means of going forward unless you can vote your Miscellaneous Estimates before Easter, except by Votes on Account. But with regard to the Army and Navy Estimates, that would be an innovation. I do not deny the inconvenience—I suppose it is inconvenient to all of us; and, indeed, it may be called a public mischief—that statements of this kind cannot be made at an early hour in the evening, when Gentlemen are in the full force of their strength, but should have to be made after midnight; but that is part of the general condition to which we are reduced, and which we are about to endeavour to remedy so far as it may be in our power. But you, Sir, have ruled that there is a precedent for discussing the whole forces of the Navy on the Victuals Vote, and some practice of that kind will be adopted in this case.

Lord ELCHO said, the Chairman had decided that a general discussion could be raised upon the Vote for Provisions. The Secretary of State for War had offered a fair compromise, and that was to bring up the Provision Vote either on the first or second day after the Easter Recess, and that would enable the whole question to be discussed at length.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the Prime Minister had told the Committee he was averse to any course which should partake of the character of an innovation; but he suggested that they should first of all vote the money and discuss it afterwards. He (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) did not know whether that course was in accordance with Parliamentary precedent; but if it was it appeared to him it was a course which had better be postponed as soon as possible. If there was any difficulty in the present situation, the Government alone were responsible. They had up till now occupied the time of the House with Business which, no doubt, appeared to them to be very important, but which did not strike the rest of the House in the same light; and now the Committee were invited to vote not only the number of men for the Army without discussion, but also to vote away millions of money for one of the most important branches of the Public Services. The hon. and gallant Baronet (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) had said there was no precedent for voting millions of money away at this hour of the morning; but he thought the hon. and gallant Baronet must have forgotten that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War did last year precisely what he was doing now—that was to say, he tried to induce the House to vote away almost blindly over £3,500,000. He opposed, as long as he could, the object of the right hon. Gentleman on that occasion; and he should feel bound to go into the Lobby with any hon. Gentleman who invited the Committee to divide this evening against this Vote. There could be nothing more improper than to vote away millions of public money in the small hours of the morning, because it was impossible that the questions involved could be adequately discussed, or that anything like justice could be done to the subjects. The Prime Minister said they could very properly discuss anything connected with the Army on subsequent Votes. It appeared to him (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) that as a matter of Order that contention could not be maintained. That a discussion had always taken place on Vote 1 in previous years was due to the fact that the Vote provided for the pay of so many different branches of the Military Service, and that there was scarcely a topic that could not be touched upon under the Vote. He was inclined to ask how, if the Vote was passed now, it would be possible to reduce it? If subsequent discussion showed that the Vote was unduly large, how were they to rescind their Vote? He knew it was not a very common thing for a Vote submitted by Government to be reduced; but he recollected that the year before last he was enabled to secure the reduction of one of the Votes submitted by Her Majesty's Government, though he believed he was one of the very small number of Members who had ever succeeded in that endeavour. But having succeeded once, he was not without hope he might succeed again. There were many things in this Vote which required discussing. For instance, he should be inclined to contest the utility of spending so much money on the Riding Establishment at Woolwich; there was, in his opinion, a great deal too much money wasted upon that establishment. On the Vote, too, would naturally arise a very important discussion as to the propriety of framing the Estimates in the way in which they had been framed this year. For instance, the extra receipts taken in aid had been so arranged that it would enable the Department to evade the proper Parliamentary control; it would enable the Departmental authorities to spend more money than Parliament had ever been asked to sanction. These were questions which naturally arose on Vote 1; and he did not see why they should be asked—and, indeed, almost peremptorily ordered—to vote away public money whether they would or not. He did not think it was necessary to vote the money; he doubted whether it was really necessary even to vote the men to-night. It was perfectly true that the Vote for Men must be taken and agreed to by this House and "another place" before the 5th of April; but there was abundant time for doing everything necessary between now and then. With regard to the Vote for Pay, he was convinced it was not necessary to take it to-night. The War Office had a large available balance—he believed it amounted to £2,000,000 or £3,000,000—with which it was quite able to carry on without any further Vote by the Committee at present. If the War Office obtained this Vote they would be in a position to dispense with any further Votes until the end of August. Under these circumstances, he decidedly objected to the Vote for Pay being taken to-night; and he did not think it was at all fair that the House of Commons should be called upon, in the small hours of the morning, to pass the Vote even for men.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he could not understand, after what had fallen from the Prime Minister, why a Vote on Account should not be taken.

Lord EUSTACE CECIL said, he had heard no argument whatever against taking a Vote on Account, except the Prime Minister's statement that it was against all precedent. He ventured to say it was against all precedent to bring in Army Estimates at half-past 1 o'clock in the morning. He did not think the Prime Minister, in his experience of 40 years, ever knew of the Army Estimates being brought on at such a time of night. They had heard from the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), who had had considerable experience in the matter, that there was no difficulty in postponing the Votes. He (Lord Eustace Cecil) did not believe there was any difficulty in the matter; but that a great and principal objection was the Prime Minister's own will. He repeated that he believed firmly that it was nothing else but the Prime Minister's will that stood between them and progress to-night. They had occasion to observe earlier in the evening the temper and animus which the right hon. Gentleman had shown. They ought to have better arguments adduced than they had heard to-night against taking a Vote on Account. He was perfectly willing to be reasonable in the matter; he was quite willing to fall in with any reasonable compromise the right hon. Gentleman might suggest; but when a proposition of the kind which the right hon. Gentleman suggested was brought forward without any argument whatever, and especially when it was opposed to the practice of the House, they had a right to resist it.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he really must object to the noble Lord's personal remarks. He did not wish, rising at 3 o'clock in the morning, to detain the Committee with a lengthened statement. He stated that it was totally without precedent, in his belief, to apply the system of Votes on Account to the great Military and Naval Services of the country; and the noble Lord, under those circumstances, rose and said it was nothing but his (Mr. Gladstone's) personal will, or, in other words, his obstinacy and dictatorial spirit.

Lord EUSTACE CECIL: I did not say that.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, the noble Lord's meaning was obvious. The noble Lord said he was there to impose his will between the House of Commons and the progress of Business without reason; the true meaning of that was that his obstinacy and dictatorial spirit was the only obstacle in the way of the course which the noble Lord wished to see taken. The noble Lord then went on to say that he (Mr. Gladstone) had that night shown temper and animus, which justified him in putting an unfavourable construction upon the present proceeding. If the noble Lord referred to what took place early in the evening, he had no right to do so; the proper time for the noble Lord to have made his observations in relation to the matter was when the offence was committed. The noble Lord might indulge whatever feelings he thought fit; he would only make a respectful protest against the application of any personal remarks in matters of this kind. If the noble Lord would allow him to have an opinion, he would say that to introduce the practice of taking Votes on Account for the great Military and Naval Services would be a most mischievous and even dangerous innovation. They tolerated Votes on Account in the case of the Civil Service, because they were absolutely necessary; they never tolerated them except in cases of absolute necessity. If they were to allow Votes on Account to apply to the Military and Naval Services the consequence would be that a large portion of that expenditure would be sanctioned by the House of Commons at the beginning of the year without discussion. The scale of expenditure was fixed, and large portions of it were actually made without any discussion. That was the meaning of taking a Vote on Account. Could there possibly be anything more dangerous?

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH: That would be the effect of passing Vote 1.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he did not admit that at all. No doubt Vote 1 was to be applied to certain portions of the military expenditure; but to pass Votes on Account gave the sanction of the House for a certain portion of the year to the entire scale of expenses in all its parts and particulars. It appeared to him it was most objectionable to introduce a practice of that kind. It would greatly tend to relax the control of the House of Commons, and it would be the greatest possible inducement to a Government to put forward other Business and take as many Votes on Account as it could get. To take a discussion upon general subjects upon the Victualling or Clothing Votes would be a very small deviation from the general practice; but, excepting in cases of political crises, to take Votes on Account for the large Services of the country was, in his opinion, a very important innovation, and an innovation touching in principle not only the relations between the House and the Government, but the relations between the House and the finances of the country. He hoped, therefore, the Committee would adopt that which had already been recognized by some of those who sat on the opposite Benches as the most convenient mode of proceeding under the circumstances. He begged the Committee to recognize that he was not proposing any deviation. The hon. Gentleman said the Estimates had been delayed through the fault of the Government. [Mr. Warton: Hear, hear!] That might be the opinion of the two illustrious Gentlemen (Mr. Warton and Mr. Arthur O'Connor); but that was not now the question before the Committee. That mode of proceeding was part of the extremity of circumstances to which they were driven. They ought, if they could, to find a mode of relief to the position they were in; but let them not find that mode of relief by adopting a change in principle so objectionable as that proposed.

Sir JOHN HAY said, the right hon. Gentleman had made his argument open to considerable criticism. When Vote 1 of the Navy was agreed to without discussion it was considered that there was no objection to any of the items coming under it, or, at any rate, none that could not be considered under Vote 6 or 10, with regard to shipbuilding and stores. Here, however, it was said that there was a great deal of objection taken to Vote 1; and it would be impossible on, say, Vote 5, to go back and consider that which should have been discussed under Vote 1. It appeared to him that the Government was asking them to give up Vote 1 entirely, with no prospect of being able to challenge the items that were to be decided in it. The Committee, he thought, should follow the course suggested by his right hon. Friend (Mr. Sclater Booth).

Mr. CHILDERS said, he did not see any reason why Vote 1 should not be treated as the Government suggested. As a matter of practice, there were many things discussed under Vote 1, which did not come under that Vote—in fact, it was a matter of custom to discuss under it all Army questions, and others would do just as well. An hon. Member had said it would be impossible to propose a reduction of horses. [Mr. Arthur O'Connor: I spoke of the pay of the officers.] The question of horses could be discussed under the Vote for Forage. As to the necessity of taking a Vote at all, there had been years in which there had been available money to a certain extent; but that was not the case now. The Government could not, after the 1st April, spend any money except out of Votes taken to-night.

Earl PERCY said, the right hon. Gentleman had stated that they could propose a reduction in the number of men on the Forage Vote, an hon. Member having taken exception to the passing of a Vote on which the Committee might wish to discuss a proposal for the reduction of the force. He (Earl Percy) did not think such a course would be regular. But he rose to put a question to the right hon. Gentleman as to a statement he had made with reference to the course the Government intended to pursue in regard to Public Business. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that no Legislative Business would interfere with his taking the Estimates as soon as possible after Easter. He (Earl Percy) should like to know whether the discussion on the Rules of the House would come under the head of Legislative Business?

Mr. O'DONNELL said, that illustrious statesman the Prime Minister—["Oh!"] Well, he was only following the style of phraseology adopted by the right hon. Gentleman himself. The manner in which the Prime Minister had spoken of hon. Members opposite to him was calculated to inspire the suspicion that the noble Lord (Lord Eustace Cecil) was not so far astray when he spoke of the right hon. Gentleman's temper and animus. It was to be hoped no hon.

Gentleman would follow up the line of argument adopted by the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman's proposal amounted to their taking this Vote as a Vote on Account, the policy of the expenditure to be discussed at some indefinite period of the future. The Secretary of State for War said this debate was to be taken up on the first Monday after Easter, and that no legislative proposals were to interfere with it. How on earth was the right hon. Gentleman to guarantee that the first Monday after Easter would be entirely devoted to a discussion of the Army Estimates? Why not take advantage of the present time, and go on with the Army Estimates at convenient periods during the next week or fortnight? How did they know what might take place after Easter? There might be an Irish crisis, or an Eastern crisis. It was highly inconvenient to follow this system of interlarding or interleaving one kind of Business with another, from day to day, and from week to week. As he understood the proposal of the Government, they were to hurry through this important Vote now, and go at similar high speed through equally important Votes in connection with the Navy on Thursday, and then lay aside the Estimates, and plunge into all the black letter law of Procedure in debate; then, having pumped up all the precedents on the Procedure of the House on the first Monday after Easter, they were to come back and discuss the Army Estimates in some curious way on the Vote for Provisions. The right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Childers) seemingly wished to *manger la soupe avant de se battre.* No doubt victuals made the British soldier; but it was a curious way to consider the condition of the Army to bring on the discussion *apropos* of the Provision Vote. He was not sure, if the New Rules were passed in the meantime, that it would not be the duty of the presiding officer to declare such discussion dangerously irrelevant. It was proposed that the Government should take a sum on account, and every legitimate opportunity should be given to them to do so; and the discussion could then be taken properly when the Committee was in the humour for it and time suited. It would be much better to consider the Estimates by themselves and the Procedure of the House by itself than to give a day to the Estimates, then a day to Procedure, then hark back to the Estimates, and so on, following a system that would of necessity cause a great deal of repetition, because a large amount of that which was said one day would be forgotten a week or two after, when the debate was resumed.

Mr. CHILDERS said, the noble Lord the Member for North Northumberland (Earl Percy) had asked him whether the discussion as to the New Rules would be taken on the first Monday after Easter. He (Mr. Childers) was able to say distinctly that it would not be taken on that day.

Mr. WARTON said, it was now the 14th March. On the 14th March last year the Premier came down to the House, supported by a large number of his friends, and told them it was important that he should have "Urgency" to pass a large number of Votes at once. The Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote) took a different view of the situation, and maintained that it was not important that Urgency should be declared for the Estimates; and it was demonstrated that the right hon. Baronet's view was correct. The Prime Minister now told them that it was necessary, as a matter of law, that the Vote before the Committee should be agreed to. But the law did not require it. He would, therefore, move to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again,"—(*Mr. Warton,*)—put, and *negatived.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £4,162,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge of the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of Her Majesty's Land Forces at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883."

Viscount FOLKESTONE said, he had listened with great attention to the explanation given by the Government as to the difference between taking a Vote on Account in the manner proposed and passing the Vote as it stood. He confessed himself unable—though, perhaps, it was through his stupidity—to see any difference. It appeared to him that what the Prime Minister had put was a distinction without a difference;

and as it was necessary, not only for himself, but for other hon. Members on that (the Opposition) side of the House, to have some time to think over the difference between taking a Vote on Account and passing the whole Vote, he begged leave to move to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Viscount Folkestone.*)

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he hoped the Committee would not waste time in discussing this Vote. At the same time he intended to vote for reporting Progress, because he did not think that, so far as the law was concerned, it was necessary to pass the Vote to-night. There were plenty of means for passing the Vote after to-night. He should have been very glad to have voted for £2,000,000 or £3,000,000 on account if he had had the opportunity.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 33; Noes 69: Majority 36.—(Div. List, No. 45.)

Original Question again proposed.

COLONEL ALEXANDER said, that, without distrusting in any way the good intentions of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, he would like to remind the Committee that the precedent of last year, with regard to this matter, was not by any means encouraging. The right hon. Gentleman made last year, as he had made that night, a very long and very interesting speech; and at the conclusion of that speech he entered into an engagement to take care that there should be a full opportunity of discussing everything he had referred to in his speech. The House waited patiently until after Easter, and again until after Whitsuntide, and then towards the end of June what happened? The Government gave them a Morning Sitting, when the right hon. Gentleman made a longer speech than he had made on the previous occasion, and left about three-quarters of an hour or an hour for all the criticisms that hon. Members desired to pass upon the Army Estimates. Many hon. Members who were extremely anxious to speak upon the subject were precluded from addressing the House, and, in the end, there was no real discussion at all. He thought the House ought, if possible, to avoid anything of the same kind taking place again; and he would therefore move that the Chairman do now leave the Chair.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Chairman do now leave the Chair."—(*Colonel Alexander.*)

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 31; Noes 69: Majority 38.—(Div. List, No. 46.)

Original Question again proposed.

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, that towards the end of last Session he asked the Prime Minister to try and bring on the Estimates at an earlier period this Session, so that the House might be able to devote to them a full and fair discussion. He had asked the same thing in previous Sessions, and with precisely the same result. He did not think it was fair on the part of Her Majesty's Government to expect the House to vote £4,500,000 without discussion, and then go home quietly to bed. The Vote was only a portion of the entire sum required for the service of the Army —£4,000,000 out of £15,000,000—and therefore the compromise which had been offered was an extremely fair one—namely, that in regard to this particular Vote the Government should take a Vote on Account. The Committee were perfectly ready to grant a Vote on Account, and then to retire, on the understanding that the discussion should be taken on the remaining portion of the Vote. But the Government declined to accept such a compromise, and insisted upon having the whole of the Vote. He did not think that was a fair way of taking the Estimates. The subject was one in which, personally, he took a deep interest, and he objected to vote the money of the country in this loose and inconsiderate manner. He begged, therefore, as a protest against the proceeding, to move, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Captain Aylmer.*)

SIR ROBERT LOYD LINDSAY said, a protest had been now made—and in his opinion properly made—against proceeding with the discussion of the Estimates at that hour of the morning (half-past 3). If the Government had been inclined to give way, they might have had a full discussion of these Estimates on Monday; but the Leader of the House refused to permit that course to be taken. Under these circumstances, if it was not possible for them to have a discussion on Monday, the proposal which had been made by the Secretary of State for War seemed to give them the next best opportunity for obtaining a full discussion of the Estimates. No doubt, it would have been more convenient to have had that discussion earlier; but circumstances seemed to prevent the possibility of that course being taken, and the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War was that they should agree to the present Vote, and reserve the full discussion until they reached Vote 12. It therefore seemed to him that the object they desired would be attained by that means, and on an early day—the first day after the Easter Recess, he understood—they were to have the discussion which they demanded. Under these circumstances, he hoped that, having made a protest against the course taken by the Government, the Committee would agree with him that it was scarcely desirable to proceed any further with these divisions.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I wish to correct the hon. and gallant Gentleman. He says that I have refused to go on with these Estimates on Monday. That is not the case. It is necessary on Monday that these particular Votes should be reported in order to enable us to meet certain provisions required by law. I confess that it is with some astonishment that I have heard hon. Gentlemen, who cannot possess the means we have of appreciating the necessities of the time, dispute that assertion; and I am the more astonished that the contradiction should come from the other side of the House. We are the persons who are responsible, and I repeat that, in order to enable us to fulfil the provisions of the law, it is necessary that we should have these Votes reported on Monday next. Even then it will be necessary to ask the House of Lords to sit at an unusual hour on the Monday following in order to secure that full effect shall be given to the Votes.

Earl PERCY said, he wished to point out that in 1872 the 1st Vote on the Army Estimates was not taken until the 23rd of March. If his hon. and gallant Friend the Member for Maidstone (Captain Aylmer) went to a division he should certainly vote with him; but, at the same time, he agreed with the hon. and gallant Member for Berkshire (Sir Robert Loyd Lindsay) that they had now made all the protest they could, and there was no reason why they should all be kept out of their beds any longer. He thought the use the Prime Minister had made on this occasion of the majority he had fully justified the remarks which had been made by the noble Lord on the Front Opposition Bench (Lord Eustace Cecil). The Prime Minister, backed up by his majority, without the least consideration for the wishes of the minority of the House, was himself forcing on a contest of an unseemly and undignified character. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would have acted more gracefully if he had studied the wishes of the minority.

Mr. GLADSTONE: To appreciate the strictures of the noble Lord it must be borne in mind that the moment he chooses for making them is immediately after I have stated, with a full knowledge of all the facts, that I find the law compels us to have these Votes reported on Monday next in order that we may obey the provisions of the law. The noble Lord chooses that moment to tell me that he does not believe me—to tell me, in fact, that he disbelieves the assertion I have made, and that it is my will, and not the reason of the case nor the necessity of the case, that encourages the Government to persevere. I hope the noble Lord will understand the effect of what I state. He has told me fairly that he disbelieves my assertion. That is the kind of connection which the noble Lord, in the position he holds, thinks fit to establish between one Member of this House and another.

Earl PERCY: Perhaps the Committee will allow me to correct what the right hon. Gentleman has erroneously attributed to me—namely, that I meant to doubt his veracity. ["No, no!"] The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary says "No." I have often heard the right hon. and learned Gentleman tell the House that he himself was the best judge of what he meant. I have made a certain statement, and I am the best judge of what I meant when I made it. I say that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister has erroneously understood what I meant. What I meant—and I regret extremely if I did not express it—what I meant to say was this:—The right hon. Gentleman states that, in his opinion, it is necessary, in the interests of Public Business, that Supply should be taken by a certain date. ["No!"] If I understood the Prime Minister rightly, that is what the right hon. Gentleman said. I believed —and I confess that I am still inclined to believe—that the Prime Minister—and it is no uncommon thing, allow me to say, with all those who have the conduct of important Public Business—was of opinion that what he regarded as the best course in the interests of Public Business was, in itself, an absolute necessity; and therefore it was that I expressed the opinion, to which I still adhere, that although it was the Prime Minister's opinion that, in his view of the public situation, it was necessary to have these Votes reported on Monday, I have not yet heard any reason assigned why it was necessary to take the Report on Monday. I also called attention to the fact that, in 1872, the 1st Vote in the Army Estimates was not taken until March the 23rd. I might have added that, in 1874, the Army Estimates were not taken until March the 25th; but as there was a General Election in that year, perhaps the analogy will not be considered to hold good.

MR. GLADSTONE: I accept at once the statement of the noble Lord that he did not mean to convey the idea which his words appeared to me to imply. I had not completed all I desired to say when I was interrupted by the noble Lord. I was about to answer a question he had put; but I thought he rose to intercept something I was then saying, and therefore I resumed my seat in order to allow him to explain. The answer to the noble Lord's question is quite obvious. I have no doubt that the 23rd of March would amply suffice for the introduction of the first Votes in the Army Estimates under ordinary circumstances; but on this occasion Her Majesty is about to leave Windsor, and the fact that Her Majesty will be abroad when the Votes are passed makes all the difference. Upon the best computation we are able to make, it will be necessary, in order to comply with the requirements of the law, that these Votes should be reported on Monday next.

EARL PERCY said, he should like to state that if he had in the smallest degree offended the right hon. Gentleman he begged most sincerely to apologize, and to assure the Committee that, whatever might have been the expressions made use of in the heat of debate, so far as his personal feeling went, he had never intended to say anything distasteful to the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. GLADSTONE: I heartily accept the disclaimer of the noble Lord.

LORD EUSTACE CECIL also expressed his regret if anything he had said should have hurt the right hon. Gentleman's feelings. But he had risen for another purpose. They had just heard that in consequence of Her Majesty's visit to Mentone it was necessary that this Vote should be reported on Monday. Under those circumstances, he thought he might appeal to his hon. and gallant Friend behind him to consider the propriety of withdrawing his Motion for reporting Progress. He believed that every Member in the House would wish to consult the convenience of Her Majesty; and after the Prime Minister had alluded to that as a reason for passing the Vote, he felt sure that hon. Gentlemen upon those Benches would desire not to pursue the conversation further.

CAPTAIN AYLMER thought the course taken by the Government on that occasion had been most extraordinary. Great pressure had been used in order to get the Vote passed; but it was only at 4 o'clock in the morning that the real cause of this was made known. If the statement of the right hon. Gentleman had been made before he should certainly not have offered the slightest opposition to the passage of the Vote; and with the permission of the Committee he would now withdraw his Motion to report Progress.

MR. HEALY said, he was glad to see the reconciliation that was taking place. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had told the Committee that the Vote must be taken that night, otherwise the law would be broken. But, he asked the right hon. Gentleman, what did that matter—did he not break the law many times a day in Ireland? He reminded the right hon. Gentleman that the seizures of Irish newspapers without warning, and other matters which had occurred in the Post Office in Ireland, were just as much breaches of the law as the act which he was now so anxious to avoid. It was a remarkable thing to say that because Her Majesty was at Mentone the Vote must be passed that night. He did not see the necessity at all, because, if she liked, Her Majesty could come back from Mentone for the purpose of the Vote. As the Fourth Party had already retired, and the Conservative Party were so loyal on that occasion that they felt it their duty to give in, he supposed Irish Members were expected to do so likewise.

Mr. WARTON remarked, that the Prime Minister had said that, when he had stated the law, he was not contradicted by any Member sitting upon that side of the House. The right hon. Gentleman was in error; he (Mr. Warton) had contradicted him, stating that the question was not one of law, but one of fact.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he supposed that he, also, should preface the observations he had to make by the statement that if he had offended anybody he was sincerely sorry. He thought it was to be regretted that the Prime Minister had not reminded the Committee earlier of the fact alluded to by him as the reason for pressing forward the Vote. The Committee having been kept in ignorance of the real cause of the right hon. Gentleman's anxiety to pass the Vote, many hon. Members had attributed it to other reasons than the visit of Her Majesty to Mentone. He should not oppose the withdrawal of the Motion before the Committee; but as soon as it was withdrawn he should move the reduction of the Vote by an amount representing the cost of that portion of the British Army which was engaged in the work of coercion in Ireland.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR wished to point out to the Committee the singular effect of the Prime Minister's words upon hon. Members sitting opposite him. The right hon. Gentleman said that Her Majesty was on the point of leaving for Mentone, and the Conservative Party immediately left the House. The Prime Minister had also said that the Vote should be reported next Monday; but he would venture to point out that this was no reason why they should necessarily pass the Vote that night. It could be taken on Friday, or even on Thursday; and he failed to see that there was anything unreasonable in asking that it should be taken on one of those days when hon. Members would have an opportunity of fully discussing it. He saw no reason why they should consent to the Vote passing at that hour (3.50), when they had not been able even to appreciate the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War; and under the circumstances, although Irish Members on that occasion formed a numerically small body, he trusted they would stand to their guns and resist the withdrawal of the Motion to report Progress.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. O'DONNELL begged to move the reduction of the Vote by the sum of £1,000,000, which, he believed, would about represent the cost of that portion of the British Army engaged in evicting tenants in Ireland. As far as he could ascertain, something between one-third and one-fourth of the total Forces of the Crown were at that time engaged in assisting at evictions in Ireland. There was nothing to justify the use of any portion of the Army for such a purpose; and he regarded its employment in the manner alluded to as a violation of the Constitution, and a sin against humanity. Those who should be regarded as the defenders of the hearths and homes of the people were now actually engaged in the work of breaking them up. The House had, on various occasions during the Session, discussed the Irish question; and it would, doubtless, be called upon to do so again during the remainder of the Session. He would, therefore, not trouble the Committee at that late hour by going into any details, but would merely move the reduction of the Vote by the sum named.

Motion made, and Question put,

"That a sum, not exceeding £3,162,000, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge of the Pay, Allowances, and other Charges of Her Majesty's Land Forces at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883."—(*Mr. O'Donnell.*)

The Committee *divided:* — Ayes 9; Noes 72: Majority 63. — (Div. List, No. 47.)

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;*

Committee to sit again upon *Wednesday.*

MOTIONS.

PAROCHIAL CHARITIES (LONDON) BILL AND LONDON PAROCHIAL CHARITIES BILL.

Ordered, That the Report of the Commissioners appointed by Her Majesty to inquire into the Parochial Charities of the City of London, which was presented to this House in the year 1880, be referred to the Select Committee on the Parochial Charities (London) Bill and the London Parochial Charities Bill.

IMPRISONMENT FOR DEBT BILL.

On Motion of Mr. ANDERSON, Bill to abolish Imprisonment by Inferior Courts for Debt, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. ANDERSON, Mr. MICHAEL BASS, Sir HENRY WOLFF, and Mr. BROADHURST.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 102.]

House adjourned at Four o'clock in the morning.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 14th March, 1882.

MINUTES.] — PUBLIC BILLS — *Committee — Report*—Settled Land * (19); Conveyancing (20); Slate Mines (Gunpowder) * (28).

PARLIAMENTARY DECLARATION BILL.

PETITION PRESENTED.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES), in presenting a Petition from Bristol in favour of this Bill, said, he had put down the second reading for Thursday, the 23rd of March; and he would express a hope that noble Lords would come to the discussion of the provisions of the measure without any prejudice, and that they would consider them free from any Party feeling.

CONVEYANCING BILL.—(No. 20.)

(*The Earl Cairns.*)

COMMITTEE.

House in Committee (according to order).

LORD COLERIDGE said, he wished to call the attention of the noble and learned Lord to the clause in the Bill which proposed to abolish the Office and all the machinery for taking the acknowledgments of married women. He should submit to their Lordships that the abolition of this Office was unwise and inexpedient. The whole scheme and the functions of the Commissioners were regulated by Act of Parliament; and, so far as he knew, the law in many cases operated for the protection of persons who ought to have a certain protection thrown over them. The scheme was very inexpensive, and he believed that the Judicial Bench was in favour of the retention of the present system. He submitted that it was hardly worth while, under the circumstances, to abolish this Office.

EARL CAIRNS said, that the clause to which the noble and learned Lord referred passed through their Lordships' House last year without opposition. The Bill containing the clause passed a second reading in the other House and was referred to a Select Committee. There was a preponderance of opinion in the Committee in favour of the clause; but in order that the passing of the Bill should not be endangered the clause was withdrawn. He now asked their Lordships again to send the clause to the other House in the present Bill. For many years there had been a great feeling that the system of the acknowledgment of the deeds of married women was entirely useless and very expensive. He did not speak of the fees paid to the Commissioners; but in order to take an acknowledgment complicated machinery had to be set to work and solicitors employed, and, as a consequence, great expense was occasioned. If it were attempted to justify the continuance of this system on general principles he would point to the whole tendency of modern legislation as being contrary to it. As an evidence of that, he would refer to the Bill which had recently been introduced by his noble and learned Friend on the Woolsack, by which married women were given control over their property as if unmarried and with similar rights in respect of property as men. He regarded the present system of taking acknowledgments as one which caused great expense, and was productive of no advantage whatever.

Bill *reported* without amendment; amendments made; and Bill to be read 3ª on *Thursday* next.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES)—REPORTED MAGISTRATES — MACCLESFIELD—THE CASE OF CAPTAIN PEARSON.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

LORD STANLEY OF ALDERLEY, in asking the Lord Chancellor, If he would accept Captain Pearson's explanations, and reinstate him in the commission of the peace, since he had not thought it necessary to remove the three magistrates censured by the Macclesfield Bribery Commissioners as the leading cause of corruption on the Liberal side? said, he had altered the Notice of the Question since he first put it down; because he thought it would be more fitting to invite the clemency alone, rather than the severity of the noble and learned Lord upon the Woolsack, and also because, as he was a neighbour to the magistrates who had been blamed by the Bribery Commissioners—and who, perhaps, deserved removal from the Bench more than Captain Pearson—he should be sorry to appear to invite that severity upon them which had befallen their colleague. He had also to correct a mistake in the Notice Paper, owing to his having put it down from memory. "The leading cause" should have been "a leading cause." As the Correspondence between the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack and Captain Pearson had been laid before the House, it would not be necessary to take up the time of the House by recapitulating what was contained in those letters. Judging from the Correspondence, Captain Pearson had been removed from the Bench more on account of his answers to the Bribery Commissioners than for his act in obtaining for Mr. Eaton, one of the candidates, and for his agent, the sum of £200. He would first endeavour to show that Captain Pearson's act was an innocent and an unavoidable one, and then offer to the noble and learned Lord some explanations beyond those which had been already given him. Captain Pearson was at the same time an old friend and the host of Mr. Eaton, and in business relations with him, and a running account existed between them. Mr. May asked Captain Pearson for this £200 the night before the election, in order not to disturb Mr. Godwin, who was Mr. Eaton's treasurer. The £200 was handed over, and simultaneously the same day repaid by being entered to Captain Pearson's credit in the running account between him and Mr. Eaton. Captain Pearson had told the Bribery Commissioners that this money was repaid a few days afterwards, by which he meant that the running account was then balanced; but in like manner, as a sale and purchase were completed at the time of the agreement between the parties, and not at the time of payment, so this £200, having been entered to Captain Pearson's credit on the same day that he had handed over that amount of cash to Mr. Eaton's agent, there was no loan. If there had been a loan, interest would have capable of being charged upon it. Would the noble and learned Lord state whether in law interest could be charged upon a sum simultaneously entered into the debtor and creditor sides of a running account? If not, it followed that there was no loan, that Captain Pearson did nothing upon which the Commissioners had a right to examine him, and their examination of him was an unjustifiable and inquisitorial search into his abstract opinions as to bribery, which might equally well have been addressed to himself or the noble Earl who represented the Home Office. He was asked by the Commissioners if he understood that the money lent by him was intended for bribery, and he unguardedly answered that he supposed it was. After all the revelations that had been made as to bribery in Macclesfield, this was a very natural answer; and the only defect in it was the omission of the word "now," which would have conveyed his real meaning, and have protected him from the imputation made against him that he was careless as to bribery. He would now read to their Lordships the questions and answers given before the Bribery Commission, which had been referred to in the letter of the noble and learned

Lord upon the Woolsack. He was asked —"What particular purpose of the election did you suppose it was for at that hour of the morning, or so late at night?" and he replied—"I supposed it was for the use of the expenses of the election." He was then asked—"What class of expenses of the election?" and he answered—"I considered it was to be used for bribery." The next question was—"That is what you intended should become of it?" and the reply was—"That is what I expected would become of it. I do not know, of course." The question and answer which preceded this last should, however, be taken into consideration, as it went far to confirm Captain Pearson's statement that he only answered the Bribery Commissioners according to his later knowledge gathered from their proceedings. The want of exactitude and definiteness as to time was very excusable in a military officer who had served long in India and the Crimea, and who was without suspicion as to the tendency of the questions put to him; and the defects of composition in the printed Correspondence, for which a military man need not blush, since too much literary proficiency spoilt a Cavalry captain, proved that Captain Pearson gave a candid answer to the Secretary of Commissioners, unassisted by anyone who might have better represented the real facts of the case. He would now read to the House an extract from the Report of the Bribery Commissioners, describing the conduct of three magistrates who, more fortunate than Captain Pearson, had not been invited to a voluntary retirement from the magistracy—

"Your Commissioners, though they have abstained from scheduling as bribers Aldermen Wright, Bullock, and Clarke (all of them Justices of the Peace), cannot pass over without notice conduct on the part of those gentlemen which must be regarded as a leading cause of the corruption on the Liberal side. Though fully convinced at the meeting held in November, 1879, that not more than £500 could be legally expended by either of the candidates at the last election, the two former agreed in urging the necessity and advisability of spending double that amount, overbearing by argument the scruples which Mr. Chadwick professed to entertain, and his undoubted reluctance to pay more, if possible, than the above-mentioned sum. Alderman Wright, 'who,' said Mr. Chadwick, 'was the person who convinced me,' told us that they 'were driven to consider the desirability of fighting anything but a pure election.'"

Most persons would think that Captain Pearson's act of facilitating Mr. Eaton's obtaining some cash at short notice, and at an untimely hour, was a trifle compared with that of overruling the scruples of a candidate and inducing him to resort to bribery. The first observation that would be made upon these words of the Commissioners was, that they had the power to schedule as bribers these three magistrates, for a Judge did not say that he abstained from sentencing a man convicted of petty larceny to penal servitude for life, because he could not give such a sentence; if he were indiscreet, as Judges seldom are, he might say he regretted not being able to sentence him to penal servitude. Then the question arose, why did the Commissioners abstain from scheduling these three magistrates? Was it because they caused corruption only on the Liberal side? Impartiality and justice demanded that the same measure should be meted out equally to Conservatives and Liberals. It might be accidental that this was not done at Macclesfield, except that a similar mishap occurred elsewhere, and Mr. Crompton Roberts, a Conservative, had been removed from the Bench, whilst his Liberal fellow-offender had been left upon it. Perhaps the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack did not read this passage of the Report of the Bribery Commission, which was very long, or it was not brought under his notice; or else the noble and learned Lord might tell their Lordships that he had no occasion to doubt the impartiality and judgment of the Commissioners, and that he merely followed the schedule. This would be an all-sufficient answer if magistrates were removed from the Commission of the Peace only for legal offences; but as, on the contrary, they were constantly removed at the discretion of those who held the power of removing, for what might be described as mere indications of unfitness to be on the Commission of the Peace, the active part as to bribery taken by these magistrates could hardly have been passed over by an impartial Commission; and now that the words of the Commissioners had been brought under the notice of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, the responsibility as to impartiality or the reverse would revert to the noble and learned Lord. He hoped he had succeeded in exonerating

Captain Pearson, and in showing that he had been very hardly dealt with for that which must appear to be very trifling and venial when compared with the action of other magistrates, and that the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack would be willing to remedy the apparent breach of impartiality on the part of the Bribery Commissioners. He also hoped he had succeeded in his endeavour to avoid using any words that might seem wanting in respect, not only to the high Office of the noble and learned Lord, but also to that respect and esteem which all of their Lordships felt for his high character.

The LORD CHANCELLOR said, he did not complain of the manner in which his noble Friend had brought forward this subject; but, as regarded one point, he might state that before the end of the last Session of Parliament, and therefore before the illness to which his noble Friend had referred, he had given every attention to it, and had considered the evidence produced before the Commissioners. With regard to the case of Captain Pearson and the other cases which his noble Friend had mentioned, he had only to say this—that he had taken the law for his guide. The principles on which he had acted in these very unpleasant cases were laid down in a letter written by his Secretary of Commissions on the 12th of September, 1881, to Captain Pearson. In that letter it was said—

> "The Lord Chancellor has not felt that, when a gentleman in the position of taking an active part in the business of elections, as in your case, has knowingly done an act declared by the Statute to be bribery, he could be properly retained in the Commission of the Peace. On this rule he has acted in several cases, in which he would have been glad to find it consistent with his duty to take a different course."

He (the Lord Chancellor) could state that not a single magistrate who had been scheduled by the Commissioners, and who before them had had an opportunity of stating his own case, and had not, by his own statement, succeeded in exonerating himself, had been retained in the Commission of the Peace. All these magistrates had been removed without any distinction of Party, and without any respect of persons. Among the gentlemen so removed was one whom he was happy to number among his personal friends, and who, he felt convinced, entertained no corrupt purpose; but he had done acts which he (the Lord Chancellor) could not hold to be, in a legal point of view, erroneously estimated by the Commissioners. There were also several other individuals among them whose faults were certainly as venial as Captain Pearson's could be supposed to be. Several Liberal magistrates at Macclesfield had been scheduled as having been guilty of bribery, and they had been all removed; one, at least, was as deserving of consideration as Captain Pearson, who had himself admitted in evidence that he had advanced £200 to Mr. Eaton, one of the candidates, knowing that it would be used for bribery. The circumstances, in his opinion, were such as to make it impossible to deny that the Commissioners' decision was a justifiable one; and he would have been wanting in his duty if any regard for the position and character of Captain Pearson—who, he had no doubt, was a gentleman worthy of esteem in all other respects—had induced him to make an exception in that gentleman's favour when he was removing others not more culpable from the Bench of Magistrates. The law as to the course to be followed by the Commissioners was clear, and so it was in regard to the removal of persons who might, on a regular trial, be found guilty of bribery, from the Commission of the Peace. Such persons, being found guilty, were incapable of holding any judicial office, or from acting on the Commission of the Peace. Though Captain Pearson was not tried for the offence, yet, when he found such a Report against him, after he was heard before the Commissioners, and had the opportunity of telling his own story, when he really admitted the fact, he would not have been justified in treating him as a fit person for the office of Justice of the Peace. He invited Captain Pearson to send in his resignation, and he did so; but if he had not done so he must have removed him. He was not open to the charge of having acted inconsistently in the case of the three magistrates referred to by the Macclesfield Commissioners, for those three gentlemen had not been reported as guilty of bribery, and no sufficient evidence had been adduced against them to justify such a Report, though it was true they were censured for other acts by the Commissioners. It was not possible for him to go beyond the law. These gentlemen, whether or not they had entered out of political zeal into a competition in which they were aware that some illegal expenditure would be likely to take place on both sides, had not placed themselves in such a position as to be treated by the law as guilty of any offence. The evidence which they had given, and the evidence given against them, had failed to bring home to them any specific offence. There might be illegal expenditure, which was not bribery as defined by law, and which the law had not visited with the penalties of bribery. Therefore, though he regretted that any gentlemen in the position of magistrates should have placed themselves in a position to deserve any such censure as that which had been passed upon these three magistrates, he could not, as he had said, go beyond the law, and measure, in a manner which the law did not authorize, the precise extent of their culpability. He hoped that he had fully explained to the House how these matters really stood.

House adjourned at Six o'clock, to
Thursday next, half past
Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 14*th* *March*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—New Writ Issued—*For* Carnarvon District, *v.* William Bulkeley Hughes, esquire, deceased.

Private Bills (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Newcastle-upon-Tyne Improvement*; Oxford Gas*; Sutton and London and South Western Junction Railway*; Tilbury and Gravesend Tunnel Junction Railway*; Worcester and Broom Railway*.

Considered as amended—London and Saint Katharine Docks*.

Withdrawn—Waterloo and City Railway*.

Public Bill—*Second Reading*—Drainage (Ireland) Provisional Order* [94].

QUESTIONS.

BRAZIL—EMANCIPATION OF SLAVES.

Mr. DILLWYN asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If the British Minister at Rio has furnished any late Report on the progress of slave emancipation in Brazil; and, whether, on the ground that so large a portion of the slave population have been imported in contravention of British treaties and of Brazilian law, he may be instructed to use, as occasion may offer, the friendly influence of Her Majesty's Government in advising the adoption of measures for anticipating the present remote period of complete emancipation?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The Reports received from Her Majesty's Representatives at Rio with regard to the emancipation of the slaves in Brazil are contained in the Volume of Slave Trade Correspondence, which will be very shortly distributed. The Brazilian Government are already fully aware of the views of Her Majesty's Government with regard to the question; and it is certain that under the operation of existing laws the number of the slaves is steadily diminishing.

INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT—UNLICENSED DEALING IN PLATE.

Dr. CAMERON asked the Lord Advocate, Whether his attention has been called to the case of William Forrest, a working watchmaker of Glasgow, fined £3 and costs for having sold a watch without a licence to deal in plate, in which the accused was entrapped into the commission of the offence by an agent of the Inland Revenue instructed to "make a detection;" whether it is true that Forrest, in reply to a false story told him by the agent of the Inland Revenue, stated that he did not sell watches, offered to take him to a dealer where he could select one, and ultimately consented to let him have a watch, sworn to be intended as a present for his wife, on the agent's expression of an urgent desire to deal with him personally, because he believed him to be an honest man; whether any evidence was adduced at Forrest's trial suggestive that this breach of Law was not a solitary one; and, whether the case was prosecuted by a Procurator Fiscal; and, if so, whether Public Prosecutors in Scotland have any instructions to prosecute in every Excise case, irrespective of its general merits, or the manner in which it may have been got up?

The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. Balfour): From the inquiry which I have caused to be made into the circumstances of this case, it appears that complaints had been made to the Inland Revenue Department that William Forrest, the person named in the Question, had been for a considerable time dealing in silver plate without a licence, and two of the subordinate officers of that Department arranged a plan by which they thought they might procure a conviction. One of them called on Forrest, and, after some conversation, proposed to buy a watch. It is the case that in the course of that conversation the subordinate officer did make certain untrue statements; and some witnesses deposed, it would also appear, in the course of the trial, that he rather induced Forrest to sell the watch. When it was reported to the Department that Forrest had sold the watch without a licence, they, not being aware that any deception had been practised, directed a prosecution; but when, after the trial, they became aware that there had been deception, they censured the officer. In answer to the third paragraph of the Question, I have to say that evidence was not produced at the trial that this was Forrest's first or was not his first breach of the law in this respect. The Solicitor to the Inland Revenue began to lead evidence as to the previous complaints; but this was objected to by the Solicitor on the other side, and, yielding to the objection, he did not persevere. The prosecution was not instituted by the Public Prosecutor, but solely by the Inland Revenue Department, who employed as their Solicitor a gentleman who happened also to be Procurator Fiscal for the Justice of Peace Court. The remainder of my hon. Friend's Question I answer in the negative.

Dr. CAMERON: I beg to give Notice that I shall on Friday ask the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he will consider the propriety of asking the Commissioners of Inland Revenue to remit the fine?

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT.

Mr. SEXTON (for Mr. Healy) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the charge under which Mr. J. Byrne, Mr. G. Murphy, and Mr. T. O'Dempsey, of county Wexford, were arrested under the Coercion Act is one for which the greatest penalty on conviction, under the Conspiracy Act of 1875, is three months' imprisonment; whether those gentlemen have not now been five months in prison; and, whether their cases have been reconsidered?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the charge against these prisoners was that they had endeavoured to compel others, by intimidation, not to work for certain persons, or sell to them—in fact, to prevent the exercise of their lawful rights by other people. The offence was punishable under the Whiteboy Act by imprisonment for a period not exceeding three years, with or without hard labour. These persons had been in prison since the end of October, and their case had been reconsidered.

Mr. GRAY asked whether, under the Whiteboy Act, the punishment of flogging also could not be applied?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that was so; but nobody would think of applying it.

Mr. HEALY asked if the right hon. Gentleman was aware that Lord Justice Holker had proposed the repeal of the Whiteboy Acts?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he had no information on the subject.

Mr. REDMOND asked, If it is a fact that the suspects in Limerick Prison are not permitted to receive the "Graphic" newspaper; whether this rule exists in other prisons; and, why rules governing matters of this kind are not uniform in all prisons where suspects are detained?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that application was made by the Governor of the gaol to the Prison Board on the subject, and an order was sent down to that and the other prisons that *The Graphic* might be received by the prisoners. It appeared from a letter sent to him by the Prison Board that most of the complaints made in the House of Commons by Members were unknown to the Board until they were called upon to reply. If the prisoners would only write to the Board of Appeal, to any member of the Board, or to the Inspector who visited the prisons, any just cause of complaint would be at once remedied. By the General Prison Rules, Governors were obliged to see every male prisoner once, at least, in every 24 hours, and he was also always ready to receive complaints. If there were complaints, and the Governor did not examine into them, he incurred a most heavy responsibility. He was not aware that the Governor had ever refused to do so.

MR. REDMOND: Are prisoners permitted to make complaints by letter to the Prisons Board? In two cases I know that such letters when sent were never replied to.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I cannot conceive that there could be any objection to allow complaints by letter. If the hon. Member will give me the particulars of the cases he refers to I will examine into them.

METROPOLITAN IMPROVEMENTS—SHIFTING OF THE POPULATION.

MR. FIRTH asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he is aware that the various Railway, Market, and other schemes affecting London, now before Parliament, involve the removal of more than 20,000 of the poorer classes of the Metropolis; and, whether, pending the constitution of a public body able and willing to protect the interests of the Metropolitan poor, he will provide for the insertion into these measures of clauses preventing the demolition of houses now occupied by the poor, until proper accommodation for the number scheduled for removal has been provided in the neighbourhood, such clauses to be of at least equal stringency to Clause 33 of "The Metropolitan Street Improvement Act, 1877?"

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The matter to which my hon. Friend refers is, I admit, one of considerable importance. I cannot say if Clause 33 of the Metropolitan Street Improvement Act, 1877, could be made available in the way he suggests. Our experience has been that the clause has not worked satisfactorily. I shall be happy to confer with my hon. Friend, and also with the President of the Board of Trade, as to whether any provision could be made for the purposes indicated in his Question.

PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION—THE VACANT SEATS.

MR. LEWIS asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether the Government proposes to move for the issue of a new Writ for the City of Oxford, in the place of Mr. Justice Chitty; and, whether he will state the course the Government propose to pursue as regards the still vacant seats of Members unseated for bribery?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): It is not the intention of the Government to move for the issue of a New Writ for the City of Oxford in consequence of the elevation of Mr. Justice Chitty. In answer to the second portion of the Question, I may state that it is the intention of the Government to submit a Bill for the consideration of the House, and the House will then have an opportunity of dealing with the different constituencies according to the amount of corrupt practices which had been reported to have existed.

MR. LEWIS: Can the Attorney General state when the Bill will be brought in?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES): At the first practicable opportunity, Sir.

MR. LEWIS: In consequence of the answer I have received, I beg to give Notice that on this day week I shall move that a New Writ be issued for the City of Oxford?

MR. THOMAS COLLINS: I beg to give Notice that I shall oppose the Motion.

MR. ONSLOW: Will the hon. and learned Gentleman say whether he intends to proceed with that Bill or the Corrupt Practices Bill first?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that that was a matter relating to the general conduct of Business; and the Question ought, therefore, to be addressed to the Prime Minister.

POST OFFICE—ARTICLE 6, POSTAL CONVENTION OF PARIS—SEIZURE OF ARTICLES PASSING THROUGH THE POST.

MR. HEALY asked the Postmaster General, Whether it is true that Her Majesty's Government have interpreted Article 6 of the Postal Convention at Paris, which declares—

> "In case of the loss of a registered article, there is to be paid an indemnity of 50 francs to the sender by the administration upon whose territory the loss has occurred,"

to mean cases of "accidental" loss, and not to seizures, as in the case of the "Irish World;" if so, whether they have communicated their views to the American Government or to the other Signatory Powers, what is the date of the communication, and where its terms may be referred to?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he would answer the Question on behalf of his right hon. Friend. The words of the Convention were taken as applying to articles which were not to be found. No communication had been made on the subject to any of the Signatory Powers.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE BASUTOS.

Mr. DILLWYN asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether, having regard to the fact that the period fixed for the acceptance by the Basutos of the ultimatum sent to them by the Cape Government will expire on Wednesday next, Her Majesty's Government are prepared to recommend that an extension of time be given to the Basutos, within which they may comply with the demands made upon them?

Mr. COURTNEY: When Sir Hercules Robinson arrived at the Cape he found the Basutos at war with the Cape Government. On the 30th of January, 1881, he reported that he had received a Petition from Lerothodi and Joel Molappo, praying for his intercession in the interests of peace. After some negotiations, the arbitration of Sir Hercules Robinson was accepted on both sides, and on the 29th of April Sir Hercules Robinson gave his award. On the 12th of May Lerothodi, Joel Molappo, and 10 other Chiefs wrote to Sir Hercules Robinson accepting his award. Masupha not having signed the letter, it was doubtful whether he accepted. On the 13th of September, however, Sir Hercules Robinson telegraphed that Masupha had at length fully accepted all the terms of the award, and that they were being carried out in their integrity throughout the whole of Basutoland. On the 24th of November, however, he telegraphed that Masupha had broken all his promises of submission to the award, and was once more acting in defiance of the Government. The award was loyally accepted by the Cape Parliament, and the Cape Government continued to make strenuous efforts to obtain its fulfilment by the Basuto people; but these efforts were only partially successful, mainly owing to the opposition of Masupha. On the 25th of January Sir Hercules Robinson telegraphed that the attempt to enforce the award on Masupha by the aid of the Basuto Chiefs and people having failed, Ministers advised that Parliament be convened for the 17th of March to consider the situation. On the 15th of February he telegraphed that the Ministers had sent to the Acting Governor's agent in Basutoland an intimation to be conveyed to the Basutos that the award must be complied with by the 15th of March, failing which it would be deemed cancelled. The matter thus lies entirely in the hands of the Cape Government and the Cape Parliament. It is within the power of the Cape Government to enlarge the time without reference to the Secretary of State; and if they intimated any intention to enlarge it this would be at once acquiesced in. But it would be improper in relation to the Cape Colony, and inconsiderate in relation to the Basutos themselves, for Her Majesty's Government to volunteer to the Cape Government a suggestion that the time should be enlarged.

NAVY—ARMAMENT OF H.M. SHIPS.

Captain PRICE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether it is intended to arm the "Dreadnought," "Thunderer," "Devastation," "Agamemnon," and "Ajax," or any of them, with the new 43-ton breech-loading guns?

Mr. TREVELYAN: The 43-ton gun will be mounted in ships now building, in which the turrets and barbette towers are being prepared for them. The late Board considered the question of the *Ajax* and the *Agamemnon*, and resolved to arm them with the 38-ton gun; and the present Board found the ships too far advanced, and the 43-ton gun too little advanced, to enable them to reverse the decision. In the case of the *Dreadnought*, the *Thunderer*, and the *Devastation*, it would be bad policy to dismantle our most powerful ships afloat until we have the new ships with the new guns to replace them on the seas while the process of re-arming is going forward.

RELIEF OF DISTRESS (IRELAND) — SEED SUPPLY ACT, 1880—THE SEED RATE — LOSS OF FRANCHISE BY NON-PAYMENT.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether, in cases where the ordinary poor rate has been paid and accepted, and the seed rate remains outstanding, the occupier's right to the franchise is lost?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): The instalment of seed rate which is payable is by the Statute, as I pointed out yesterday in reply to the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell), "to be added to the poor rate, and to be collected therewith." Therefore, there cannot lawfully be a part payment of this aggregate rate under the description of "ordinary poor rate," or any other description. Consequently, the hypothesis on which the hon. Member's Question is founded cannot, in point of law, arise.

MR. O'DONNELL inquired, if there was any provision in the Seeds Act repealing portion of the Reform Act which made the non-payment of the poor rate the only ground for disfranchising?

[No reply.]

RELIGIOUS DISSENSIONS (GIBRALTAR)—DR. CANILLA.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any intelligence has been received from the Government of Gibraltar respecting arrests and imprisonments of different of Her Majesty's subjects, in that possession, made on the occasion of the installation of Dr. Canilla, as Vicar Apostolic, under the protection of the troops?

MR. COURTNEY: A despatch was received to-day from Gibraltar which will be included among the Papers now with the printers. It appears that in clearing the Church of St. Mary the Crowned, which had been occupied early on the morning of the 2nd by persons who had commenced barricading it, 43 arrests were made, all, with one exception, by the civil constables. Twenty of these were tried the next morning by the magistrate, and one of them, who had assaulted the police inspector and been punished on the last occasion of disturbance, was sentenced to six months' imprisonment with hard labour. All the prisoners were defended by a barrister. Of the other persons arrested, some were bailed until the following day, when all the rest were tried. The same day, the 4th, notices of appeal were lodged in respect of 24 of the convicted prisoners, and, bail having been given, they were released pending the appeal.

ARMY (INDIA)—BENGAL STAFF CORPS—CAPTAIN J. B. CHATTERTON.

MR. GRANTHAM asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether he can now answer the question, put to him in August last, as to Captain Chatterton, viz.:—Whether, after the holding of the court of inquiry on the state of Captain Chatterton, as mentioned by him last Thursday, there were general, brigade, and divisional orders issued in reference to his case, dated respectively 15th, 16th, and 17th March 1869; and whether, in consequence of such orders, Presidency Surgeons Baillie and Brougham, and Garrison Surgeon Powell, placed Captain Chatterton in the Officers' Hospital at Fort William, Calcutta, for urgent surgical treatment, as the operation, however simple it might have been if performed in the September previous, had become a serious one, owing to delay; whether Garrison Surgeon Powell has certified that, after full examination, he found Captain Chatterton suffering from a contracted limb, for which he considered the division of the left tendon achilles necessary; that he attended him daily, prepared his papers, and proposed to take him before the Medical Board in Calcutta on the 28th April, with a recommendation that he be granted twelve months' leave of absence to visit England, in order that the operation might be performed under favourable circumstances, but that he was unable to take him before such Court in consequence of an Order from the India Council being served on him on the 26th April, requiring him to dismiss Captain Chatterton from the hospital; whether that India Council Order was founded on the previous Despatch of January, and in ignorance of the opinions subsequently formed by the highest medical authorities in Calcutta; whether, in consequence of Captain Chatterton being so hastily turned out of the hospital, he was left to find his way back to England to undergo the operation the best way he could; whether he will allow this officer to be examined by the Medical Board at the India Office to report to the House whether Captain Chatterton is now a cripple for life, notwithstanding five operations, performed in England, in consequence of the delay in attending to his case in India, owing to the differences of opinion existing among the medical authorities in India; and, whether he can recommend some compensation to Captain Chatterton for the injury he has sustained, and the great expense to which he has been put, in consequence of the numerous operations he has been obliged to undergo?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: In May last I informed the hon. Member that I would have the matter carefully looked into, in order to ascertain whether it was requisite to make further inquiry in India. Subsequently, I privately informed the hon. Member, in reply to a private inquiry made by him, that the replies I had already given in the case of Captain Chatterton were based on the information which had been laid before previous Secretaries of State, and that the more detailed inquiries subsequently made in India only confirmed more precisely the accuracy of that information. I have now satisfied myself that further inquiry in India would throw no more light on the case than we already have. It has been officially reported that under no general, divisional, or brigade order was Captain Chatterton placed as a patient for surgical treatment in the Officers' Hospital at Fort William. These orders simply communicated to him the fact that, pending the orders of Government in his case, he might consider himself on leave in Calcutta, and consult any medical officer he pleased. He, therefore, voluntarily availed himself of the privilege of admission to the Officers' Hospital, according to the then prevailing custom of all officers when sick and on leave in Calcutta. He was admitted into the hospital on the 7th of April, 1869. The case-book shows that he came in for stiffness of ankle-joint due to the contraction of the tendo achilles and heart disease. The existence of the former was unquestioned; of the latter it was more doubtful. The case-book adds that "no treatment was considered necessary or adopted," and that he, having been placed on half-pay, left the hospital on the 23rd of April, 1869; but he apparently did not leave until the 28th. The surgeon in charge of that hospital, now retired, has, I believe, certified that he intended to bring Captain Chatterton before a Medical Board with a recommendation that he should receive 12 months' leave to enable him to undergo a division of his tendo achilles under favourable circumstances. Before the Board met Captain Chatterton had been placed on half-pay, and was at liberty to proceed to England without further permission or the formality of a Board, a liberty of which he availed himself. I am not prepared to call for a Report on Captain Chatterton's state by the Medical Board of the India Office; nor can I admit that there is any ground for recommending Captain Chatterton for any pecuniary aid in addition to the retired half-pay he already receives.

NAVY—THE CHANNEL SQUADRON.

CAPTAIN PRICE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, What is the present strength of our Channel Squadron; if he could state, without detriment to the Public Service, for what duties it is intended; and, what opportunities are now given to Naval Officers, and especially to Flag Officers, to perfect themselves in the art of manœuvring Fleets?

MR. TREVELYAN: Three ships of the Channel Squadron are now cruising in the western part of the Mediterranean. The object of their cruise is to teach their seamen to work aloft, and, as far as it can be done with three ships, to practise the officers in manœuvring. The *Minotaur* will be commissioned in a fortnight for the flag of the Vice Admiral in command. The *Sultan* will be added to the Squadron next month, and it is hoped that on the return of the Detached Squadron from China in August next, the *Inconstant* will be attached to the Channel Squadron to complete her commission, making six large ships in all, carrying 4,200 officers and men. With regard to the last part of the hon. and gallant Member's Question, I have something to say on the opportunities to officers for practising manœuvring in the Statement on introducing the Estimates. Perhaps he will excuse me if I reserve it till then.

PRISONS (IRELAND)—OMAGH GAOL.

MR. T. A. DICKSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, taking into consideration the revelations which have come to light in connection with Omagh Gaol, he will order an inquiry into the proceedings of the Prisons' Board in reference thereto, and into the sanitary condition of all the prisons in Ireland?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, a very careful inquiry had been made into the state of Omagh Gaol by an eminent Dublin physician, whose Report he had only before him that day. He did not, however, think there was any ground for going to the expense of a general inquiry into the proceedings of the Prisons Board in reference thereto, and into the sanitary condition of all the Irish prisons. Since the prisons came under the supervision of the Prisons Board the death-rate had been very low; but, taking all the circumstances of the case into consideration, he had directed that special inquiry should be made into the condition of the prisoners under the Coercion Act.

MR. T. A. DICKSON said, he had intended to have asked the Chief Secretary what provisions would be made for the widow and children of the man who lost his life in the discharge of his duty? but, owing to the fact that certain Papers were being laid upon the Table, he would postpone his Question.

MR. GRAY inquired, whether the Chief Secretary would have any objection to allow the medical sanitary officers of Dublin, who were the officers of the Local Government Board, to inspect Kilmainham Prison without any expense to the Government?

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he did not think he ought to do that unless there were special reasons for it.

MR. HEALY: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he intends to remove from Kilmainham Mr. Parnell, Mr. Dillon, and Mr. O'Kelly, to some other gaol; and, if so, whether he has taken special care as to the sanitary condition of that gaol?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: That is a Question I must decline to answer.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—JOHN M'MORROW.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, On what grounds John McMorrow is still retained in prison, he having been arrested over twelve months ago?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the individual in question had been arrested on the ground that he had been a principal in a riot and in an unlawful assembly. He had made inquiry as to whether his liberation could be effected without danger; and if the hon. Member would repeat his Question in a few days, he would inform him of the result of the inquiry.

THE NAVY ESTIMATES.

MR. GORST asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether he is aware that Vote 1 of the Navy Estimates was "reported" last year as late as March 21st, and that, during the former Liberal Administration, Vote 1 of the Navy Estimates was "reported" as late in 1873 as March 26th; in 1872, as March 23rd; and in 1871, as March 28th; and that Vote 1 of the Army Estimates was "reported" in 1871 on March 24th; whether the Law on these occasions was broken with his sanction; and, whether any more serious evils will result if the Reports of Vote 1 of the Navy Estimates and Vote 1 of the Army Estimates were taken during the present year as late as in 1871?

MR. GLADSTONE: I cannot answer to the fullest extent which the form in which it is printed demands the Question of the hon. and learned Member without entering into a detailed exposition of the rules under which this House votes public money with the view to the public security and to the control of Parliament over public money, which would not be appropriate on this occasion. I accept the statements made in the Question of the hon. and learned Member as to matters of fact. I have no doubt that they are accurate. It is perfectly true that in 1881 these Resolutions were not reported until the 21st of March; whereas Monday next is only the 20th of March. That is a difference which I will not dwell upon. The hon. and learned Member will see that it is more than explained by the absence of Her Majesty on the Continent. The time will be consumed in communicating with Her Majesty by telegraph, and in the transmission by messenger of the Royal signature necessary to complete the passing of an Act. As to the other years referred to in the hon. and learned Gentleman's Question, I accept the statement of the hon. and learned Member in reference to them. But when the hon. and learned Member asks me whether the law was broken on those occasions with my sanction, I have to reply that it was not broken with my sanction, for the simple reason that it was not broken at all. On those occasions there was no breach of the law or irregularity in any sense whatever; because before the Navy Votes were taken other Votes had been taken, and a Ways and Means Bill was in progress through the House, so that it could receive the Royal Assent before the close of the financial year, and likewise certain Votes necessary for the Public Service were in a position to be reported before the close of the financial year. There is no inconsistency between the precedents cited by the hon. and learned Member, and the statement I made last night; because at the present time there is no Ways and Means Bill in progress through the House which could receive the Royal Assent before the close of the financial year. The third Question of the hon. and learned Member I believe is disposed of by my answers to the former Questions.

Mr. O'DONNELL: Might I ask the right hon. Gentleman if the Government were aware of the approaching departure of Her Gracious Majesty for the Continent when they invited the House to deal with other matters than the Estimates three weeks ago?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Her Majesty makes her own arrangements with regard to the times of her departure, and gives us adequate information with regard to them when we ask it. I do not think I am called on to give any further answer.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—THE CLOTURE.

Mr. ANDERSON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, considering all the time that has been already lost for want of his proposed Rule 2 (as to Adjournment Motions at Question Time) and Rule 12 (as to Supply on Mondays), he will postpone the consideration of the Clôture and the others, and bring forward these two for more immediate discussion?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Her Majesty's Government, when they were preparing the Resolutions, which have since been laid upon the Table and partially entertained by the House, considered very carefully the question whether they should begin by submitting to the House the Resolution relating to the power to close the debate, and they made up their minds that they would best consult the convenience of the House by giving that Resolution the first place. I will not now enter into the reasons for that determination; but I do not think that we should depart from it even if the discussion had not been commenced; but as it has been commenced, I think that my hon. Friend will see that it would be highly inconvenient to change it at the present time, although I believe that what is called the Monday Rule is one of the most important in reference to the conduct of Public Business.

STATE OF IRELAND—POLICE PROTECTION FOR CARETAKERS.

Mr. GIBSON (for Lord John Manners) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If the patrols which are now in certain cases substituted for the protection heretofore afforded to caretakers are mounted?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he was not aware that the patrols in question were mounted. He had reason to believe that the mounted patrols were not found to be efficient.

STATE OF IRELAND—ARREST OF PATRICK MASTERSON.

Mr. SEXTON (for Mr. Molloy) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the following account is substantially true, that—

> "On the 18th November last Mr. Digby was fired at and wounded in the neighbourhood of Tullamore. That Patrick Masterson, the son of a landlord and tenant farmer, was arrested, in the middle of the night, on suspicion for the crime. On his arrival at Tullamore he was placed in the 'black hole' of the prison, and, later on, compelled by a constable to strip and put on old clothes and slippers. Later on four 'corner boys' were brought in and placed beside him, and then, on examination, Mr. Digby said only that Masterson was 'about the size,' but did not recognise him. Two men, who saw the shot fired, declared that Masterson bore no resemblance to the man who fired the shot. Upon this, Masterson was remanded that witnesses might be brought. Meantime he was left fasting in the 'black hole' till 2 p.m. The witnesses included the petty sessions clerk, a country gentleman-farmer, and several members of the accused's family, who proved he was nine miles away and in bed at the time. After five remands, and no evidence against the accused, he was discharged. On the third remand the resident magistrate had the solicitor to the accused turned out of Court by the police. One week after his discharge he was re-arrested

under the Coercion Act, and is now in hospital in Naas Gaol spitting blood, caused by his hard treatment in Tullamore Gaol;"

and, whether, if this statement is correct, he will release Patrick Masterson?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the hon. Member appeared to have been very much misinformed as to the facts of this case. The only really accurate statement was that Mr. Digby was fired at, and it was by the merest chance that he was not very seriously injured. The following night Masterson was arrested on suspicion of having committed the offence. He was not placed in the "black hole" of the prison, but was put in the kitchen near the fire. He was not forced to strip; but his trousers was kept by the police for certain reasons, and another pair supplied to him. He was placed with four persons of his own class for identification, and Mr. Digby walked straight up to him and said he was the man; but as he had not properly seen his face, he could not swear to him. It was not true that he had been left fasting until 2 P.M., because he got his breakfast and dinner, and expressed his thanks for both. No witness proved that the man was nine miles away from the place at the time of the occurrence. The magistrates did not turn the attorney for the accused out of Court; but his demeanour was most insulting to the Court. He refused to sit down, although frequently requested to do so. The Court was then cleared, and the business of the day disposed of. Masterson was not in hospital, and was not spitting blood.

PARLIAMENT—RULES OF DEBATE—RIGHTS OF SECONDERS.

VISCOUNT FOLKESTONE said, he wished to ask the opinion of the Speaker with regard to a Question of Order. It would be in the recollection of the House that yesterday he seconded a Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) by going through the formality of raising his hat. Later on he rose to address the House, when he was stopped by the Speaker, who ruled that he had exhausted his right by formally seconding the Motion. He wished to state that he believed he was entitled to address the House, and he afterwards referred to Sir Erskine May's work on *Parliamentary Practice,* where, at page 333, he found the following sentence:—

> "Formerly a Member who had moved an Order of the Day or seconded a Motion was precluded from afterwards addressing the House upon the same question, or was heard merely by the indulgence of the House; but of late years the option of speaking at a subsequent period of the debate has been conceded whenever the moving or seconding is confined to the formality of raising the hat."

He wished to ask whether or not that opinion was an accurate representation of the practice of the House?

MR. SPEAKER: I have to say, in the first place, that the point of Order ought to have been raised at the time. At the same time I am quite willing to answer the appeal of the noble Lord. The noble Lord seconded not a substantive Motion, but a Motion for the adjournment of the House; and I may say that a Member seconding a Motion for the adjournment is fully entitled to speak at the time. If he raises his hat he can only speak later in the debate with the indulgence of the House. I cannot say that the occasion to which the noble Lord refers is one on which special indulgence should be conceded. The quotation cited by the noble Lord from the valuable work of Sir Erskine May applies to substantive Motions and Orders of the Day, and not to questions of the adjournment of the House like that which arose yesterday.

RUSSIA AND PERSIA—THE BOUNDARY TREATY.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the Government are in possession of a copy of the Russo-Persian Treaty; and, if so, whether such copy will be laid on the Table, together with the other Papers relating thereto?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE, in reply, said, Her Majesty's Government were now in possession of the Treaty, which would be laid before the House. The Papers passed out of the Foreign Office more than 10 days ago, and the delay had been caused by the difficulty in reproducing a map. The map had been drawn on stone by the Intelligence Department of the War Office, and copies were being struck off by the contractors under the direction of the Stationery Office. As a large number were required, great delay had been caused;

but the Foreign Office had pressed the Stationery Office for the production of the map; and he could only express his regret that the Papers were not forthcoming earlier. The Treaty would also be laid at once; but the Papers to which he had referred contained all the necessary information.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT.

Sir ARTHUR OTWAY gave Notice that on Thursday he would ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland a series of Questions with respect to the treatment of the Irish political prisoners. One of these would be whether he had taken any steps to shorten, or intended to shorten, the period of 18 hours' solitary confinement imposed upon these political prisoners not yet convicted of crime?

Mr. JOSEPH COWEN remarked that letters sent to "suspects" in Irish prisons had not been received by those gentlemen. He wished to ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland if the letters not delivered to the political prisoners would be returned to the senders when opened?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he would answer the Question on Thursday.

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS—"COUNTS OUT."

Mr. MONK: I beg to ask the Prime Minister, Whether, considering the public scandal which would arise from this House being counted out on three consecutive Tuesdays, the Government will endeavour to keep a House to-night to enable private Members to bring on their Motions?

Mr. GLADSTONE, in reply, said, it would be impossible for the Government to take any measures with that end in view. If they were responsible for keeping a House on one Tuesday, they would become responsible for every Tuesday, a task which manifestly no Government would undertake.

Mr. ONSLOW asked the Prime Minister if the discussion on the *clôture* Resolution would be the first Order of the Day on Monday, or would the Report of Supply be taken?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have not considered the subject yet. I am not sure that we may not get the Report of Supply before Monday.

Mr. HEALY inquired whether the *clôture* Resolution, when passed, would not be enforced during the discussion of the remaining Resolutions; and whether, to avoid such a contingency, the Prime Minister would propose the suspension of the operation of the 1st Resolution until the others were passed?

Mr. GLADSTONE: To suspend the operation of Rule 1 would require a separate Resolution; and I am not inclined to multiply Resolutions without a strong reason.

THE COMMERCIAL TREATY WITH FRANCE—THE NEGOTIATIONS.

Mr. MAC IVER: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the French Commercial Treaty, recently signed by Lord Lyons and M. Freycinet, is already binding upon us for 10 years; and, if it will be laid upon the Table of the House before ratification?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The Treaty is not a Commercial Treaty; but with that exception the statement of the hon. Member is perfectly correct. It is a Treaty relating to fisheries, trade marks, navigation, and other purposes; but it is not a Commercial Treaty. It is binding on this country, and it will be laid on the Table of the House.

Mr. MAC IVER: As the hon. Baronet has not given a definite reply to my Question, I wish to ask him whether I am to understand that the situation remains precisely as before? I wish to ask if it is not the case that this Treaty, by deliberate omissions, is, in point of fact, a retrograde Treaty?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is entering into matters of debate. He may put a Question; but it is not competent for him to enter into matters of debate.

Mr. MAC IVER: I wish to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether it is not the case that by reason of its omission to deal with these matters we suffer injustice; and whether it is not, in point of fact, a retrograde Treaty, which ties our hands for a period of 10 years as regards questions where pressure might have been brought to bear to remedy such injustice? I also want to ask him whether it is true that the concession which has been made as regards a reduction in the *surtaxe d'entrepôt* on South African wool is not, in reality, a concession to French manufacturers, which, by cheapening so much of their raw material as may be obtainable from South Africa, will operate to the disadvantage of our competing manufacturers and agriculturists? ["Oh, oh!" *and* "Order!"]

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member cannot be allowed to introduce matters of debate or controversy.

MR. MAC IVER: I beg to give Notice that on Thursday next, on going into Committee of Supply, I will call attention to this Treaty and move a Resolution.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: This is not a retrograde Treaty, because, as regards the subjects with which it deals, it is exactly the same as the last, and has nothing to do with the *surtaxe d'entrepôt*.

MR. MAC IVER: It omits it.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: It is not a Treaty which can possibly take account of it.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—DR. J. E. KENNY.

MR. REDMOND asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is a fact that Dr. J. E. Kenny has applied for permission to pay a professional visit to Mr. Davitt in Portland Prison; whether he has not for many years been Mr. Davitt's medical adviser; and, whether permission to pay the visit was refused?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Soon after Michael Davitt's admission to Portland Prison Dr. Kenny applied for permission to visit him, and I very gladly gave him that leave; but subsequent events connected with Dr. Kenny made me think it would be improper to allow any further visits of Dr. Kenny to Michael Davitt. [MR. O'DONNELL: Mr. Michael Davitt.] I therefore decline to grant any further permission. At the same time, I am able to inform the hon. Member that Michael Davitt's health is extremely satisfactory.

MR. REDMOND asked whether permission would be given to any independent medical man other than Dr. Kenny to visit Mr. Davitt?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: If the name of any gentleman to whom I see no objection is submitted to me, I think it very likely that such permission would be given.

COAL MINES—THE LUMLEY COLLIERY ACCIDENT.

MR. BURT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether he can give to the House any information with regard to the giving way of the shaft at Lumley Colliery and the imprisonment of 115 men?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: At the time I left the Home Office no information beyond that contained in the papers had reached me; but if any should come in the course of the afternoon I will communicate with my hon. Friend.

MOTIONS.

NAVY—FITTERS IN HER MAJESTY'S DOCKYARDS.—RESOLUTION.

MR. BROADHURST, in rising to call attention to the work and position of Fitters in Her Majesty's Dockyards; and to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, it is detrimental to the public service, fatal to the efficiency of our war ships, and unjust to the artificers concerned, that superintending leading men should be placed in authority over workmen with whose trades they have no practical acquaintance, or that men should be put to execute work for which they are unsuited, either by training or experience,"

said, he had no intention of attacking the Administration of either the present or the late Government. He feared that the system referred to in this Motion was one which had grown up through the course of a great number of years, and for which responsibility could not be placed upon any particular Administration. The whole burden of his contention would be that it was impossible for men not highly trained and skilled in the working of iron, and in the management of machinery, to do that work satisfactorily, and with advantage to those who employed them. In other words, he contended that a tailor was the most proper man in the world to make a coat, and that a shoemaker was the most proper man they could find to make boots. It was unfair to ask men who had been trained from boyhood to work in wood to succeed in making iron vessels; and especially preposterous to ask them to undertake the work of fitting and arranging most complicated machinery. As workers in wood, there was no doubt that the shipwrights in their Royal Dockyards, as, indeed, in their private yards, would compete most successfully against any workers in wood in the world; but it was not fair or reasonable to expect that those men could turn their hand to learn a new business, after arriving at the middle stage of life. Yet that was precisely the complaint which he had to submit to the House. Speaking generally, about 25 years ago shipwrights who were employed at the Royal Dockyards were put to work in iron, and about four or five years ago another step was taken in the same direction, and shipwrights were put to the highest class of work—that of fitting machinery in the interior of the hulls of their great fighting vessels. Up to 1877, he believed, all machinery, of whatever sort and for whatever purposes—including water-tight doors, stop valves, sluices, machinery for ventilation, and other purposes—was done by fitters; but in that year there was a considerable transfer of fitters from the Engineers' Department to the Chief Constructor's Department, or, in other words, they were placed under the supervision of shipwrights, and a new regulation was made defining the work which should be chargeable to the Engineers' Department, and the work which should be chargeable to the Chief Constructor's or Shipwrights' Department. In that regulation all machinery was handed over to the Shipwrights' Department, except that which was actually required for the propulsion of the vessel; and it would surprise many to hear that that work was not to-day in the hands and under the control of those men who alone could make the machinery, and were capable of fitting it so that it would efficiently answer the purposes for which it was intended. What should be one undivided authority and one responsibility, in order to insure complete efficiency, was now scattered all over the vessels, as it were; and when any of the machinery failed it was all the more difficult to fix upon anyone the responsibility of the failure, as each Department could cast blame upon the other when, in reality, none of the Departments were to blame, but the ridiculous system of allowing one part of the machinery of the vessel to be fixed by workers in wood and under the management of a separate Department to that which looked after the engines and boilers. He wished it to be understood that the shipwrights, who had the responsibility of fitting delicate and complicated machinery, were incapable of making a single inch of that machinery, and, therefore, could know nothing about fitting it into its place. No private contractor would act on the system followed by the Government; and in all private dockyards great care was exercised that the men employed as fitters should thoroughly understand the machinery which they were handling. Those who had the management of affairs in the Royal Dockyards were officials of position and character, who, doubtless, intended to do what was right, and this extraordinary proceeding was the result of drifting as it were. He understood that the present Board of Construction consisted of five shipwrights, one engineer, one engineer's assistant, one engineer-in-chief, and a secretary, who was also a shipwright. Here there was a preponderance of something like three to one in the interests of wood and sailing, and that in the presence of a condition of things when nearly everything on board a ship was done by steam. He would now give some illustrations of the extraordinary work to which he had been referring. On board the *Inflexible*, which was being fitted at Portsmouth, an important electrical machine, intended for the instantaneous transmission of messages from one part of the vessel to the other, was fitted by shipwrights to the inequalities of the deck in such a manner that it would not work at all. No engineer trained to the fitting of engines would ever have made a fatal and an almost criminal mistake of that kind. Again, on the *Agamemnon*, two water-tight doors, on which the safety of the ship might in certain circumstances depend, were fitted by shipwrights in such a way that they would not shut, and, therefore, were of no use. On board the *Polyphemus*, several doors and valves, which had been originally fixed by shipwrights, had to be re-done by fitters. With regard to the keel ballast, on which the safety of this vessel so much depended, it was most important that the machinery for letting it go and tightening it up should be the best that could be got, and fitted into its place by the best possible mechanics. Then there was another matter connected with this extraordinary vessel which he wished to bring under the notice of the House. He had been informed on good authority that the capstan engines, after having been made by contractors, were fitted on board by shipwrights; but, in consequence of their inability to gear the worm properly into the wheel, the shipwrights sent for the dockyard engineer to show them how to do the work properly. He declined to act in the matter, whereupon the shipwrights had to repair the defects themselves. The result was that it took 35 lb. of steam to work the capstans when they were light; whereas, when at full work, they ought not to take more than 10 lb. But there were other instances of defective work on board this vessel. Owing to the unsuitable machinery employed, the launching of the life-raft occupied from 20 to 30 minutes instead of two or three, as it ought to do. Then it appeared that at Sheerness Dockyard it was the custom for shipwrights, instead of ironworkers, to fit the iron water-tight compartments in vessels. Then, on board the *Inflexible*, the shipwrights had made four attempts to erect some important hoisting machinery; but having failed in their efforts, owing to their want of engineering knowledge, engineers were at last called in to do the work. Again, ridiculous designs for rudder-heads having been made by the Shipwrights' Department, it was ultimately found necessary to have other designs prepared by an engineer. Upon the arrival of the *Ajax* at Chatham, after her completion, it was found that her two ponderous turrets, which had been fitted by shipwrights, would not work, and had to be lifted up from the deck altogether. This was owing to a mistake made by the shipwrights in erecting them; and he had been informed, by persons of the highest experience, that this mistake would cost the country at least £5,000 or £7,000, to say nothing of the trouble, loss of time, and want of confidence caused to those on board. The statements he had made were based on careful investigations extending over the past 12 months; and the facts he had stated constituted but a mere scrap of the many fatal extravagances, blunders, and waste of money that prevailed in the Dockyards through men being employed upon work they did not understand. Shipwrights accustomed to build only wooden vessels were now employed as platers, engineers, iron-fitters, &c., without any inquiry as to whether they were capable of doing such work. At Devonport, for instance, shipwrights were put to bend a stern-plate to one of the vessels lying in the Dockyard; but being unable to manage the job, it had to be handed over to the iron shipbuilders. Then the shipwrights were asked to give an estimate for an iron coal-shoot, when they fixed £20. The iron shipbuilders, knowing more about the matter, fixed £30. The work was then intrusted to the shipwrights, with the result that it cost the country £50. The fact was that many of the shipwrights were supernumeraries, and in order to find them employment they were put upon work to which they were unaccustomed. Although their present ships were almost entirely constructed of steel and iron, 200 shipwrights had entered the Dockyards at Portsmouth as against 12 fitters. It had been said that it was more convenient to employ shipwrights who went on the Establishment than fitters who did not care to do so. What was the reason of that? Some years ago a proposal was made to the fitters with a view to induce them to enter the Establishment. The proposal contained a provision reducing a wage of £1 14*s.* a-week to £1 10*s.*, and so on in proportion, and offering a speculative pension as an off-set for the reduction. The Government could not be surprised at the refusal of the fitters to accept those terms. He complained also of the way in which work, such as patterns made by the chief engineer, was submitted to the inspection of the shipwright, a worker in wood; and when he had approved them, instead of their being executed in the Yard, where men and materials were lying idle, they were put out on contract, for no reason that he could conceive, except that the Dockyard officials had the purse of the nation to dip into. The Government work might often be executed within the Yard when it was sent out. And it was of the utmost importance that every part of the vessels should be perfect. He hoped the House would say with him that these things should continue no longer. Let them remember that their vessels had not been into action. They were all experiments, more or less. The only evidence they had yet had as to what they would do in action was what they had done when they had come into contact with each other—and they knew how they behaved then—in the most unwarlike manner possible, blowing up or going down, as the case might be, and disappearing from the face of the waters. They wanted that these vessels, which carried, as it were, the fortunes of the nation within their sides, should be as complete in the successful production of unity in engineering skill, efficiency, and finish of workmanship as it was possible to make them. Anything he brought forward might be suspected of having a tinge of trade unionism in it. He ventured to inform the House that there was nothing of that sort in this matter. The movement, indeed, had originated with anti-union men; but the unionists were patriots in the work of helping forward a movement of this kind, as they usually were, notwithstanding what was said against them. Every gun they had on board those floating monsters, every monster itself, was absolutely useless, worthless—nay, a mere trap to those who had to go on board, and a trap and a deception to the nation, unless, when called upon to perform its functions, it should answer in even the minutest part of its machinery and work with absolute perfection. These, and these only, were the conditions under which these vessels could successfully discharge the duties for which they had been created. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving his Resolution.

Mr. SLAGG, in seconding the Motion, said, that he had satisfied himself that the disclaimer of the hon. Member of the association of this question with trades unionism was perfectly correct; but even if it were associated with the trades union body he should not object to it, because trades unionism was a very different matter from what it was many years ago. The removal of unjust and iniquitous laws which operated to the disadvantage of the working class had placed trade combinations upon a reasonable and just basis; and little objection could now be urged against them, either by employers of labour or economists. Nor was this in any way a matter of wages. His hon. Friend was not advocating an advancement of wages for any section of the workpeople. All he wanted was that the best qualified men should be appointed to do the work for which they were most capable. The House must have been impressed by the descriptions given through many channels of the immense alterations which had taken place in the construction of modern war vessels, showing how steam had almost superseded every other agency as a motive power, and how every branch of science, no matter how abstruse and refined, was brought to bear in the construction and management of their ships. Wood had given place to iron, steam had taken the place of wind, so that sails were little used, and electricity was brought into constant operation in the management of war vessels. From the statement just made to the House it appeared that their Dockyard authorities had been slow to make themselves acquainted with the important changes which must take place in the application of labour to the construction of their vessels in order to keep pace with the immense scientific advance of the age. It was clear that the very great change in conditions and material must involve equally large changes in the accomplishments and acquirements of those who had to deal with these matters. In the olden time it was very easy to take a man from the Coast Service or the Mercantile Marine and make him fit to serve in the Royal Navy. But now they required, not only a sailor, but also a man to some extent well skilled as an engineer, and capable of using the instruments required in regard to iron ships designed upon the most delicate principles. Thus he was a totally different man from the old naval seaman, and he was more costly to train, more rare, and much more important to the community. Such a man could not be trained to efficiency very quickly, and it behoved the House to do all in their power to secure safety to crews composed of such men, and to maintain them in a position in which they would not only be safe, but would absolutely feel safe and have full confidence in the machinery of the ships to which their lives were intrusted. The hon. Member had brought forward a great many circumstances which would appeal to the House very strongly in regard to the shortcomings of their Public Departments in these respects. For himself, as one accustomed for very many years to deal with mechanical forces, he could very fully realize the immense importance of a due distribution and division of work amongst those who were concerned in the construction of these delicate and important machines. From the evidence he had seen on this subject it seemed perfectly clear that the line of demarcation was not strong enough between the engineer who had to do with the fitting of the engines and the man who, while occupying an inferior position, really was put to work which could not be properly done without suitable training and ability. It seemed to be a question where the engineer ended and the shipwright began; and when men with the name of shipwrights were put to work which only trained and skilled engineers were able to do, the Government might be fairly asked to look into the matter, and give some solid assurance that such defects should be remedied as far as possible. He held no brief for any class of workmen; but was concerned only for the efficiency of the Public Service, and for a due and proper expenditure of the public funds. This was a time especially when attention was being drawn to the efficiency of the British workman; and it behoved Parliament to co-operate in everything that could be suggested or accomplished to promote in all respects an improvement of his position. They were beset by rivals on every side, and the supremacy of their industrial and constructive powers was very much questioned. Surely, then, the reproach should not rest upon any Department of Her Majesty's Government that it permitted slipshod work, put the wrong men to the wrong task, or proceeded by any rule-of-thumb system, which would certainly be rejected in the management of any private concern. Neither himself nor the Mover of the Resolution sought to make an attack upon the Government. They had no special case to make out against the present Dockyard administration which did not apply to previous Administrations; but he was sure they should perform a graceful and useful service to the Government by bringing a certain amount of pressure to bear and gently stimulating them so that they might, to some extent, escape those bands of wood and iron which surrounded the best intentioned officials. If in this way they helped to loose those swathings of red tape which always bound up great Departments of the State, they would not have spoken quite in vain.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That, in the opinion of this House, it is detrimental to the public service, fatal to the efficiency of our war ships, and unjust to the Fitters in Her Majesty's Dockyards, that superintending leading men should be placed in authority over workmen with whose trades they have no practical acquaintance, or that men should be put to execute work for which they are unsuited either by training or experience."—(*Mr. Broadhurst.*)

MR. TREVELYAN said, the speech of his hon. Friend the Member for Stoke-upon-Trent, who spoke, as he always spoke, with great special knowledge, and with a personal conviction which always produced a considerable impression upon the House, showed that there were doubts in his mind—and if doubts existed in his mind he was sure they existed very widely elsewhere—which he was very happy to have so very fair an opportunity of trying to clear up. The subject of his Resolution was an important one and a very delicate one. He (Mr. Trevelyan) spoke not only as a Member of that House, and not only as a Member of the Government, but as the representative of a firm employing vast numbers of workmen all over the globe, and speaking on a question intimately affecting the interests and, what was perhaps more important, the feelings of those workmen. Everyone knew how cautiously, in the private trade, an employer would, under those circumstances, open his mouth in public; and he hoped the House would forgive him if, on that occasion, he was very quiet and very tame, though he could assure them he would be quite sufficiently explicit in what he said. The state of the case was this—A generation back, when ships were built of wood, and not of iron, the great bulk of the skilled mechanics in the Dockyards went by the name of shipwrights, and were, as a matter of fact, carpenters, specially skilled in a special class of work. The master shipwright had under him a certain proportion of fitters and millwrights, for the purpose of carrying out certain metal work in connection will the hulls of ships; but the great army of skilled workmen were the shipwrights. They might, indeed, well be called an "army," because they had some of the best military qualities about them. They regarded the nation as something more than a mere paymaster; they were proud of their position; they valued their certain and assured employment; and they regarded with very high appreciation the prospect of a pension for old age. The hired men who were not yet established looked forward, by good behaviour and ability, to succeed to vacancies on the Establishment, and to become entitled to a pension. And their appreciation of these advantages they showed by serving for a much lower pay than shipwrights received in the private yards; and 30 years ago shipwrights took, and took without grumbling, at Woolwich and Deptford, 4*s.* a-day, when workmen in the private yards on the Thames were earning 7*s.* Towards the beginning of those 30 years, the entire nature of shipbuilding changed, and so the nature of shipbuilders—the mechanical powers and faculties of these shipwrights—changed also. On this point he would not ask the House to accept his dictum, but would be able to support it with evidence, which he thought would thoroughly satisfy hon. Members. That was a very long period in a generation of working men, and the men now in the yards who were classed as shipwrights had been trained from boyhood upwards—because at every time in their Dockyards they had no less than 545 shipwright apprentices—had been trained to a very great extent, and, in fact, in the case of the great majority of them, in metal and not in wood. Their name had not been changed; but they were doing work as different from that which was done by the shipwrights of 1851 as the work of making a locomotive was from the work of making a mail coach. But in one respect they had not changed, and that was in their relations to the nation which employed them. They still preferred the certainty of the Establishment. They appreciated being Government workmen, with a right to pension. And the Government encouraged them in that view, because, to speak quite plainly, it was a matter of life and death to the country to have in the crisis of a war a great body of skilled workmen, on whose services the nation might count, as it counted on the services of its Blue-jackets and Marines. To what a great extent that might be said of the shipwrights was shown by the fact that of 4,200 shipwrights nearly 3,000 were actually on the Establishment—a fact the value of which, under circumstances that had occurred before and might well occur again, it was hardly possible to overrate. Now, the fitters viewed the question differently. The certainty of employment, the short hours which they worked in the Dockyards—51 hours a-week, as against a much longer period of hours in private yards—had not such attractions in their eyes that they were willing to sacrifice their freedom and their high wages for the certainty acquired on the Establishment. Out of nearly 1,300 fitters only 236 were on the Establishment, and the wages which they received were higher by 9*d.* a-day than those received by shipwrights, either hired or established. The fitters, speaking through his hon. Friend, told them that they did not like to see work which they could do done—and, as they maintained, not well done—by men who did not belong to their branch of the trade. Their contention was that the shipwrights were mere carpenters. A deputation of fitters waited on the hon. Member for Rochester (Sir Arthur Otway), and stated that the authorities had given fitters' work to shipwrights—"Men who are used to woodwork, and know nothing whatever of fitting." Especially (they said) that was the case with the fittings of doors in water-tight compartments. They urged—

> "The iron-clads of the present day cost between £500,000 and £600,000, and if an accident took place from bad workmanship the ship would be at the bottom of the sea with 200 or 300 sailors. The fitters had stood this as long as they could, until they found the very bread was being taken away from them and given to others not entitled to the same."

But when the shipwrights heard of the movement among the fitters they, too, were on the alert; they, too, addressed the hon. Member for Rochester, and described themselves as follows:—

> "We are the working constructors of the British Navy in wood, iron, and steel, and, at the same time, principally in steel. Therefore, who can be so capable of fitting doors of all kinds, sluice valves, armour plates, stems, sternposts, rudders, and all else pertaining to the

> construction of a ship of war as the shipwright?"

They, too, stated that a ship of war cost £700,000 or £800,000, and that the lives of 500 or 600 men depended upon the workmanship in it. And they urged these considerations with the warmth of men who felt that their bread, and the bread of their children, depended on the issue of the controversy. Now, these allegations having been made on both sides, and the consequences to the individual fitters employed in Her Majesty's Dockyards being nothing (for, under any circumstances, there was no talk of discharging them), while the consequence to the shipwrights would be very serious indeed, he hoped that the House, in fairness, would allow the shipwrights to be judged by the opinion of those who had an intimate knowledge of the work which they turned out. The opinion of the Constructive Department of the Navy fully and absolutely confirmed their contention, that in technical skill the fitter and the shipwright, who worked in steel and iron, were on an equality. The late Controller, Sir Houston Stewart, summed up the unanimous feeling of the Department, over which he so long and so ably presided, when he said—

> "The shipwrights have become skilled workmen in wood and iron, thus enabling a great deal of the work which in former days could only have been done by fitters to be skilfully turned out by them at lower wages than fitters receive."

Captain Parkins, the Superintendent of Pembroke Dockyard—the most purely iron shipbuilding establishment in the whole world—assured him that the shipwrights had, to a great extent, ceased to be carpenters, and had become skilled workmen in iron, and did nothing else. That was the opinion inside. What was the opinion from without? Mr. Henry Laird, of the Birkenhead Ironworks, unsurpassed as a judge, and, perhaps, unsurpassed in his experience of Admiralty work—Mr. Laird, fresh from a complete overhauling of the iron-clad *Hotspur*, which had been built by shipwrights, said of himself and his partners—

> "We always consider that the work turned out by the Royal Dockyards is of superior quality, and have found such as has come under our immediate observation thoroughly sound and good."

Mr. Peter Rolt, the representative of the Thames Ironworks and Shipbuilding Company, wrote as follows:—

> "I beg to state that, from my long acquaintance with work in the Dockyards, I have no hesitation in pronouncing the work on ships to be of the very best description."

There they had outside opinion in this country. What was the opinion abroad? In 1873 and 1874, when it was contemplated to introduce iron shipbuilding on an extended scale into the French Dockyards, some eminent constructors were sent over to examine and study the system pursued and the work turned out in our Dockyards; and their Reports were so favourable that our system of having a foreman of the class of naval architects over each ship, with a special class of shipwrights bred in the Dockyard, was generally adopted in the construction of modern iron ships in the French Navy. That able writer and excellent judge, Engineer King, of the United States, made similar observations in his official Report—

> "The inferior officers and workmen," he said, "in the English Dockyards are employed solely on their merits, and are mainly well-trained, efficient, and faithful, besides which the permanence of employment adds stability and gives character to the whole staff of *employés*."

And, finally, the work of our shipwrights was submitted to an ordeal through which nothing could pass which was not sound and true. It had to find favour in the eyes of the captain and the officers of the vessel, and that was no slight test of its excellence, as would be acknowledged by anyone who had seen the commanders of such ships as the *Nelson* and the *Inflexible* hanging about the lobbies and office rooms of the Admiralty day after day to ask, to ask not for some advantage of pay or rank for themselves, but for some more and more exquisite perfection in the safety and fighting power of that beloved vessel over which they thought that the nation should be only too proud to spend its money. If the shipwrights' work could face the critical observation of such officers as Captain Fisher of the *Inflexible* and Captain Erskine of the *Nelson*, it must be good indeed. It was stated by Captain Fisher, in the Report he had made regarding his vessel, that all this most complicated arrangement had fully answered the expectations that he had formed of it. If this Motion were carried, they would be forced to break into their system—to discharge the men by hundreds; and why? How did this controversy begin? He would read a letter written by Admiral Brandreth at the time that he was Superintendent at Chatham—

> "The fitter question refers to an arrangement we made here some months since. Fitters' work has been in arrear from the ships"—

the *Agamemnon*, the *Ajax*, and the *Polyphemus*, no doubt—

> "All getting into the fitting stage at once, while the shipwrights' work was well ahead. So, as the Wages Vote would not allow more fitters to be entered, an arrangement was made to remove the ship-branch fitters from on board and work them at the machines and shops, in order to prepare additional fittings, which additional fittings shipwrights have been employed to fit on board. This has been found to help the work much, and has prevented the discharge of shipwrights."

Now, he would ask hon. Members to consider what, if this Motion were passed in its present shape, they would be doing. Here was a little shipbuilding crisis, resembling on a very small scale what would occur in war. In order to push on the arrears of work, that excellent manager, Admiral Brandreth, judged that he wanted more of the men in the shops and fewer in the ships; and, therefore, for the first time in the history of our Dockyards, Parliament was invited to step in and remove from the Admiral and the Captain Superintendents the discretion of arranging the national work as in their judgment they thought best. There was really no foundation for the cry of taking bread out of the fitters' mouths. On this very occasion 20 more fitters were entered at Chatham Yard, so far from any being discharged; and the Constructor told the men, with perfect truth, that if it had been the shipwrights' work that had been behind, and the fitters' work had been ahead, he should have made a precisely counter-arrangement in order to avoid a discharge of fitters. He had hitherto spoken with reference to the class of work on which fitters and shipwrights were employed. He should now wish to say a few words on that part of the Resolution which related to superintendence of labour. The case stood thus:—In the steam branch of each of our Dockyards all the skilled workmen were fitters, all the leading men fitters, and the foreman of the branch was invariably an engineer likewise. In the ship-fitters' shop, where ironwork was made destined to be put on board ship, the leading men were likewise ship-fitters. He believed it was nowhere the case that fitters, as a body, were under the authority of leading men not of their own trade. But on board ships in process of construction the foreman in charge of the ship was a shipbuilding officer. The essence of the English system was that one and the same foreman, who was, in truth, a naval architect, was responsible for the progress of one and the same ship, just as on land one and the same architect superintended the construction of a building, whether built mainly by bricklayers or joiners; and the Admiralty could not consent that the responsibility for the construction of the ship should be divided between as many foremen as there were men of different trades employed on board, any more than in building a house one architect would be told off for the joiners and another for the bricklayers. The foreman was an officer highly paid, of great importance, and very great scientific knowledge—an officer of an education and standing very much above that which his name might in the ears of the general public imply. Hitherto these foremen of the yard, who had both shipwrights and shipfitters under them, had been taken originally from the shipwright class; but he was perfectly prepared to say that the Admiralty, who were now on the eve of examining into the organization of the Constructive Department, were ready carefully to consider whether promising men of the engineer class might not have a chance with others of qualifying themselves for the arduous duties of general foreman of the yard. To what extent the Naval Constructors of the future were to be taken from a class of special officers educated for the purpose was not yet determined; but, so far as they were drawn from the ranks of the workmen, shipwrights and fitters ought to have an equal chance in proportion to their numbers of being educated for the posts of foremen and constructors. To show the tendency of thought in the Admiralty with regard to this question, it was only last week that he had in his hand Papers carefully discussing the circumstances under which fitter apprentices were to share with shipwright apprentices the advantages of being educated at the Naval College at Greenwich. He thought the House would see that this reform would remove every vestige of the complaint which his hon. Friend made with regard to the class of fitters not having their fair share of authority. He might say that both with regard to the class from whom their Naval Constructors were to be drawn, and still more with regard to the distribution of work between shipwrights and fitters, the Admiralty expected great assistance from the advice of Mr. Rendel, the new Civil Lord, who had had unsurpassed experience in dealing with great bodies of workmen in steel and iron. In conclusion, he must impress upon the House that it was in the interests, to a great extent, of the Public Service, and, he thought, even to a great extent of the men themselves, that their Dockyard administration should not be bound by any hard-and-fast rules. In shipbuilding, and, most of all, in shipbuilding for war purposes, it was unavoidable that ships should be in various uneven stages of advancement, and at one time an enormous amount of one kind of work had to be done, and a few months afterwards the pressure was in the direction of quite a different class of work. Now, in private establishments, in order to meet the exigencies of trades union rules, the redundant men of one class would be discharged, and men of the class required would be entered, and they, in their turn, would again be discharged and give place to others. But in the National Dockyards it was not desirable, and anyhow it was practically impossible, to play fast and loose in this style with the vast masses of workmen whom they employed, depriving them by hundreds a day of the right to a pension which they had been many years in earning; and therefore it was that our constructors were allowed to shift men from shop to ship and from ship to shop whether they were called fitters or shipwrights, as long as they were good workmen able to perform the task on which they were engaged. That power, essential, as he believed, to the national welfare, essential, as he was sure, to the comfort and final well-being of the workmen whom they employed, they must not abandon without greater reason than his hon. Friend had shown. His hon. Friend had brought forward a considerable number of instances of bad workmanship. He was not very willing to go into that question. He should be a pretender and a coxcomb if he were to essay to give an answer in detail to those instances which had been brought forward without Notice. The constructors could, if they thought it worth while, bring forward instances of bad workmanship on the part of shipfitters. But, with their full and hearty approval, he had agreed to have nothing to do with this line of defence. The Admiralty would not run the risk of fostering a rivalry between two great classes of public servants which, novelty as it was, might soon grow into a positive danger to the State. The Admiralty would not run the risk of encouraging one set of workmen to be ever on the alert to detect imperfections in the work of another set of workmen. Fitters and shipwrights had for many years wrought side by side as brother workmen; and he earnestly trusted that the effect of that debate would be to clear up the feeling which last summer was for the first time visible, and which he could not help hoping that second thoughts had, to a certain extent, already mitigated. The question had received the attention of the Admiralty ever since his hon. Friend had had his Notice on the Paper, and everything should be done which considerations of the national advantage would permit to see fair play between all classes of our public workmen. It would be to him, personally, a very great gratification, and he thought to the public advantage, if his hon. Friend, having secured any small advantage for the class he so ably represented, would consent to withdraw his Motion.

MR. CARBUTT said, he thought they might well be satisfied with the remarks which the Secretary to the Admiralty had made, coupled with the appointment of Mr. Rendel to the Constructor's Department. His only wonder was that they had secured such a man as Mr. Rendel at the low salary which they could offer.

MR. BROADHURST said, he was much obliged to the Secretary to the Admiralty for the fair manner, generally speaking—though he found fault with many parts of his speech—in which he had met this Motion. Having regard to the concessions made, and the promises held out of such an encouraging nature in regard to future amendment and progress, he would ask leave to withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

METROPOLITAN FIRE BRIGADE.

RESOLUTION.

Sir HENRY SELWIN-IBBETSON rose to call attention to the Report of the Committee on the Metropolitan Fire Brigade in 1877, with the object of moving—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the protection to life and property from fire in the Metropolis is insufficient, and that whilst a constant water supply, with proper hydrants affixed, is absolutely necessary for its improvement, the management of the Fire Brigade itself should for the future form a branch of the Police Force of the Metropolis."

The hon. Baronet remarked that his official position in the late Government had prevented him from following up the Report of the Committee of 1877; but the question was still one demanding the urgent attention of the House; and its importance might be gathered from the fact that during the seven years from 1868 to 1875 there were 1,197 lives endangered, and as many as 240 of them lost, by fires in the Metropolis. Since that period, moreover, these figures had gone on in a constantly increasing ratio. He had been unable to get the particulars for 1875 and 1876; but in 1877 he found that 165 lives were endangered and 29 lost; in 1878, 151 endangered and 25 lost; in 1879, 164 endangered and 32 lost; in 1880, 160 endangered and 33 lost; and last year, 1881, 154 lives endangered and 40 lost. Those statistics showed that in the last five years 159 lives had been sacrificed, and nearly 400 lives had been lost in 12 years. Another reason for calling attention to this matter was the large number of fires which took place in the Metropolis. Last year there were 1,991 fires, without including what were called "chimney fires," and of those 167 were of a serious character. There was a steady increase of fires, and, beyond the loss of life which resulted, the destruction of property was serious. Every day the Metropolis was growing in size; and if they looked at the streets and the mode of paving so much prevalent, there might be an additional danger under their feet if a fire got beyond the control of the Fire Brigade. General complaints as to the frequency and danger of fires, and the discontent existing amongst the firemen, led to the appointment of the Committee in 1876. When that Committee was sitting evidence was brought forward showing that the discontent amongst the men hindered recruiting, and that the men were short-handed and over-worked. The subject of the water supply also was considered, and even the question as to whether the Metropolitan Board of Works was the proper authority to have control of the Brigade was discussed, and the suggestion that the Brigade should be formed as a branch of the police was carefully gone into. That Committee sat from April to July in 1876, and from March to May in 1877. There was no doubt that the Committee made an exhaustive inquiry into the merits of the whole case. As to the question of superannuation, he would not go into that, because in 1877 the Metropolitan Board of Works brought forward a scheme which he was informed was working satisfactorily. The hon. Gentleman was proceeding to show how far the Fire Brigade, on receiving an increase of pay, had availed itself of the additional facilities afforded it in an increase of the water supply, when—

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members not being present,

House adjourned at half after Seven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 15th March, 1882.

MINUTES.]—Private Bill—*Withdrawn*—Longton, Adderley Green, and Bucknal Railway*.

Public Bills—*Ordered—First Reading*—Patents for Inventions (No. 2)* [104]; School Boards* [103].

Second Reading—Municipal Franchise (Ireland) [6]; County Courts (Ireland) [18], *debate adjourned;* Judgments (Inferior Courts) [44]; Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment (No. 3) [48], *debate adjourned.*

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—:0:—

MUNICIPAL FRANCHISE (IRELAND) BILL.—[BILL 6.]

(*Mr. M'Coan, Mr. Richard Power, Mr. Dawson.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. M'COAN, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it was not necessary for him to trespass more than a few minutes on the attention of the House, inasmuch as the subject had already been twice before the present Parliament. He need not, therefore, repeat the arguments which had been used on those occasions. He might, however, remind the House that in Ireland the qualification to vote at municipal elections depended on the very high voting franchise of a £10 rating, which virtually represented a rental of from £12 to £15; so that, generally speaking, no one in a municipal borough in Ireland was entitled to a vote unless he was the occupant of a house of the rent value of, say, £15 a-year. In England, on the other hand, there was a complete absence of value qualification; and every rated householder was entitled to vote at municipal elections. The absurdity and the inequity of such a difference between the franchises of the two countries would become more apparent when he reminded the House that the Parliamentary borough franchise in Ireland was only £4, and that, while a man rated at that sum could vote for the election of a Member of the Imperial Parliament, he was debarred from voting for the election of an alderman or a Town Councillor unless rated at £10. The practical effect of the distinction between the municipal franchises of England and Ireland was an absurd difference between the number of the burgesses of the large towns in the two countries as compared with their population. These facts alone, he considered, were sufficient to support his application for a reform of the law on this point. When the late Mr. Butt introduced his Bill on this subject in 1874—which was rejected by the Conservative Government — he submitted statistics which abundantly illustrated both the fact and the results of the difference in the franchises of the two countries. Bringing down Mr. Butt's figures to the present day, he (Mr. M'Coan) might inform the House that whilst Dublin, with a population of 267,712, had on its burgess roll only 5,584 voters, Leeds, with a population of 220,000, had 52,000 burgesses qualified to vote at its municipal elections. Similarly, Belfast, with a population of 207,000, had only 5,220 burgesses, whilst Bristol, with a population of 206,503, had 25,847 municipal voters. In the same way, Cork, with a population of 97,526, had only 2,005 burgesses, whilst Wolverhampton, with a population of 75,738, had 11,514 burgesses. These figures were fairly representative, and showed the inequitable distinction between the law in the two countries, which it was the object of the present Bill to remove. It did not even ask as much as the second Bill promoted by Mr. Butt, which sought to equalize the privileges of the two countries, as the present one left to England and Scotland a long list of privileges which were not enjoyed by Ireland. These, he hoped, would be conceded later on. For the present, he was content to have the money franchise in Ireland abolished, and to assimilate the voting qualifications in the two countries. He was gratified to know that, with respect to the subject of this Bill, a sense of justice actuated Her Majesty's present Government; and it was with great satisfaction that he recalled the fact that its Members had, when out of Office in 1874, supported Mr. Butt, when he desired to effect a similar reform, and, when in Office in 1880, had supported the measure of the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power) when he in turn introduced a Bill to effect that object. He trusted that the Irish Members might now again reckon on their support, notwithstanding all that had happened in the House of late. He ventured also to hope that the changes which had occurred since 1874 would bring their Conservative Friends to a more liberal state of mind, and that they would meet with no opposition from them to the second reading of the Bill. If that were so, it would be regarded in Ireland as a gratifying sign of the disposition of the House and the Government to do justice to that country, by satisfying its reasonable demands in this matter. He begged to move the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. R. POWER, in seconding the Motion, said, that all that the promoters of the measure desired was that justice should be done in the matter of the municipal franchise to Ireland. It had been declared by the Act of Union that Ireland was to enjoy equal laws with England, but that declaration had ever since remained a dead letter; and the first of England's acts after the Union was the passing of martial law for Ireland. He was astonished that, after all the professions of the present Ministry to do justice to Ireland, this subject was not referred to in the Queen's Speech. Last year he had the honour of introducing it to the notice of the House, and the Session before he was successful in carrying the second reading of the Bill. Unfortunately, however, owing to the obstructive tactics of the hon. Member for Belfast (Mr. Corry), the Bill did not get into Committee. The history of the subject afforded a very sad commentary on the conduct of Irish Business in the House. For 50 years the Representatives of Ireland had been trying to get for Ireland the simple question of having her laws on this point assimilated with those of England, and still they had failed, through the opposition of both Tory and Liberal Governments. The Bill only asked for a mere equality. He regretted that the Conservative Party, who were now in Opposition, should still consider it necessary to oppose the second reading of the Bill, because a few nights ago his right hon. and learned Friend the senior Member for Dublin University said the Tories were quite prepared to make concessions to Ireland, and that, in point of fact, they had done a great deal for the people of that country. The right hon. and learned Gentleman was right as far as coercion was concerned; for he (Mr. R. Power) found that while the Liberals passed 22 Coercion Bills for Ireland the Conservatives only passed 11. He would remind those Members of the Opposition that the late Lord Derby commended to his followers the principles of the Bill. With reference to the fact that the English Franchise Law did not extend to Ireland, Lord Derby said that the principle of reform was the same whether applied to England or Ireland; and if it were just in the one country it must be just in the other. If the House wished to afford to Ireland real substantial cause of complaint, and encourage a national demand for the Repeal of the Union, they could not do better than continue to show that English interests were treated in one way and Irish interests in another. He could not conceive on what grounds hon. Members could refuse to grant to Ireland such an extension of the franchise as would place her on the same footing with England. The Liberal Government were pledged on this question; but he regretted to say that, like many other pledges given during the last Election, they had not acted up to their promises. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had advocated in his speeches the desirability of binding the three countries together by the tie of equal laws. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had said that this was amongst many Irish grievances requiring to be redressed, and the Secretary of State for War had made statements of a similar character. The present Bill would cover 11 Irish towns in which 1 man in 40 was now a voter. In English boroughs the proportion was 1 in 8. A population of 29,000 in Waterford had only 700 voters; Bradford, with 145,000 people, had 24,450 voters; while Belfast, with a population of 174,418, had only 5,525 voters. Those figures were quite sufficient to prove how unjust and unequal the law in this respect was. Of course, it was perfectly useless for an Irish Member to try to carry a Bill like this through the House without the strong support of Her Majesty's Government. He did not wonder that the people of Ireland had very little faith in an English House of Commons, when he remembered that a small measure of this description, which demanded no exceptional privilege, but simply asked for equal rights and the removal of the stamp of inferiority, had been asked for upwards of 50 years, and had been continually rejected by Parliament. One aspect of the question which presented itself strongly to him was, that when the Irishman left his own shores, and went, say, to Liverpool or Manchester, he became entitled to the franchise there. He demanded the same privilege for Irishmen at home. The Bill was based upon the principles of assimilation and equal rights, and he hoped that the House would allow a second reading of it, and that Her Majesty's Government would also allow it to be taken into Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. M'Coan.*)

MR. CORRY said, it was not his intention to oppose the Bill. At the same time, as one of those who sat upon the Select Committee appointed in 1876 to inquire into the municipal government of the towns and the levying of taxes in Ireland, he would say that the Bill was a very small portion of the recommendations of that Committee. The Bill would only affect 11 municipal boroughs in Ireland, and would leave untouched a large number of towns which came under the Towns Improvement Act. One remarkable thing which was brought out in evidence before the Committee was that in no instance was any attempt made to lower the franchise by those towns which came before the House with Bills; but, in many cases, they asked rather for an increase of the franchise. The recommendation of the Committee was that the municipal should be assimilated with the Parliamentary franchise. The question had not engaged public attention in Ireland. Speaking for the important borough he represented, he would say that no extension of the franchise was wanted in Belfast. When the Acts of 1840 and 1855 were passed, Dublin, which was then exempted, received exceptional privileges; but the extension of the franchise in Dublin, instead of reducing the franchise, virtually increased it. A great deal of evidence was given before the Committee of 1876, as to the management of municipal boards and local government as it existed in Corporations, and some of the disclosures made to that Committee were not creditable to the Corporations. It would not be advisable, he thought, to reduce the franchise in these boroughs until the other matters referred to in the Report of the Committee were attended to; because it would be a very serious matter to put the power into the hands of a large number of people who did not now possess it, for the purpose of levying taxes upon properties, and the management of Corporation funds. Other matters connected with the question were more in want of attention than the lowering of the franchise. One of the great difficulties with Corporations was to get members to attend to the business; but he did not believe that that would be removed by lowering the franchise. The municipal question of Ireland was one that should be dealt with by the Government. He was perfectly certain if the Government took the matter up the Irish Members on the opposite side of the House would give them every assistance possible. The Irish people were not slow to make themselves heard on any question that was popular; but nothing was being said in Ireland upon this question, and he did not think that, at the present moment, people were much concerned about the franchise. As regarded the towns which came under the Towns Improvement Act of 1840, many of them, far from wishing for a reduction in the franchise, actually had refused to be brought under the Local Government Act. One of the other matters dealt with by the Committee was the extension of the boundaries of boroughs. That was a question which ought to be dealt with in any Bill that was brought forward concerning local government. As regarded the Municipal Corporation of Belfast, although there were always some grumblers against it, he could unhesitatingly say that on the whole its affairs were well carried on; but there were reforms and privileges which Belfast wanted. A fresh valuation was wanted in Belfast. Deputations from that town had urged upon the late Government to bring in a Bill for a new valuation. No re-valuation had taken place for so long that great inequalities and consequent injustice existed. Yet Irish boroughs had municipal advantages which England had not. In Ireland the aldermen were elected by the ratepayers, and not as in England, by the Town Council. He hoped that the Government, instead of dealing with this small matter, would see their way to take up the whole question and deal with it in a comprehensive way; and with that view he would suggest that during the Recess the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary should give the subject some consideration.

MR. DAWSON said, it was very agreeable to have received some support from the Opposition side of the House in regard to the Bill. The hon. Member for Belfast (Mr. Corry) had spoken in a very broad spirit, and had really said nothing it was necessary for him (Mr. Dawson) to reply to by way of argument. The hon. Member had admitted the importance of the matter, and would give the Government an opportunity of dealing with the question in all its branches hereafter. Although the suggestion might be well meant, it seemed to him (Mr. Dawson) rather to have been made as a means of shelving the small step towards reform now before the House. He did not think it was quite in accordance with the character of the people of Belfast, who were very practical, to put off a subject indefinitely merely because other cognate matters were not then under discussion. The only argument against the Bill, and the chief ground of the disinclination to reduce the municipal franchise in Ireland, seemed to him to be due to some sort of opinion that the people were so low, and their habitations so miserable in many of the towns, that they did not deserve a vote. But that seemed to him to be the very reason for giving them a vote. If they had any control over the municipal authorities, who had the power of improving their homes and improving the sanitary condition of their dwellings, they would have decent homes and good sanitary arrangements; but it was adding insult to injury to tell them that they were miserable because of the wretchedness of their dwellings; and, further, that they would be kept miserable, because they would not get the privilege of sending into the municipal councils representatives who would improve their condition. Many of the present members of the Municipal Corporations seemed to forget that they were guardians of the people rather than of the money of the people, and they consequently lent their assistance towards the improvement of the dwellings of the poor very sparingly. Lord Beaconsfield had said that a money qualification was the very last qualification that should be taken, because by it you kept out the masses of the people and left them entirely in the hands of the monied classes. The hon. Member for Belfast asserted that there was no popular agitation in favour of the present proposal; but did he intend to argue that the Irish people ought to get nothing from that House without agitation? If so they would soon have Town Leagues as well as a Land League. In England there was not only household franchise; but a Court of Law decided last November, upon an appeal from a decision of the Revising Barrister, that every room held separately was a house within the meaning of the Act introduced by Lord Beaconsfield, and gave a vote to the occupier, whether the rates were paid by the tenant or the owner. This decision would add 10,000 voters to one metropolitan constituency alone. The Prime Minister himself had quoted and endorsed the saying of Lord Chief Justice Holt, that every man should have power to elect those who bind his person and his property. Had the representation of Birmingham suffered from the influx of the popular vote? On the contrary, Birmingham was a type of that municipal government which they in Ireland would like to imitate. It was true, as the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Corry) observed, the standard of £10 which existed through Ireland generally did not extend to Dublin. In Dublin it was a household standard; but when giving Dublin the household franchise they also imposed upon it the condition of a three years' residence, and that imposition prevented artizans and others of the labouring classes from getting votes, for they could not generally live three or four years in one house. The very measure which was to have enlarged the franchise in Dublin was more exclusive than the general law, for while the valuation in Dublin would be sufficient for between 20,000 and 30,000 voters, the restrictions imposed reduced the number to 5,000. They talked about "Boycotting" and violence; but people in Ireland could not elect Town Councillors or Poor Law Guardians as they could in England. They had no specific panacea like the ballot paper, by which the constituents could assert their right. Thus it was that the people were driven into acts of violence. He thoroughly agreed with the hon. Member for Belfast, who said these alterations should be made in Committee, and that the towns should be presided over by Towns Commissioners; but he (Mr. Dawson) thought the municipal franchise in England gave every householder a vote, and he did not think that they should give anything less to Ireland. He believed that the same beneficial results might be expected to accrue from this reform that had followed upon the extension of the franchise in England. His hon. Friend (Mr. R. Power) said that for 50 years this question had been before the House, and for 50 years it had been undecided. So long ago as 1846 Sir Robert Peel said, when the unbiassed eye looked over the franchise of the two countries, it would be able to detect a disparity between the two communities. There were gaps and yawning gulfs which separated the people from their privileges, and kept them in a disloyal, unconstitutional state. It was needless for him (Mr. Dawson) to speak at any greater length, further than to congratulate the House and himself upon the fact that a true sense was coming over the consideration of Parliament upon the question, and he had great pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill.

MR. PLUNKET said, he did not wish to oppose the second reading. It was true that on some former occasions he and others sitting on that side of the House had opposed the Bill. He would, however, remind his hon. Friend (Mr. R. Power) that, on the last two occasions when it was brought forward, he (Mr. Plunket) offered no opposition to it; but he did oppose it in 1878, on the ground that, at that time, there was a Committee sitting which had been appointed for the very purpose of inquiring into the question. That Committee had taken a considerable amount of evidence, and had taken a vast amount of pains to inquire into this very question of the reform of the municipal franchise in Ireland. It was the Irish Members themselves who insisted upon the second reading of the Bill, and wanted to settle the whole matter out of hand, while the Committee was before the House. Now, the difficulty he had about it all along, and which he still felt about this Bill as it stood, and which would still lead him to oppose it if he thought it was going to be passed without amendment, was this. The great misfortune and drawback in the present state of Municipal Corporations in Ireland was that there was, he would not say a total, but a very considerable, absence of interest and action on the part of the property holders in the proceedings of the Corporations. That matter was gone into very carefully by the Committee which sat for three years on the subject, and which reported in 1878. He would just call attention to one paragraph in their Report to show that there was a very considerable feeling of that kind. It said the interests of the property holders and the proper discharge of their duties was not found sufficient to stimulate owners as a class to take part in municipal government. Even if owners strove to secure representation in the Governing Body under the present system, their numbers were insufficient to protect their interests, and it was contended that the revision of taxation would be unjust in itself. The truth was this—owing to the unfortunate proportions in which the various classes were found in Irish towns and Irish society generally, there was great difficulty in applying a system of representation without reducing it to the same rule as had been applied to England. It was on this ground that the Committee, having heard the evidence on both sides of the question, proposed a revision of the representation. They proposed a plan which would reduce the divisions between the various classes in Ireland in a way that would be conducive to their best interests. The Committee then went on to recommend some of the provisions which were contained in this Bill, and he (Mr. Plunket) was not now opposing them; but he said in dealing with a part of this question, if this Bill were to be passed simply as it stood, and without any amendment, it would have the effect of intensifying the very evil of which they complained, because it would have the effect of swamping the interests of the class referred to, and whose interest in municipal government was recommended and desired by the Committee. In short, if members of that class were to attempt to take part in the proceedings of a council, their influence would be practically nullified by the preponderating numbers of other classes. He would not refer to the political aspects of the question, though he might perhaps desire that some Corporations in Ireland should attend more to their natural functions and less to political disputes. But certainly, while he did not oppose the second reading of the Bill, he thought it dealt only with a part of the subject; and even as to that part of the subject it required careful consideration in Committee before it could be passed into an Act.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that it would not be necessary for him to detain the House for more than a few minutes, because there appeared to be a practical unanimity as to the second reading of the Bill. He understood the practical object of the Bill to be to make the municipal franchise in Ireland the same as it was in England; but it seemed to aim at an occupation franchise instead of the present system. He had on previous occasions, when sitting on the other side of the House, expressed his opinion in favour of that proposal, he held it still; and he was glad now to find that there was not any real difficulty raised or objection made to it by the Irish Members on the Opposition side. The hon. Member for Belfast (Mr. Corry), while not opposing the principle of the Bill, mentioned other matters which he (Mr. W. E. Forster) dared say were of great importance, but which did not exactly concern this question. Reform might be desirable in those matters; but, for his own part, he was inclined to believe it would be better to deal with the electoral question by itself, and it was desirable that some such Bill as this, or, at all events, the principle of the Bill, should be accepted by the House. This, of course, did not prevent the Government from considering Amendments in Committee; but he could look to no Amendments in Committee which would derogate from the principle of the measure. There appeared to be in the Bill some clauses which, regarded from an English point of view, were unnecessary and superfluous. The hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power), amongst other observations, which he must see he had better left unsaid, had said the Government had not kept its pledges in this matter. The hon. Member did not, it was true, say so very loudly; but, however that might be, it was a matter which the Government thought ought to be settled in this direction, and they would be glad to give it their support to-day, and afterwards, supposing it could be settled according to Parliamentary arrangements, when it went into Committee. He could not promise, however, to make it a Government measure and to give a day for it. Considering the state of Public Business, it would be impossible for him to give any such pledge as that. He only hoped that the promoters of the measure would be able to get the measure fairly before the Committee, and then he trusted that if they did so, they would really set to work about it, and that the Irish Members on the opposite side would not make use of the Rules of the House to obstruct it. In that event he should not despair of the Bill being passed during the present Session.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY said, he wished to impress upon hon. Members that the Government could not give any particular time for the discussion of this matter, and that the entire fate of the Bill depended, and the possibility of settling the question depended, upon hon. Gentlemen opposite not unnecessarily obstructing it. The Select Committee, of which he was a Member, was by no means unanimous as to the representation of property as suggested by the right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket). A large minority of the Committee took quite a different view. His late Colleague (Mr. Butt) pointed out to the Committee that the principle of Municipal Reform Bills in England and Ireland was, that owners of property should only have representation on these Boards by residing in the boroughs. In that proposal there was a common ground on which the Irish Members on different sides of the House might approach the question, and to see if there could not be a solution of it. So far from leading to that unanimity and fusion of opposing classes, separate assessment of property in Ireland would only lead to a division of those classes. He was afraid the proposition that property ought to have special representation on these Boards could not be accepted. It was a mistake to think Irish Corporations took a particular interest in politics, as might be assumed from the remark of the right hon. and learned Member. English Corporations took quite as much interest when great questions were stirring in the country, and they were just as fond of expressing their political opinions as they were in Ireland. Within the last three or four years, English Corporations had firmly and publicly conducted their elections on the lines of Liberal and Conservative—he would not say to political purposes—but they were carried on quite as much on political lines as were those in Ireland. If there was occasionally an excess of politics in Irish Corporations, it was only a temporary phase resulting from the excited state of things in Ireland, and would pass away after that excitement had subsided; but it was impossible during the three years the Committee sat, aided as it was by Commissioners sent over from this country, to lay a finger on any single charge of corruption or any suspicion of it. The right hon. and learned Member for the University of Dublin had said under the present state of things by this Bill the property classes would not find much more chance of representation in those bodies; but he (Mr. O'Shaughnessy) thought they would have more chance with large constituencies than with small ones, as, in the latter case, the few voters held the ward in their own possession and dictated to the rest. It was much easier to go to a large constituency with a cry of economy or good administration, and assure that constituency it would be to their advantage to return men of a good class, who would enter into the corporation for the purpose of seeing to the due administration of the rates. Thus the property classes would have a far better chance than they now had of representation. It was fancied in some quarters that by keeping the municipal constituencies as they were at present they would exclude certain of the humbler classes from the representation, and leave the representation in the hands of the better classes. But a greater mistake could not be made. Everyone who knew the Irish people knew also that the middle classes exercised very little power indeed when any great crisis came, and when power should be used. The real power lay in the body of the people, and it was much better to give them the legal opportunity of expressing their opinion by electing men who would express their opinions and carry out their views. That in the long run would be found to be the surest and best principle, and he believed the true Conservatives —he did not use the word in a Party sense, but those who had respect for the law—would largely benefit by the extension of the franchise proposed by the Bill. He believed when they got into Committee, there would be no disposition to stand on hard-and-fast lines with regard to this reform. They had to give and take, so long as they did not establish separate representation, so long as they did not ask for violent changes, or to adopt anything in Ireland which was not adopted in England. They were quite willing to discuss matters with the other side of the House. Under these circumstances, he respectfully appealed to hon. Members on the other side not to kill the Bill by the half-past 12 Rule as it was on the last occasion when before the House. Let not that be its fate now; but let them approach the question as citizens of a common country, and with the desire of arriving at the best possible solution of the difficulty which had so long existed.

MR. LEWIS said, that a large number of Liberals in the constituency he represented (Londonderry) were opposed most decidedly to the measure, and therefore he should not be doing justice to that city if he did not at once and most distinctly state that he should oppose it as far as he was able. They had nothing whatever to do with proposals which might give it a different shape; but, as he understood it, the Bill before the House aimed at placing the municipal franchise in Ireland on exactly the same basis as it was in England, with some slight variations; but that proposal was one which he should have objected to, even had it been a *res integra*, for he did not believe it had been to the advantage of England to have municipal matters absolutely in democratic hands. He believed it had acted with gross injustice to property, and he did not wish to inflict a similar disadvantage upon Ireland. He maintained that in municipal matters they had a totally distinct class of interests, a totally distinct set of reasons, which ought to be attached to the franchise. The chief duty of a municipal corporation was to assess and collect rates, and to spend the money so collected, and therefore, according to the first principles of justice, he maintained they should have regard to the interests of the people who paid those rates, and not the people who did not pay. So, in regard to the rights of owners, he would be prepared at all events to take his stand upon the Report of the Select Committee which had already been presented to this House in the last Parliament, and which indicated the mode of settling this question in a far more righteous and proper manner than did the proposal of to-day. His hon. Friends below the Gangway would pardon him if he was very candid on this question; but he, for one, thought there was not much reason to look with complacency upon the municipal government principle as evinced in the various bodies in Ireland, and he thought hon. and right hon. Members opposite had as good a reason for looking upon them with disfavour as he had. When they found that municipal corporations in Ireland were continually mixed up year after year, month after month, and week after week in political affairs, they might fairly consider what was likely to follow upon the lowering of the franchise which was proposed in this Bill. Only recently, according to *The Daily News*, at a special meeting of the Cork Corporation, a resolution was passed condemning the Government for having imprisoned Mr. Parnell, Mr. Dillon, and Father Sheehy, by 22 members out of 26; and the meeting, which was semi-public, pledged itself, in case Mr. Dillon were not released, and if he should die in prison, to erect a monument to his memory, and inscribe upon it the names of the three principal Members of the Government as his murderers. That was the spirit in which municipal government was conducted in one of the first cities in Ireland. Were their memories so short that they had forgotten the very recent action of the Dublin Corporation? Was there anything in the general condition and character of the municipal corporations of Ireland to induce the House to go out of its way for the purpose of nullifying and destroying the interest and power of persons of property simply in the interests of those who paid an infinitesimally small amount in comparison? So far from approving the proposal to assimilate the municipal law of Ireland to that of England, he should oppose it to the best of his ability, because he regarded the municipal law of England itself as a bad one, inasmuch as it conferred upon those who possessed no property the right of dealing with the property of others. He knew that in the city he represented the proposition contained in this measure would be looked upon with disfavour equally by Liberals and by Conservatives, and he challenged hon. Gentlemen from the North of Ireland to speak in the name of the Liberal Party in favour of the measure. He would be fulfilling the desire and the mandate of a large majority of his constituents in opposing the Bill, which, notwithstanding the modest suggestion that it could be made innocuous in Committee, he did not believe could be turned inside out, or be made anything else than a measure for the degradation of the municipal franchise of Ireland. Therefore, although on the present occasion he would not claim a division, he must announce his intention of opposing the future progress of the measure in every possible way.

Mr. GRAY said, that the speech to which they had just listened was precisely what the House might have expected from the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), since he had always taken an extraordinary view with respect to the extension of the municipal or Parliamentary franchise. They could therefore expect nothing short of a determined and straightforward opposition from that hon. Gentleman. He (Mr. Gray) did not think it necessary to follow the points which the hon. Member had mentioned, further than to say that, if the hon. Member's objection to the Bill was a political one—and, so far as he could see, there was nothing, as the municipal corporations were at present constituted, to prevent their taking the strongest political action open to them —perhaps they might, by going down a little deeper in the social scale of the franchise, succeed in striking the Conservative working man in Ireland. He presumed that the political views of the great corporations could not be more obnoxious to the hon. Member if they were based upon an extended franchise than they were at the present time. They could not do any worse in Ireland in the eyes of the hon. Member than they had already done; but while he was not surprised at the speech of the hon. Member for Londonderry, he was very much astonished at that of the hon. and learned Member for Limerick (Mr. O'Shaughnessy). Were it not for the observations of the hon. and learned Gentleman, he (Mr. Gray) would not have spoken in this debate. He could not concur in these statements, and would rather see the Bill rejected than pass on the basis shadowed forth in the speech of the hon. and learned Member. The Irish Members were not willing to consent to any alteration of any kind which would prevent an assimilation of the franchise between the two countries. If, as the hon. Member for Londonderry contended, the present English franchise was mischievous, then amend it and give Ireland the benefit of the amendment, for the Irish Members were willing to consent to any amendment which insisted upon Ireland enjoying the same privileges as England. While they were under the same Parliament they claimed, at least, to enjoy such benefits as the Union extended to them. They should have those benefits really as well as nominally; and, at the present time, they found in connection with almost every portion of the administration of Public Business that, while they were nominally under the same law as England, they were practically under an entirely different law. The effect of that was nothing but that of adding insult to injury. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket) had contended that the owners of property were not sufficiently represented upon the corporations in Ireland, stating that the great desideratum was that men of property should take a more active interest in municipal affairs. He (Mr. Gray) had no objection to men of property and position having an active interest in municipal affairs, if they desired to do so; but, after an intimate acquaintance of the working of the Dublin Corporation, he could say that it was not the men of position or of high social standing in that body—although they had a good many of them—who did the hard, practical, everyday work; it was the men of lower social position and with fewer pretensions who did the work, and who were of the most value to the City. Some proof should have been given of the assertion that if there were more representatives of property in the corporations of Ireland the work would be better done, for that was an old argument that was always urged by the Conservatives in Ireland. There were two systems working side by side. There was the Poor Law system and the municipal system, and in many cases they performed identically the same functions. For instance, all the sanitary work in one district was intrusted to the corporation; while, in another, at a very short distance from it, it was placed in the hands of the Boards of Guardians. Half of the latter bodies held their positions *ex-officio*, and consisted usually of landlords and magistrates. As a rule, throughout the whole of Ireland these men seldom attended to any of the practical work of their Boards. Of course, they attended whenever there was an election, and then always on political grounds; but they left the business to be performed by the vulgar herd, and did not trouble themselves about it. Under the election system of Poor Law Boards, there was a property vote and a property qualification in their entirety, by which system the rich man could have six votes, while the poor man had only one. By means of a certain combination of qualifications the rich man could have as many as 18 votes to one of the poor man. He denied that, however, a better class of men were elected by means of this system, and that they did their work any better than others. Wherever there was a restriction placed upon a constituency there could not be a healthy interest in public affairs, which alone could secure their equitable administration. In Dublin, the greatest city in Ireland, with a population of 250,000, the Corporation was elected by 5,000 men. Owing to a restricted franchise, wire-pulling had a great deal more to do with an election than—if he might use a sporting expression—the public "form" of the candidates. All that was now asked was that that which had been found to work with advantage in England might also be applied to Ireland, and that while they had, perhaps, more than their share of the disadvantages enjoyed by England, they might also receive some of its advantages. He had no hesitation in saying that, if such a proposition as that foreshadowed by the hon. and learned Member for Limerick were inserted in the Bill, he (Mr. Gray) would block it, if no one else did so; for he would sooner wait 10 years for a good measure than allow the House to proceed upon any false assumption that the Irish people would be satisfied with a merely nominal concession, which would be so disastrous in its working, as that made by the hon. and learned Member for Limerick.

MR. T. C. THOMPSON said, he was surprised to hear the arguments deduced from the supposed failure of municipal institutions in England. He thought that if an appeal were made to the country, the answer would show that the extension of municipal institutions to the great towns of England had done much to benefit the country. Not only had they benefited the general prosperity of those towns, but they had enormously increased their wealth and health. Therefore, if the Bill depended upon the answer of England, he felt sure there would be little doubt that it would receive a very cordial assent. Objection had been made to the Bill on the assumption that by lowering the franchise they would bring in a lower class of people into public affairs. Had not the lowering of the franchise in England been the most beneficial measure passed during the last 40 or 50 years? Through its operation, the masses took a keener interest in national and Imperial affairs; and he believed no Assembly could take a keener interest in the affairs of the world than this House of Commons, which was elected by the lowest franchise that had yet been tried. It had been said that people of the lower ranks of society took no interest in municipal institutions. For that very reason, then, should the franchise be extended to them; for the chief thing to be desired in all representative institutions was not merely the result it would have on legislation, but the effect it would have upon the people themselves. They never extended the franchise towards a lower class of people without at once awakening in them a very deep interest in questions which they never thought of before, and the practical result was to insure an excellent representation both in municipal institutions and in that House. More than that, he regarded it as of importance that they should especially encourage the feeling that Ireland was to be treated in the same manner as England. There was a feeling gradually rising up—it was found, not only in the public assemblies, but in the homes of England—that Ireland had not been treated quite fairly; and the people of this country trusted that, by legislation like this, would be obviated the necessity for that exceptional legislation which had been the unfortunate practice of the House for the last two years. There were, however, two points in which he thought the Bill should be amended—these being, first, that some provision ought to be made to prevent any voter losing his vote by leaving one town for another, for he saw no reason why a man should be compelled to reside in a town a year, or in some cases for two years, before he had the privilege of a municipal vote. On settling in a town he ought to be able to put himself on the municipal register by a formal application to the local authority, which should hold good until the next revision. He further considered it was a very great hardship that very poor people who received relief from the public should be excluded from the franchise. Considering the many advantages that all classes enjoyed at the public expense, it was harsh to deprive men of the rights of citizenship because they were compelled by misfortune to throw themselves for a while on rates to which they might long have been contributors. He trusted that in these two matters at least Ireland would show herself in advance of England.

MR. FINDLATER said, in his opinion, all the objections that had been raised to the measure were only such as could be easily and satisfactorily answered. In the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland, referring to the carping observations of the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power), he (Mr. Findlater) was sure his hon. Friend would see that those remarks had been better unsaid. He could not really think, if they were to look for favours from the Government, that speaking in an angry spirit of every act of theirs would tend to get what they required. He said that in the most friendly spirit to the hon. Member for Waterford, and he was sure it would be accepted in that spirit by him. The hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) challenged Liberal Members from the North of Ireland sitting on that side of the House to say whether the great body of the Liberals of Ireland wished for this change in the franchise. He would accept the challenge, and say that for his part he had not the slightest doubt, from his experience on the other side of the water, that the great body of the Liberals were quite as desirous for the change as was the hon. Member who moved the second reading of the Bill (Mr. M'Coan). He had very great pleasure in supporting the Motion before the House.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, it was scarcely necessary for him to add anything to what had been said by his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland; but he rose to say the principle upon which he should support the Bill was that representation should accompany taxation. He was also firmly of opinion that a man who was qualified to exercise the trust of voting for a Member of Parliament was certainly not in any way disqualified from exercising a similar trust in voting for the members of a municipal corporation. Those who had, he would not say absolutely most, but who certainly had a very large interest in the homes and the comfort of the poor, were those who themselves came from the lower classes. In saying that, he meant to cast no reflection whatever upon the upper classes, especially upon those in the City of Dublin, who had, perhaps, individually shown more solicitude and interest in the poor than those of any other city in the United Kingdom, particularly some whose names were well known, and whose service was coveted as affording comfort and security. It should not be lost sight of that the Corporation of Dublin occupied an anomalous position as compared with the other corporations of Ireland, and that was a grievance which, at all events, ought to be redressed. Why a person in one city should have a vote, and a person in the same position should not merely because he lived in another city, he could not understand. One great principle might be found in Ireland, that so far as they could enlarge constituencies by introducing persons who had a stake in the country, so much more would they add to the stability of the country and to the loyalty of the population; and the more they excluded this class of people the more would they, to use a popular but forcible expression, sit upon the heads of the people, and the less likely were they to make the people loyal. He was very glad to be able to support the second reading of the Bill, although he wished to protect himself from implying that he adhered to it as it stood, as there were a couple of matters which were, perhaps, more matters of technicality and drafting than anything else, in which he considered it required amendment, but which did not in any way affect its principle, to which he entirely adhered. In Committee he would feel himself at liberty to support or oppose any Amendments, provided they did not interfere with the principle of the Bill.

Mr. METGE, in supporting the Bill, said, he felt that the Representatives of Irish constituencies had a right to ask from the only Irish Parliament they had some fulfilment of the pledges from the Government, which had been broken as fast as made ever since the time of the Union. With reference to the remarks of the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Findlater) respecting the speech of his hon. Friend the Member for Waterford (Mr. R. Power), he would remind that hon. Gentleman that the Irish people looked for measures of this kind as measures of simple justice, and no more; therefore, they could not be said to ask for anything in a carping spirit. When they were granted, they considered them not in the light of favours from the Government or the English Parliament, but as being passed by the Parliament of the United Kingdom. He cordially supported the Bill.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

COUNTY COURTS (IRELAND) BILL.

(*Mr. Findlater, Mr. Givan, Mr. Patrick Smyth, Mr. Thomas Dickson.*)

[BILL 18.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. FINDLATER, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it was framed for the purpose of remedying a great injustice which at present existed with regard to the appeal in ordinary cases, and also under the Equity Clauses of the Irish County Court Act of 1877. It provided for the hearing of appeals in equity cases by Assize Judges. At present all the cases went before the Lord Chancellor. In small cases this led to expenses which were simply ridiculous. Under the law as it at present stood, in ordinary cases before a suitor could appeal from the decision of the County Court Judge, it was necessary he should obtain two sureties to enter into a recognizance in double the amount of the decree, and the state of the law in many cases caused very great difficulty where the amount was considerable, say, £50. When the security to be given was large in amount, practically there could be no appeal; and in some cases he had heard that the County Court Judges had fixed the security at such an outrageous figure as to preclude all chance of appeal, knowing the very great difficulties there were in the way of poor suitors to procure the necessary securities, although, of course, he

(Mr. Findlater) could not speak from personal knowledge of any case. Another difficulty was that appeals should be made during the session of the Court, the consequence being that very often, where the decree was made near the close of the session, it was almost impossible to get the opinion of counsel in time to institute the appeal. The Bill he had introduced would obviate that grievance. Although these difficulties existed with regard to appeals in ordinary cases, appellants in those cases certainly had the advantage of appealing to the going Judge of Assize, who was quite accessible; and, in fact, there was a perfect re-hearing of the case, and there was some certainty of justice being administered. However, with regard to appeals under the equity jurisdiction of the Court, the case stood upon an entirely different basis. In all cases, however small, these must come before the Lord Chancellor, leading to expense which was simply ridiculous. Most cases instituted under the equity jurisdiction of the County Courts were cases for the recovery of small legacies, and the amount involved was generally so small that if a ridiculous mistake happened to be made by the Chairman, there was practically no appeal at all. Another difficulty was the great delay that occurred in the hearing of the appeal cases. It usually took six months from the time a decree was pronounced before the appeal was heard, and sometimes even longer than that. He believed there was one case not long ago which took nine months. In a case, Murdock *v.* Murdock, the reversal of the decree cost £20, and a delay of five months. The case goes back to the Chairman, and will be heard next April, and the parties are in the meantime in a starving condition. Then, again, in these equity cases, the appeal had to be decided mainly on the notes of the evidence taken and the points raised by the County Court Judges. He need not point out how unsatisfactory it was that the Judge of Appeal should only have the notes of an inferior Judge to decide the facts of a case upon. In Ireland, just as in this country, strong complaints had been made by Judges as to the incomplete and imperfect notes made by County Court Judges in cases that came before them on appeal. He noticed in the London *Times* of the previous day a strong expression of opinion on this point, and the case was sent back to the County Court Judge. Things were twice as bad in this respect in Ireland. If such scandals took place in the Superior Courts the outcry would, no doubt, be very great indeed; but they attracted little attention when they occurred before the inferior tribunals. There was also an extreme difficulty in getting these notes from the County Court Chairman, imperfect and one-sided as they generally were. There was a case before the ex-Chancellor (Dr. Ball) in which it took nearly six months to get the notes from the Chairman, and the appeal had to be ultimately lodged without the notes at all. This irregularity and delay in lodging the notes was a very serious matter. In some cases the disputed amount involved might be nearly £500; but it was equally hard in principle when the amount was small. A barrister friend of his (Mr. Findlater's) not long ago came across a case in Court when an equity civil bill for specific performance was decided by a County Court Judge. The defeated party sought advice from the barrister as to the propriety of appealing, and handed him the Judge's notes of evidence, when it was found that the notes absolutely left out all reference to the case of the party in question. The name of the case was Simpson *v.* McLelland. In this case the barrister, of course, advised that no appeal should be lodged. To put an end to the evils to which he (Mr. Findlater) had referred, the Bill proposed to refer the equity appeals to the going Judge of Assize, and not to the Lord Chancellor, who would re-hear the case both as regarded the facts and the law. Surely it would be a considerable advantage that cases of this kind should be tried at Assizes. They would be heard by Judges of eminence, who, as the Bar in Ireland from which they were taken did not confine their practice to one branch of the Profession, would have the necessary equity experience. They would not have, as the Lord Chancellor had at present, to decide the cases upon imperfect notes of evidence and other matters. That would be a very great advantage in the hearing of small cases. He understood the present eminent Judge who occupied the position of Chief Baron of the Exchequer in Ireland was strongly in favour of the hearing of these appeals by the Assize Judges. [Mr. GIBSON: Have you any evidence of that?] He did not say he had evidence of it; but he had been told it by a gentleman practising at the Bar, whose statement he believed. He thought there was some reform wanted in these matters, and the Bill which he now begged to move should be read a second time met all the difficulties he had mentioned in the observations he had made to the House.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Findlater.*)

MR. GIBSON said, it was obvious that any attempt to modify such an important Act, passed so recently as the year 1877, required strong evidence for its being carried into effect. He was of opinion that no such case was made out by the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Findlater). The Bill was one that would only be justified by establishing the fact of the great inconvenience of the present system as well as the convenience that would result under the system proposed to be adopted. With respect to the objections made by the hon. Member to the present system of appeal in equity cases resting with the Lord Chancellor, he (Mr. Gibson) had the honour to be Chairman of the Committee which sat upon the subject in 1877, and if there was any one point on which there was the greatest possible unanimity it was upon this—the importance of giving the widest equity jurisdiction to County Court Judges. There was an equal unanimity on the point that it was desirable that the comparatively humble suitors before County Courts should be able to appeal to the highest judicial authority the country could supply. Both the late and present Lord Chancellor, he knew, felt that no part of their duties required more zealous attention than these appeals on equity matters from County Courts. The hon. Member had complained that there was delay in the hearing of the appeals. That delay, however, was not an evidence of the failure of the system, for in the very nature of things there must necessarily be some delay in working a new jurisdiction. Moreover, the delay had been greatly obviated by the fact that the Lord Chancellor had called in the aid of two of the higher Judges of Equity to assist him in his administration. He believed that with the assistance of the Vice Chancellors and of Judge Flanagan, who had been asked to assist the Lord Chancellor, there would be very little delay in future in hearing these equity cases. The Bill as at present drafted would lead to the greatest confusion. As to the power of appeal, supposing the money amount in the case involved a long and complicated account, as was often the case, he believed it would not often happen that such cases could be taken within the short limits of the Assizes. That meant a new Judge to sit in the next Assizes, and to decide on the accounts ordered by the last Judge of Assize. He ventured to think that if his hon. Friend considered all those matters, he would find they involved very considerable difficulties. He (Mr. Gibson) thought it premature at present to make such changes in so short a jurisdiction; and, under all the circumstances, he would suggest that the hon. Gentleman should postpone the consideration of the Bill until public opinion had been elicited upon it—until it had been ascertained what was thought by the Judges as well as by the suitors regarding it, and until they could see what was the effect—the tendency—of the proposal. Therefore he would move, not in any spirit of hostility or disrespect to the legislation proposed by his hon. Friend, but to obtain an expression of public opinion upon it, the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Gibson.*)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, that, in his opinion, the suggestion of the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gibson) was one which it was highly advisable that his hon. Friend (Mr. Findlater) should adopt. He (the Attorney General for Ireland) did not acquiesce in all the objections raised by the right hon. and learned Gentleman against the Bill; but he thought the course proposed by him was the best to be adopted. He did not think Assize Judges incapable of taking long and complicated accounts into consideration within the limits of the Assize sessions. He had seen long cases of the kind, for instance, between butter merchants and farmers, with a history which extended over a period about 12 months, decided by a Judge of Assize. But he agreed with the right hon. and learned Member for the Dublin University—and that was the key-note of his objection to the passing of the Bill now—that it was inadvisable so soon to alter the arrangement come to in 1877. He objected altogether to the system of the passing, and then immediately pulling up Bills when they had been in operation for a short time in order to see how they worked; and he thought on that ground it would be desirable that the debate should be adjourned until the subject was brought before the country and the opinion of those whom it affected could be expressed upon it. On this subject he might remark on the state of the Benches below the Gangway on the opposite side, usually occupied by what was known as the Irish popular Party. This was a question which affected the very poorest class of suitors in Ireland. There was no person so poor as not to be touched by it, and yet those Benches were altogether vacant, the only Members of the Party present being the hon. Member for Youghal (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) and the hon. Member for Carlow County (Mr. Macfarlane). That showed how, in one respect, Irish questions were attended to by the hon. Gentlemen. He believed the County Court decisions, as well as the appeals before the Lord Chancellor, gave satisfaction in Ireland. The judicial capacities of the ablest and most learned Judges were brought to bear upon these matters, which inspired the Irish people with the greatest confidence. He did not think himself that there was any authority for saying that there was any general dissatisfaction with the present system of appeal, either by the suitors or on the part of professional men. In fact, he had the highest authority for saying just the reverse. The delay complained of by his hon. Friend would be obviated by the recent regulation by which the Lord Chancellor was enabled to transfer his jurisdiction in certain cases to two or three Equity Judges. Under all the circumstances of the case, therefore, he thought it would be better if his hon. Friend agreed to the adjournment of the debate, in order that the matter should be ventilated in the country affected by it; and if, after the sense of the country should have been obtained, it should be shown that any alteration was required, he was quite sure that such alteration would not be objected to by the House.

Mr. FINDLATER said, he readily accepted the proposition of the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson). His (Mr. Findlater's) only object was to get the subject well ventilated. It would now be heard of in Ireland, and he had not the slightest doubt himself as to what the result would be.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *Wednesday* 5th April.

JUDGMENTS (INFERIOR COURTS) BILL.

(*Mr. Monk, Mr. Norwood, Mr Anderson, Mr. Corry, Mr. Reid, Mr. Serjeant Simon.*)

[BILL 44.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. MONK, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that it was a very simple one. The object of the Bill was to make judgments obtained in an Inferior Court in any part of the United Kingdom valid in other parts of the United Kingdom. It had been brought in last Session, but was blocked, and had to be withdrawn. It was an onward step towards assimilating the laws of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and he hoped no hon. Member from the Sister Country would be found to oppose the second reading. The Bill proposed to extend the principle of an Act passed in 1868—the 31 & 32 *Vict.* c. 54—which provided that the judgments or decreets of the Superior Courts in England, Scotland, and Ireland should be respectively effectual in any other part of the United Kingdom. The Bill therefore applied to the judgments which might be obtained in the County Courts of the United Kingdom. A judgment obtained in a County Court in England would, on registration and on a certificate of that judgment being produced in a County Court of Scotland or Ireland, be valid there, and *vice versâ.* He had had, he said, many letters, especially from Scotland, of persons who were in favour of the principle of the Bill. The Act of 1868 had been productive of very good results, and he trusted the present Bill, which extended the principle of that Act, would meet with no opposition. The hon. Member concluded by moving the second reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Monk.*)

MR. FINDLATER said, that he had no intention of opposing the second reading of the Bill, as he considered that, practically, its principle might be advantageously accepted. He wished, however, to warn the House that it would require serious consideration when it got into Committee, in order that clauses might be inserted to guard against the hardships that would arise from defendants being compelled to appear and plead at long distances from their homes. It must not be permitted that persons residing in London should have the right to drag people over from the middle of Ireland to attend their cases in this country. It would not be fair that a man residing in London should be able to issue process here against an Irishman for the recovery of a very small debt, perhaps, and in effect compel him to come over here to defend himself. This danger, which had arisen under the Rules framed by the Judges in pursuance of the Judicature Act of 1875, had excited the protest of Scotch Members, and security should be given against its recurrence.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. J. B. BALFOUR): Sir, on the part of Scotland, I entirely endorse what has been said by my hon. Friend (Mr. Findlater). If the views as to jurisdiction were identical in all parts of Great Britain and Ireland, there could be no possible objection to the principle of such a Bill as this; but it, unhappily, is true that the views upon jurisdiction are not the same in the different parts of the island, because while the general principle, I believe, is that the pursuer in a suit must follow the defendant with that suit to the place of his domicile, or to a place where there is either real or personal property attachable, that principle is not recognized in England, and the result is that a process is very often issued out of the Superior Courts of England, under the Rules of 1875 and 1876, convening Scotchmen into the Courts in England who are not personally resident in England, and have no property in England either real or personal. In short, it has been found in experience that not merely in cases where one of many defendants is a Scotchman, but where a Scotchman is the sole defendant, he is liable to be convened when all he has done has been to write a letter ordering goods in England, or perhaps to send an accepted bill to England, and the result has been very great hardship to the mercantile and trading community of Scotland. So strongly has the grievance been felt that many of the Chambers of Commerce and the Convention of the Scottish Burghs —which I think I may say is one of the most highly representative bodies of the commercial and trading classes of Scotland—have within the last few months addressed the strongest protests against that exercise of jurisdiction which is now prevalent under the Rules of 1875 and 1876. Unless this Bill is so safeguarded that it shall be made perfectly clear that nothing of that kind will result from the practice of the Inferior Courts, I should certainly feel it my duty to oppose the second reading. Unless my hon. Friend in charge of the Bill indicates a general assent to the principle that it shall not be competent to convene the natives of Scotland, or rather to register and execute judgments against natives of Scotland, unless those natives have been at the time when the judgments have been pronounced subject to the jurisdiction of the Inferior Courts of England or Ireland on the principles recognized by general jurisprudence, and by Common Law of Scotland, I shall oppose the Bill. But if that is quite understood, I shall be ready to propose in Committee clauses which would be directed, and, in my judgment, be effectual, to prevent any such evil taking place; and if he will indicate his assent to such clauses being introduced in Committee, I shall not consider it my duty to go further into this matter just now. Otherwise, I should feel bound to bring before the House the grievance under which the Scottish mercantile community are suffering under the Rules of 1875 and 1876. It may not be known to many hon. Members that that is really a new grievance, because, while I believe it has long been the practice of the Courts of Chancery in England to issue processes against persons resident outside of the jurisdiction, I understand that this was not customary in the case of the Common Law Courts until 1875. There was, if I am not mistaken, under the Common Law Procedure Act of 1852, a distinct exception, both of residents in Scotland and in Ireland, from the issue of such process; and it did not occur to any Scotch Member, or probably to any Irish Member either, that when the Rules applicable to a purely English Judicature Act were laid on the Table of this House, there would be anything affecting the citizens of their respective countries — for the provisions of the new Rules were not discovered until they were in actual operation. I believe that is the case, because those who were formerly Members of the House from Scotland have told me that whenever this matter was mooted in their time, they invariably brought before the House objections similar to those which I have now urged. I do not desire to detain the House by raising the whole question of private International Law which is involved. I merely desire, in accordance with what I believe is the universal wish of the mercantile and trading community of my country, to intimate that, unless this Bill is safeguarded by such clauses as I venture to suggest, I shall feel bound to oppose it.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, he desired to follow his right hon. and learned Friend the Lord Advocate, because he did not exactly acquiesce in the observations which had fallen from him. As he understood the Bill, it did not deal with the preliminary stages of the suit; but it took up the suit at the stage in which judgment had been obtained, and it applied the principle of the existing Act in reference to the Superior Courts to the case of the Inferior Courts. The practical effect of the Bill as to Ireland would be that if a debtor in Ireland was sued by an English creditor in the Inferior Court in Ireland and judgment was recovered there against him, and if, although he was there in person, he had no property to be levied upon in the jurisdiction of that Court, but had ample property in the jurisdiction of a County Court in England, then, except for the natural objection which he supposed men had to pay at all—["No, no!"]—Well, he would withdraw that expression, and say that there was no reason why if the debtor's property was within the jurisdiction of any English County Court, the sum recovered should not be levied there, and *vice versâ*. He, therefore, did not object to the principle of the Bill, and would not oppose its second reading, although, in order to adapt it to the peculiar jurisdiction of the Irish County Courts, it would be essential in Committee to alter some of the details of the measure.

MR. CALLAN said, he could not congratulate the Treasury Bench on its unanimity on this subject, and, as an Irish Member, he was inclined to adopt the view indicated by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate, rather than that expressed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland. Indeed, he intended to move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months, so that they should have on record the divided action of the Government in that matter. That Bill extended the departure from an old principle that was made, for the first time, not by the Act of 1875, but by the Rules of Court, which, unfortunately, when laid on the Table, were allowed to have the force of law. If the Bill of 1875 had embraced that departure from the old principle, it would have been objected to; but it had been given effect to through its having probably escaped the attention of Scotch and Irish Members when the Rules of Court were laid on the Table. The principle of the Bill was not limited to County Courts, but extended to any Court in England, even to the Lord Mayor's Court, to police magistrates, and petty sessions in rural districts, without due safeguards against injustice. If, moreover, such a measure was to be brought in at all, it ought only to be introduced on the responsibility of the Government. For these reasons, he should move the rejection of the Bill.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Callan.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. GREGORY said, he entertained very grave doubts as to the expediency of the Bill, and shared the feeling expressed in regard to it by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate. He had always been of the opinion that Parliament had gone a great deal too far in passing skeleton Acts, thereby giving most extensive jurisdiction to tribunals to make rules which did not appear on the face of the Act, and which were little considered by the House and might lead to serious and unexpected consequences, and it behoved them to be very careful how they went further in that direction. Knowing what the County Courts were, he objected to the proposed extension of their jurisdiction as to the enforcement of their process. Those tribunals dealt with very small amounts; and practitioners in them knew that many of those amounts were recovered by agencies and combinations which went about snatching judgments, so that a man might feel himself saddled with some small claim to which he was not liable really before he knew where he was. He did not think that any extension of the power of enforcing those claims could be safely granted. Men living at a long distance from a County Court would sometimes think it better to submit to imposition rather than incur all the trouble and expense of resisting unjust claims, and run the risk of paying the costs to which they might ultimately be made liable. Process was also served somewhat loosely and irregularly, and they could not always depend on persons having notice of the claim before judgment was issued. He, therefore, felt a strong objection to the Bill.

MR. HINDE PALMER said, he should like to know from the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) whether the Bill was intended to affect the earlier stages of jurisdiction, so that a defendant and his witnesses might be dragged from his place of residence to another place far distant? As he (Mr. Hinde Palmer) understood it, the object of the Bill was simply to enforce a judgment which had been regularly obtained against a defendant in one jurisdiction in another where he might have property available to answer that judgment. If that would be its only effect, he would support the second reading.

MR. WARTON said, he was glad to have an opportunity of renewing the protest which he made last Session against power being given to Judges to make Rules to carry out the supposed intentions of Parliament. The difficulty in this case had arisen from the hurried passing at the end of the Session of a body of Rules which gave to Judges' Regulations the force of legislative Acts. The Judges were too fond of making Rules, and sought every occasion of magnifying their office. A Committee of Judges was sitting now for the purpose of repealing all sorts of Acts of Parliament. That was the result of the House allowing them to draw up Rules. The hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk), who brought in so many of those ill-considered Bills, had brought in this measure also, and the House did not know whether it affected the initial stages of a process, or the judgment. Of course, they were told that it was only the judgment that was affected; but he had no doubt that the Bill would affect not only the judgment, but the initial process. There was now much hot haste for legislation, as shown by the proceedings of the Government; but other hon. Gentlemen also were distinguished for their voracity, and none more than the hon. Member for Gloucester, who was quite proud of his success. He (Mr. Warton) was not a Scotchman or an Irishman; but he was ready to assist Irishmen or Scotchmen in obtaining the redress of their grievances. He protested against this terrible voracity of legislation, and hoped there would be a combination of Scotchmen, Irishmen, and Englishmen to reject the Bill.

SIR JOSEPH M'KENNA said, that if the Bill were to pass, all an English creditor of an Irishman or Scotchman would have to do was to get his debtor's name on a bill of exchange, and then, if not paid in due time, enter judgment in his own County Court and hand it over to be executed—say, at Ballymena, or Balmoral. That would be giving capitalists and creditors greater rights than they had against debtors at present, and the House ought to pause before giving its sanction to such a measure unless it was introduced upon the responsibility of the Government.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER) said, that there appeared to be some misconception as to the scope of the Bill. It was a plain and practical measure, framed to remedy an undoubted grievance. In 1868 a Bill was passed enabling creditors to put into operation a judgment obtained in one of the Superior Courts in England, Ireland, or Scotland against debtors in a different part of the United Kingdom, and since the passing of the Bill he had never heard any complaint in either of the three countries against it, and he should be as much opposed as anyone to interference with its principle. In the Bill of the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) there was a similar provision with regard to judgments obtained in the Inferior Courts. The Bill left all the preliminaries exactly as they were, nor could the remedies it proposed be put into operation until judgment was obtained. That judgment could not be obtained in Ireland on a civil bill process, except after personal service of the process within the jurisdiction of the Court or at the abode of the debtor. This Bill did not propose, he understood, to interfere with that rule. He supposed, in Ireland, the case of a creditor having obtained a decree against his debtor in an Irish Court, in a suit properly instituted, in which the debtor was first served personally. As the law now stood, suppose the debtor in a decree so served should go to England, he could remain there safe from the operation of the decree, unless he acquired property in Ireland. This Bill simply proposed in such a case to transfer the decree so obtained, by bringing it to the English Court, where it would be registered as if it were a decree of that Court, and could then be put in force against the debtor. This was only a proceeding consonant with common sense and in relief of the debtor, who, but for this enactment, would have to be sued again in the country where he resided, a proceeding which would be attended with additional expense to him. Hon. Members had drawn attention to the power the Bill gave to the Judges to make Rules. He thought much might be said on the subject. A delegation to Judges of what ought to be done by Parliament was most objectionable; but the Bill did not give any such power—it merely gave the Judges power to frame Rules for the conduct of the business, a function which was purely Ministerial. As he had said, it was a plain and practical measure, following out previous legislation, in reference to which he had not heard any objection, except what appeared to be founded on misconceptions. As such, he thought it ought to receive the sanction of the House.

Mr. MONK, in reply, said, he had to thank his hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General for Ireland for his clear and able exposition of the Bill. As to what had been said by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Lord Advocate, he (Mr. Monk) would point out that a man might obtain judgment for £1,000 in a County Court in Scotland, and that judgment would be valid only in Scotland, and not in England or Ireland. But if he were to obtain judgment for merely £50 in a Superior Court in Scotland, that judgment would be valid in England and Ireland. Surely that discrepancy was an injustice which ought to be remedied. If the fears of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, however, were at all well-grounded, he (Mr. Monk) would have no objection, after the second reading, to introduce any safeguards that might be deemed necessary.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Main Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Friday.*

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT (1881) AMENDMENT (No. 3) BILL.

(*Mr. Findlater, Mr. Givan, Mr. P. J. Smyth, Mr. Thomas Dickson.*)

[BILL 48.] SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. FINDLATER, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, it was a very short and simple Bill, and its object was, if possible, to remove the present congestion of business which undoubtedly existed in the Land Court by enabling fair rents to be settled and ascertained without the necessity of continuing adverse proceedings between landlord and tenant. He thought everyone would admit if that could be done in a simple manner it would be extremely satisfactory to the people of Ireland, and he thought the manner suggested by the Bill was extremely simple and satisfactory. It appeared by the last Return, dated the 24th of February, that there were 72,408 applications to the Court to fix fair rents, and that up to that period only 3,206 cases had been disposed of, exclusive of 2,180 cases settled by agreement. At the rate of progress which was now going on, there was not much chance for a considerable space of time of the rest of the cases being decided; therefore it was obvious that some facilitating progress was required, and it would be supplied in this way. The Bill proposed that when an originating notice had been lodged, instead of proceeding with the hearing of the case as a contentious matter likely to excite bad feeling between landlord and tenant, the Court should, *proprio motu*, send down two valuers to value the property and ascertain what would be a fair rent; notices should be given to both the landlord and the tenant of the attendance of the valuers, and also of the amount of valuation when it had been returned into Court. Then, if neither party objected within one month, the valuers' award should be accepted by the Commissioners, and fixed as a judicial rent. That would be equivalent to a settlement out of Court, without the necessity of any negotiations between the parties. He believed this method would be largely availed of, and that both landlords and tenants would have confidence in it. The Bill also proposed to make the Purchase Clauses of the Land Act of 1881 more operative than they were at present by removing an obstacle in the sale of an estate held by a tenant for life. At present the proceeds must be invested in Three per Cent Stock, which reduced the amount of income. The Bill would enable a valuation to be made of the interest of the tenant for life, and then the tenant for life should either receive the amount, or it might be invested in Government or India Stock, or in Bank of Ireland Stock, which would produce a larger income. These provisions were very easily understood, and he hoped the Bill would be assented to by the Government, so that it might be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Findlater.*)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, as it would be impossible for the Government to accept the Bill, it would be impossible to let it proceed to a second reading. The object of the Bill appeared to him to be this—that whereas cases might now be heard judicially in one way, or, by the consent of the parties, disposed of in another way out of Court, the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Findlater) proposed to establish a third method, under which valuers were to go down and make a report which would dispose of the case. It appeared to him that if this were adopted, all agreements out of Court would be at once put an end to, whilst judicial action would be postponed, and an unnecessary step would be added to the action of the Court. The present mode of settlement by consent was very simple, and consisted in the appointment of one valuer by the landlord and another by the tenant. He would call attention to a case that occurred the other day of a large property in the South of Cork, in which the two valuers having taken three days to make their valuation, the whole matter as between landlord and tenant was settled in three hours, except with regard to 10 tenants, who were remitted to an umpire appointed by the valuers. It was undesirable to discourage that process of settlement by a new one, and the object was to keep up a good feeling as far as possible. As to the proposed dealing with the Purchase Clauses, it was wholly insufficient; and on these grounds he asked the House to reject the Bill.

MR. PLUNKET said, he would not take part in the controversy between the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Findlater) and the Government. But any arrangement which would have the effect of mitigating the delay and expenses of the present system of procedure in the Land Court, and of facilitating the operation of the Purchase Clauses would certainly have his support. Whatever else might be said for or against the working of the Act, there could be no doubt that the expenses it entailed were out of all proportion to any good it could possibly do. On the one hand the tenants were involved in a very considerable expense, and on the other hand the landlords were actually getting their backs broken by the expense of litigating these questions in the Land Court. He heard from landlords every day who said that almost the worst effect of the Act was the frightful cost it entailed. As to the working of the Purchase Clauses of the Land Act, they were positively paralyzed, and had no effect at all. It was quite certain that they were, so far, wholly inoperative, and yet they were to his mind the most important by far, for they were the only part of the Act which was at all likely to put an end to the unfortunate controversy between landlord and tenant. Therefore, if he could only see that this Bill would facilitate the working of these clauses, and would cut down the expenses of the present procedure, he should be very glad to support it. However, after the answer of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland, it seemed almost useless to proceed with the consideration of the measure. He would impress upon the Government the necessity of putting an end to the consequences which indirectly followed from the operation of the Land Act, in putting large sums of money into the pockets of the lawyers, accumulating costs against both landlord and tenant, further embittering the relations between them, and making them less hopeful than ever that they would ever get out of this apparently endless litigation.

MAJOR O'BEIRNE said, he could corroborate, in some measure, what had fallen from the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the University of Dublin (Mr. Plunket). He (Major O'Beirne) was one of those who voted for the Land Act; but he never would have done so if he had thought it would be worked as it was at present. In fact, he considered the manner in which the Act was worked was simply a deception and a fraud, and numerous speeches of the Prime Minister could be quoted in support of that opinion. No one supposed for a moment, when it was passed, that the enormous expense was to be thrown upon the landlords of valuing their own property. That was an expense which ought to be borne by the Government itself, and in that way the working of the Land Act had been most unjust. It had been most unjust to the tenants also, for in one case which had been quoted by the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) in the papers that morning a tenant, in order to get a reduction of £4 in his rent, had to pay £105 to the lawyers. That case alone showed the utter absurdity of the Land Act as it was at present. He would be very glad, indeed, to give his support to the Bill if he could see any chance of the controversy being carried on to that length.

MR. J. N. RICHARDSON said, that although he could not sympathize with much that had fallen from either of the last two speakers, inasmuch as he believed the Land Act contained germs of great benefit to the people of Ireland as regarded both landlords and tenants, yet he was quite prepared to support the measure of amendment which was now before the House. He did not know if his hon. Friend (Mr. Findlater) intended to divide the House; but, if he did, he (Mr. Richardson) should certainly follow him into the Lobby. Not that he believed exactly that the means which his hon. Friend advocated were the best for facilitating the operation of the Act; but he wished to record the strong feeling he entertained that something must be done beyond what was being done to quicken the hearing of the cases before the Commission. In the county which he had the honour to represent—Armagh—there were 5,000 cases awaiting hearing, and in Tyrone there were more than that number; making about 11,000 cases for the two counties. There was only one Sub-Commission for hearing those cases, and when they were to be heard Heaven only knew. In the meantime, the relations between landlord and tenant in Ireland were, to a certain extent, strained. The other night he put a Question on the Paper, asking the Government if any increased facilities would be given for hearing the number of cases which clogged the Courts in Armagh and Tyrone, and the answer he received was not very satisfactory.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, the subject of expediting the hearing of the cases was, he believed, engaging the attention of the Land Commission.

MR. J. N. RICHARDSON, resuming, said, that the House was very well aware of the enormous amount of business which had fallen upon the Land Commission, and he should not feel it right to be severely critical either upon those gentlemen or on the Government; but he did impress on the Government, in the most respectful way, the feeling that he entertained, and which was brought before him every day in letters from his constituents, that something must be done to reduce the block.

MR. SYNAN said, it appeared to him to be evident that this Bill was only an Ulster balloon sent up in order to see whether the Government would accept any amendment of the Act or not. [MR. FINDLATER: No, it is not.] Well, the hon. Member who had just sat down (Mr. Richardson) said that if his hon. Friend (Mr. Findlater) wished to go into the Lobby, he would go with him; but he (Mr. Synan) doubted very much whether the hon. Member for Monaghan intended to go into the Lobby at all. What was the objection of the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland to the Bill? Only that it would interfere with the arrangements between landlord and tenant. How would it interfere? If the landlord and tenant voluntarily arranged to arbitrate, their arrangement was taken by the Court as final. If they had not so arranged, the Court was simply to adopt a cheap mode of fixing the value of the farm; and then, if the landlord or tenant did not object, that value would be made a rule of the Court. It would be a part of the judicial proceedings of the Court; but if the landlord or tenant did object, then they would go into the Court and prove their objection. Surely that would not interfere with any voluntary arrangement, and he thought it was not a bad method of dealing with the congestion of business. What he wanted to know was whether the Government intended to keep up the present congestion in the Court or not? Did they mean to tell the House that, whereas the Act required that the rents of Ireland should be re-valued in 14 years, as a matter of fact, it could not be done in 30 years? If not, they must adopt some method of coping with it; and if this method was not sufficient, let them point out one which would be sufficient, or let them amend the proposal in Committee. He thought it was much better to have two valuers than two Sub-Commissioners, who simply made a flying visit to the farm, and valued it as they would a cheese, by simply putting a stick into it, and then went away within half-an-hour. Surely it was much better to have competent valuers; and he had been astonished the first moment that the Act came into operation to find that the farms were not being valued by competent valuers. Independent valuers were much better fitted for the work than men having judicial authority, who were exposed to the influence either of the Government or of the landlords. For his own part, the result of the discussion was almost a matter of indifference, for if a division was forced upon the Ulster Members after the opposition of the Government, he should not be surprised to see them go into the Lobby against their own Bill.

MR. WILLIS said, that as an English Member he cordially supported the Bill, because he believed it would not only not interfere with, but would aid, the working of the Land Act, and would diminish litigation and its cost. He was sorry that the subject was discussed with reference to the manner in which the Land Act was passed, and that the epithets of deception and fraud were used, because there was no foundation for them, for it was not supposed at the time of the passing of that measure that the cost of litigation would be anything like so great as it had proved to be. It appeared to him that two valuers, appointed under the Land Act, would enable both landlord and tenant to abstain from the employment of lawyers until after their report had been made, and he thought those valuers should be paid by the country, and not by the suitors. He supported this measure because he believed it would be to the interest of England as well as Ireland that the Land Act should become generally operative, and he should be glad now to support any measure by which the value of the farms could be determined without the employment of lawyers. He trusted that the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Findlater) would press his Bill to a division. If so, he (Mr. Willis) should vote with him, because it would be one step towards relieving the Courts and providing a cheap method of determining fair rents.

MR. O'SHEA said, the working of the Act so far had been a great disappointment to the tenant farmers in the county Clare, who understood that official valuers would be appointed. He had spoken with many of them, and they objected to a partly perambulating tribunal, some members of which went about valuing land on their own account. He thought the Commission ought to sit permanently in the towns, and take the advice of qualified professional men as to the value of the property with which they were dealing. The appointment of valuers ought to be for a certain number of years, because, in order to keep men impartial, they must have a considerable tenure of their places. He was extremely sorry to find that the Bill was brought in more as a matter of form than with the view of passing it.

MR. FINDLATER: That is not my intention. I purpose dividing upon the Bill.

MR. O'SHEA was very glad to hear that. However, it would be very advantageous to know whether the Government intended to bring in a Bill this year for the amendment of the Act, because there was a most important point upon which the Act ought to be amended, and that was with regard to arrears. The whole advantage of the Act would be lost to a great part of the Irish tenants, unless the Government took clearly into view the fact that the Arrears Clause had hitherto been of no use whatever. When Parliament passed that clause, it was distinctly laid down that tenants in arrear should have as much right as any others to consideration under the Bill. That principle ought now to be carried out, and some means ought to be devised which would give an inducement to landlords to settle. There was no doubt some temptation must be offered if they were to have any finality in this Act as a remedial measure. There was another point to which he wished to call the attention of the House—namely, that the provisions for making loans to tenants were greatly hindered by the limitation of farms to £100 value. There were a great number of improving, steady tenants, who would be very glad to take advantage of these provisions, but the valuation of their farms was not sufficient to make them eligible. Only the other day he put before the Treasury the case of a man who had more than one farm, neither of which was in itself sufficiently large to entitle him to a loan, whereas, put together, they exceeded the valuation, and yet he was refused a loan. Instead of laying down a hard-and-fast rule, shutting out thousands of industrious and solvent tenants by reason of a small deficiency in the amount of their rents, all cases of the sort he had instanced ought to be considered on their merits, not only carefully, but rapidly, because, if they were going to have the advantages which they were led to expect from the Bill, time was an essential element. Any Bill of the kind now before the House, which went in the direction of amending the Act, as experience proved it ought to be amended, was worthy of support.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he would not follow the last speaker (Mr. O'Shea) into the question of arrears or advances to tenants, because they were outside the scope of the Bill. With regard to the actual measure before the House, he understood hon. Members who supported it to say they thought it very desirable to remove the congestion in the Land Court, and that any change which would have that tendency would be a decided improvement. He did not, in fact it was impossible to, deny that there was a very large number of cases before the Land Courts, and that no very large proportion had yet been settled; but there were one or two facts to be considered. In the first place, the number of cases which had been disposed of recently had been greater in proportion than it was before; and, unless his information misled him, the number of cases settled out of Court was very much increasing. He did not think that, at the present, they were in a condition to know how far the congestion of business would continue, or to what extent it would exist in two or three months hence. He submitted to the House, therefore, that it would be a serious matter to take such a step as that of accepting the second reading of the Bill, which would induce parties interested in Ireland to expect a change in the procedure which was very carefully sanctioned last year, and they ought not to take any such step unless they were quite clear that the change would be for the better. The question of valuers was discussed last year, and the House came to a decision against appointing valuers in connection with every Sub-Commission. [Mr. Synan: The Court has power under the Act to appoint valuers.] His hon. Friend would find, if he referred to the Act, that it was a question whether the Sub-Commissioners or valuers were to inspect the farms, and that question had been decided against the valuers. In order to get over the difficulty, the hon. and learned Member for Colchester (Mr. Willis) had proposed that there should be two valuers; but if the method now proposed were carried out, the number would be more likely 200. [Mr. Willis: I mean 200, if they are necessary.] In that case, if the Bill were to pass, he thought he should have to ask for the assistance of his hon. and learned Friend to help the Land Commission to find valuers, for that would not be a very easy thing to do. But there was this great doubt about the proposal. He was by no means clear that the proposal would not be simply to add another stage to the litigation under the Act, and that would make things not better, but worse. If the House, while agreeing that there should be valuers, should also insure the acceptance of the decisions of the valuers, then there would be no great ground for the objection; but he thought there was very little ground for believing that the decisions of the valuers would be accepted. Again, it was not at all clear that the two valuers would agree together, and their disagreement would necessitate the appointment of a third as umpire. He did not deny that the working of the Act required the closest attention on the part of the Government and of Parliament; but he did not think they were in a position to make any change. If the hon. Member for Monaghan (Mr. Findlater) pressed his Bill that day, the Government would certainly be obliged to vote against it, because the reading the Bill a second time would be to excite expectations in Ireland of a change which would be very undesirable. He would suggest that it would be as well to adjourn the debate; but, in saying that, he did not wish to create any false impression. He did not say that two or three months hence the Government would accept the Bill. What he meant was that if the congestion in the Courts increased, or did not considerably diminish, undoubtedly it would be the duty of the Government to look about for a proposal to deal with the difficulty; and, without saying they would accept it, he would be sorry that the proposal of his hon. Friend should be shut out.

MR. J. LOWTHER said, he thought the announcement which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. W. E. Forster) had just made had taken the House somewhat by surprise. The right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. W. M. Johnson), a few moments ago, had given two, and to his (Mr. J. Lowther's) mind very convincing, reasons why the House should not consent to the second reading of the Bill, and a good deal had apparently happened in the meantime. The hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. Synan) threw out the suggestion that the promoters of the Bill were not in earnest, and that in the event of its not receiving the support of the Government it would not be persevered with. It appeared that, whether or not the promoters were in earnest, Her Majesty's Government had not yet made up their minds. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had, however, made one very considerable advance since the discussion from which he was conspicuously absent the other day, for he said the working of the Land Act required, in his opinion, "the closest attention on the part of the Government," and, he was good enough to add, "of Parliament;" but the close attention of Parliament had been expressly repudiated by Her Majesty's Government. [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] The Prime Minister shook his head; but he (Mr. J. Lowther) would remind the House that this discussion occupied a fortnight of the attention of Parliament, and much time was engaged in discussing the proposal brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman, upon the expressly-stated ground that any inquiry at the hands of Parliament was unnecessary and inexpedient. He (Mr. J. Lowther) was glad to find that the result of that important discussion had not been without effect on the minds of Her Majesty's Government; but there were other lessons which the House might draw from the discussion which had taken place that afternoon. He was sorry the Prime Minister was not in the House when he might have heard the candid opinion expressed as to the merits of this great so-called "remedial Act" by the hon. and gallant Member for Leitrim (Major O'Beirne). The views of any hon. Member sitting in that part of the House, or the views of any Irish Member who acted independently, would, he was well aware, carry no great weight with the right hon. Gentleman; but his (Mr. J. Lowther's) impression was that the hon. and gallant Member for Leitrim was classed amongst those who were the habitual Supporters of Her Majesty's Government. And what were his opinions as to the Act of Parliament which had been in operation now for some months, and from the working of which such great expectations were entertained? He said, first of all, that the Act was passed by deception and fraud. He (Mr. J. Lowther) would venture to say nothing of the sort, for if he did, he did not know but that some right hon. Gentleman on the opposite Bench might call the Speaker's attention to the matter, and would ask whether the law of the land ought to be spoken of in any such terms, or whether the action of the

Government and their motives should be thus criticized? The hon. and gallant Gentleman went on to speak of some of the provisions of the Act as "most unjust;" and that was a remark which, if it had emanated from any other part of the House, would have called forth some scathing observations from the Ministerial Bench. Then he went on to speak of the "absurdity of the Act." That was a climax which would have succeeded in arousing the Prime Minister to indignation. He (Mr. J. Lowther) did not make himself responsible for the endorsement of those epithets; but, at the same time, he was not prepared to occupy the time of the House by refuting them. The hon. Gentleman the Mover of the Bill (Mr. Findlater) had pointed out that there was a complete block in the Land Court, and the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland himself admitted that the progress of business in that Court was not eminently satisfactory, and said that close attention thereto on the part of Parliament was desirable. Now, the right hon. and learned Attorney General for Ireland, in the reasons which he urged against the Bill, omitted to mention one very strong one—namely, that these valuers were to be appointed by the Land Commission; and he (Mr. J. Lowther) emphatically said the impartiality of that Land Commission had not been clearly demonstrated. The Land Commission was a tribunal constituted in a singularly one-sided Party manner; and he thought it did not commend itself to those whose interests were affected, that the two valuators to decide between the contending parties should not be nominated one by each of the contending parties, as was the case elsewhere, and that they should appoint an umpire to decide between them, instead of the indefensible plan that both should be appointed by a tribunal which had certainly not proved itself to be, as the Prime Minister would say in relation to certain other bodies, "wholly devoid of prejudice or bias." When the proposal was made that a fair and impartial Parliamentary inquiry should be made into the whole working of the Land Act, they were told by Her Majesty's Government that it was inexpedient, and that they could not entertain it, although, as he mentioned just now, it was a matter of satisfaction that the education of the Government with regard to that subject was proceeding at a very rapid rate. But what reason had the Chief Secretary for Ireland given for throwing over his Law Officers and adjourning this discussion? He asked that the House should adjourn this discussion; but what reason did he give? They thought that something might occur in the meantime which would throw light upon the situation. He (Mr. J. Lowther) thought the Government were bound to state clearly whether, in their opinion, any amendment of the law was required. If an amendment of the law was needed, that amendment should be introduced by Her Majesty's Government, they having formally undertaken to deal with the question of the Land Laws in Ireland, and they should not delegate to a private Member, however intimately he might be connected with their Party, the duty of remedying the transparent and glaring defects in the Act which should be undertaken by themselves. That the Act had completely collapsed, and that the proceedings of the Land Court were generally repudiated, not merely by one class of the Irish people, but by all classes and interests in the community, was evidenced by these discussions, and must, he thought, make manifest to the Government, as many Representatives of every political Party in Ireland had pointed out, that there were very serious hindrances and evils in the present system. They had had Representatives of the landlords denouncing the block of Business, and in many cases the gross injustice of the tribunals appointed by the Government. Members representing the Irish interests below the Gangway on this side of the House had not been at all remiss in the force of their argument. They had pointed out the defects from their point of view, which, of course, differed wholly from his (Mr. J. Lowther's.) [Mr. GLADSTONE made an observation which was inaudible.] He (Mr. J. Lowther), unfortunately, was unable to catch the remark of the right hon. Gentleman, which he concluded must have been to the effect that a general consensus of opinion throughout all classes, sections, and interests in Ireland had distinctly pronounced itself against the measure of last year. However, the House was clearly entitled to a definite expression of the opinions of Her Majesty's Government, as to whether they were prepared either to support or oppose the second reading of the Bill.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY, in rising to move the adjournment of the debate, said, he did not desire to force the Government to any premature decision upon the question under consideration, neither would he enter into the debatable matter which had been spoken of by the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. J. Lowther). He thought that circumstances were far too serious for them to make this a matter of Party politics; but he was sure they could only regret from what they heard that the right hon. Gentleman was not a Member of the House when the Land Law (Ireland) Bill passed into the Statute Book, as he might have contributed his valuable assistance in aid of that operation. There was a desire to settle this debatable question in a way that would be conducive to the tranquillity of the government of the country; and, in his opinion, it would be a very serious matter if his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland were to fall behind the real meaning of the words that fell from him just now. He spoke of an improvement taking place in Ireland in the direction of the working of the Land Act within the last two or three months, and said that if an improvement did not take place, he should feel it his duty to consider the whole position of affairs. Now, he (Mr. Mitchell Henry) had always held that his right hon. Friend had been a great deal too sanguine in his views about Irish affairs. Ireland was very much like a patient whom the doctor assured was always improving, but in the end the patient died of good symptoms. That, he thought, was very much the state of Ireland now. He had rather see the right hon. Gentleman boldly grapple with the situation as it existed, and say either he believed that nothing more was necessary, or that he would set his mind to remedy the great evils that existed. No one could doubt that the Act was not working in the way that Ireland expected, that the Courts were blocked, and nobody could hope that anything in the shape of a real clearance of that block could be made for a great length of time. He ventured to say the Bill before them was, as a rule, simply reverting to the original intention of Parliament in passing the Act at all. The right hon. Gentleman, in his opinion, fell into one tremendous mistake when he came to carry out this Act. He fell into that legal abyss which existed in Dublin with open mouth and ravening jaw ready to convert everything into the benefit of the Legal Profession. He (Mr. Mitchell Henry) had repeatedly pointed out during the passing of the Act through Parliament that the endeavour should be, not to make the Bill a matter of legal administration, but rather to make the Courts Courts of Conciliation; and over and over again he urged that, in the appointments, persons should be chosen who would go about in different parts of the country to different estates with note-book in hand and without legal records or paraphernalia of any kind, and endeavour to reconcile the differences between landlords and tenants as to their rents. Instead of that, what was done was this — Immediately, a number of Courts, with barristers and attorneys at the head of them, were constituted and sent through Ireland, every one of them——

MR. SPEAKER: I have to point out to the hon. Member that the question before the House does not touch the Land Act of last Session, and I must ask the hon. Member to keep to the question before the House.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY said, the object of the House was to appoint arbitrators to stand between the landlords and the tenants, and he was endeavouring to show that the Bill was only reverting to the original intention of the Act. In the most ridiculous reductions, say, a reduction of £2, the cost to the tenant was an enormous sum; and that arose entirely from the mode in which the Act was carried out. It was never intended that Sub-Commissions should be appointed of three persons to go round the country, and that these were to sit like Judges of Assizes to determine trumpery questions as to the value of land. The only persons who had benefited by the Act were the Legal Profession and the amateur valuators. Ireland was inundated with amateur valuators, who went about the country, telling the tenants that they would be sure, if they would only allow them to value their lands, to get a reduction of their rents. They were levying upon those poor ignorant creatures a fine of 1*s.* in the pound, and people who knew nothing whatever about land, some of whom were publicans, and others broken-down persons not very scrupulous in their ways, were extracting from the people hundreds and hundreds of pounds. If the Government were to appoint reputable men as valuers, they might expect some improvement to be made. His right hon. Friend evidently thought much good would be done by the Act, and he (Mr. Mitchell Henry) went with him some way in that direction; but he believed more good would be done if hon. Gentlemen would agree to take the opinions of those Irish Members who were anxious for the tranquillity of the country, and not of those who supposed the only wisdom to be found was amongst the permanent officials of the Government, who had the management of the country from first to last, and who had advised the right hon. Gentleman to make this Act a matter of legal Courts and expensive processes.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, it was not a matter in which there was any necessity for consulting them.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY supposed, then, the right hon. Gentleman excogitated his own method of procedure and consulted nobody. He could not for the life of him see how this Act would work at all. The right hon. Gentleman had not been remarkable for paying any attention to the wishes of those who were anxious for the tranquillity of Ireland. He (Mr. Mitchell Henry) found himself in the greatest difficulty in making any suggestions. ["Oh, oh!"] He knew it was very disagreeable to hon. Members who thought everything the Government did was right; but the question was of the country in which he lived, and he knew the condition in which it was now, and what it was likely to be. Unless something was done immediately, and unless a totally different view was taken of the circumstances, Ireland would get from bad to worse. He therefore took this opportunity of declaring that as his opinion —and he did so on his responsibility as a Member of Parliament, quite regardless whether that opinion was agreeable or disagreeable—because he believed it to be true. He hoped, therefore, the right hon. Gentleman would reconsider this Bill; and he believed, even now, if the Government appointed a number of really well-disposed men—men of experience—to go round about amongst the tenants as arbitrators, where tenants were willing to accept their services, a great impetus might be given to the working of the Land Act. But as long as they relied upon attorneys and barristers, on pleading and expenses, that could not be expected. He had just received a letter, which had also appeared in the papers, in which he was informed that nearly £300 had been expended with the result of reducing a rental by £3 or £4. He could hardly stop to speak of some of the things that had been done in Connemara—how many persons had gone from there, and how many were starving on the hillsides who had been ejected from their homes, and how there was no more chance of their benefiting by the Courts than there was 10 years ago. This matter of arbitration was urgent. Then the evictions must be dealt with; and, thirdly, some means must be adopted for disposing of the question of arrears, which the tenants could not pay, and which the landlords could not do without. Unless these things were attended to, the troubles of Ireland would continue unabated, and undoubtedly they would get no benefit whatever from the working of the Land Act. He begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Mr. Mitchell Henry.*)

Mr. MACARTNEY asked, whether it was originally intended that the Commission appointed to carry out the Land Act should appoint deputies to administer it throughout Ireland? That was one of the things he had strongly objected to in the first instance, and yet it was now proposed that these deputies should have deputies, who should do the work in their places. It was quite evident that if valuers were appointed in every county in Ireland to value the property, and if it was to be optional, in the first place, for the landlords and the tenants to adopt their valuations as a basis of agreement for 15 years, the other parties would go to the Land Court for the purpose of having the cases decided, and their valuators would be the arbitrators of the land. He did not know what would be the effect if that conclusion were carried out. If the Government were going in any way to agree to have land valued by Government officials, in Heaven's name let them have a valuation over 15 years, as Griffith's valuation was. But if they were going to have a helter-skelter method of two men here and there, whether those men had any education or not, they would have the same kind of criticism as they had now about the Sub-Commissioners, asking who they were, where they came from, and what title they had to be rulers of the destinies of the Land Question in Ireland? He thought that after the Bill was passed so short a time ago as last year, and if there was an objection against having a question asked, either by that House or by the House of Lords, as to the working of the Bill, it was really a little too soon to have the whole thing upset by making a new arrangement.

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, the discussion appears to me to have wandered from that which is before us. The question before the House appears to me to be one confined in narrow and reasonable limits by the hon. Gentleman the Mover of the Bill (Mr. Findlater), and by the general sense of the House. It is not a question of inquiring into the operations of the Land Act; it is not a question of how we are to deal with the Law of Eviction or the Law of Arrears, or whether we are to attempt to reform the processes of law altogether, or to lay down a legal system to increase the ease and facility with which voluntary arrangements may be made. These are all very large questions, but they are not the questions before the House. The question before the House is whether the time has come when it is necessary to attempt to introduce an improvement into the machinery, or to adopt an extension of the machinery provided to give effect to the Land Act, in consequence of the vast mass of business which has arisen for the Courts to transact, in comparison with that which they have transacted? That is not, I think, an unfair statement of the case. Of course, it is not to be expected that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther), who has come back fresh after a short recess of liberty, should not avail himself of his opportunity to prosecute his great design of casting opprobrium on the Land Act, especially when he had such a godsend presented to him as that of a speech for the first time on this side of the House indicating an opinion that the interests of landlords were being unjustly dealt with. I feel too much respect for the right hon Gentleman to expect from him such self-denial as that he should forbear making such a declaration as he has. The right hon Gentleman again avowed his hostility to the Land Act, and avowed that hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on that side of the House were likewise not remiss in the duty of discrediting and endeavouring to destroy it; but, as the right hon. Gentleman said, they acted from a different point of view. I made an observation to my right hon. Friend (Mr. Forster), and in order that the right hon. Gentleman's curiosity may not remain unsatisfied, I will now venture to say what that observation was. It was that the fact of a great difference in point of view between hon. Gentlemen who sit above the Gangway and hon. Gentlemen who sit below the Gangway did not appear to me to constitute any great obstacle to tolerably hearty and frequent co-operation. However, the right hon. Gentleman made a substantive proposition in his speech, with which I agree. He stated that this is a matter for the responsibility of Government. In that I quite agree, not meaning thereby exclusively the Executive responsibility of the Government, but meaning that it is the duty of the Government to provide, as they may believe to be best with the powers at their command, proper machinery for giving effect to the Act, and in case the powers were insufficient it is their duty to come to Parliament and ask for further powers. The Motion just made by my hon. Friend the Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry) is in conformity with an invitation, if not a suggestion, in the speech of my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland. We are of opinion that it would be highly advantageous not to pronounce an opinion which would perhaps seem to have the effect of rejecting a Bill of this kind, and to pronounce on the 15th March in this year 1882, that it is quite clear that the machinery of the Act will require no legislative addition. We do not wish to pronounce an opinion upon that at this date. We would much rather that the question stand over. We fully admit that it is the duty of the Government to pronounce a responsible judgment, in the first instance, upon that question at the proper time; but the question is, What is the proper time? There will also be the further question, What is the proper addition to make to the machinery, if an addition should be made? Now, with regard to time, the House will not fail to observe that there has been, although the congestion of business may still be said to continue, yet there has been a very considerable acceleration in the practical proceedings of the Courts—that the Return for the month of February is, in fact, quite a different Return as to the quantity of ground covered from the Returns that had preceded it, and we wish to see yet for a certain time longer what the real powers of the Courts are before considering the question whether any new mode of action should be provided for the machinery in order to cope more effectually with the great duty devolving upon them. Therefore, my suggestion would be that we should support the Motion of my hon. Friend. And if I am asked what I mean by this adjournment, and if the Government is to be the Mover of the Bill after an adjournment of, say, a couple of months, or whether the Government will leave the Mover of the Bill to take his chance, in the still more congested Business of this House, for raising the question?—my answer is, I do not mean, in acceding to the proposition for adjournment, that the Government should take up the Bill, but that at or about that time it would be our duty to give a statement of the view of the course it were best to take with regard to this machinery. Criticisms have been made as if the Commissioners have done something extraneous from the Act, or something apart from the views with which the Act was passed by Parliament. It has been suggested by some that the three gentlemen whose names were inserted in the Act ought to have conducted personally the whole business arising under the Act, and that there has been some virtual contravention of the intention of Parliament in appointing a large number of Sub-Commissioners, who have gone over the country and attended to the cases to the best of their ability. But, on the one hand, it is quite clear that no man could prophecy at the time when the Act passed what would be the actual and exact amount of business before the Court, and it is equally clear, I think, that every reasonable man must have foreseen that at least it might happen that a large amount of business might come before the Court; and that, if so, it was quite inevitable that a very large number of Sub-Commissioners must be appointed, and that the principal Commission could discharge only a very small proportion of that business. Therefore, I must hold that my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the Lord Lieutenant have simply performed the duty which it was obvious for them to perform in the appointment of these Sub-Commissioners, and that they have endeavoured to constitute these Courts in the very way Parliament meant them to be constituted. That is to say, that whilst they should be in substance and in operation Courts of Justice, acting solely under judicial motives and considerations, whilst we clearly approve of the intention of Parliament, yet, on the other hand, they should have among them a number of members who should be competent to deal practically with agricultural questions, and on that account they would be able to transact the business more rapidly, more easily, more cheaply, and more effectually than if the Court had been composed almost altogether of professional persons. That was the reason why Parliament seemed so little disposed to give any practical share of its confidence to the Bill Courts of Ireland; and I think I remember exerting myself considerably to be able to keep for the Civil Bill Courts as an alternative the place which they now have in the Act. My right hon. Friend, then, in asking for an adjournment, has most justly and necessarily reserved the freedom of judgment of the Government; while Parliament, of course, will reserve its own freedom with respect to the nature of the amendment which may have or may not have to be made in the machinery of the Act. It may be our duty to consider in the interval, if the debate be adjourned, whether we ought not still further to enlarge the machinery that is now at work by some further appointments. With respect to the method suggested by my hon. Friend the Mover of this Bill to appoint valuators, I at once recognize the perfect uprightness, in the Parliamentary sense, of the intention of my hon. Friend, which is directed to forwarding, and not to altering, the Act; but, at the same time, the hon. Gentleman has originated a very great difficulty in the method of proceeding that is suggested. One has to consider in what way this Bill, if it were carried, would work; and my hon. Friend who has just sat down (Mr. Macartney) has pointed to considerations in that direction that are, in my opinion, of very great weight. The question at once arises, Are we to appoint and select with great care a very limited number of valuators, upon whose authority implicit reliance could be placed, and if we select that necessarily very limited number, how are we to suppose that some of them will always be forthcoming in every suit to conduct the initiatory process? We may get into the same difficulty with regard to an adequate number of competent valuators that we seem now to be in with regard to the number of Courts as compared with the work they have to do. And there is another consideration. You must observe that these valuators, in order to give them confidence, would require to be appointed for a term of years. My hon. and learned Friend the Member for Colchester (Mr. Willis) seemed to allude to the appointment of two valuators, and it was suggested that it was more likely to be 200, and my hon. and learned Friend said he was quite ready for 200 valuators. Well, before a Bill of this kind is passed, it would be well to understand whether we should appoint 200 valuators in Ireland, and each of them for a term of years, to obtain and to give confidence to the parties. I only say this in reserving to ourselves freedom, and not as implying that there is any foregone conclusion absolutely adverse to the ideas which are embodied in the measure. Our meaning is that, recognizing the necessity of considering carefully the question whether it may be necessary or not—upon that I do not at all give an opinion—to have any extension of machinery under the Land Act during the present year, that at any rate the time has not yet arrived, and therefore we hope that the House will be disposed to accede to the Motion which has been made to adjourn the debate.

COLONEL NOLAN, in supporting the Bill, said, that if there were to be Land Courts at all, they ought to work speedily; and the question concerning the valuators was, whether they would proceed at a quicker rate than the present Courts? In his opinion it was quite likely. As the present Court was composed of legal and non-legal members, carrying out the judicial work with the work of valuation, the one had to wait upon the other, and considerable delays were inevitable. The consequence was that a dead-lock ensued, for the legal members of the Court were doing nothing, while the others were going round and valuing the farms. He would suggest that the valuators to be appointed by the Bill should value whole lots of land together; and he believed if that were carried out, it would facilitate the valuation of large districts, and the result of that would be that ten times the number of cases would be settled out of Court. It would supply the defect in the machinery of the Land Act, and winnow the uncontested from the litigated cases, thus expediting the settlement of the country and doing injury to none but the lawyers. It was perfectly impossible that Ireland could prosper or get rich in the present condition of affairs, and he earnestly trusted some remedy would be speedily effected.

MR. MULHOLLAND said, he could not quite understand from the Prime Minister's speech the exact object he had in view in adjourning the debate; because, if the Government after a time decided to bring forward a measure for further improving the machinery of the Land Act, he (Mr. Mulholland) did not see why they could not do it equally well if they gave a direct negative to the Motion now before the House. He need hardly say that he was in favour of such a change of procedure as would have the effect of diminishing the excessive costs to which the landlords and tenants were being put in the Land Courts, and also putting an end to the present suspense and anxiety; but in the present Bill it was impossible to find any solution of these matters. In regard to valuation, he thought that if the present Parliament was to fall back upon the principle of valuation suggested, it would be more mischievous than beneficial. If there was to be anything in the shape of valuation in Ireland, it was needless to say that the grearest care should be taken that the valuation should be a just and impartial valuation made by professional men without bias, who would have laws laid down for these valuations. It was said by the Prime Minister when the Land Bill was passing through the House that the Sub-Commissioners should not be mere valuators; but he (Mr. Mulholland) now asked them what it was they really were? It had been confessed by the Commissioners themselves that the evidence which came before them was not very valuable, and that many of the valuations made were mere opinions. He saw where a Sub-Commissioner the other day said the evidence of the tenant was ridiculous, and another Sub-Commissioner said he attached no importance to the evidence of paid valuators. That was clearly not the intention of the Act; and he asked if it was too late to fall back on such a system of valuation as would be both skilled and consistent? The landlord could get no evidence except that of paid valuators, so that if the evidence of the landlord and tenant were disregarded they could only fall back upon their own valuation. He had foreseen from the first that the Sub-Commissioners under the Land Act would be simply valuers, but the suggestion was always repudiated. With respect to the Bill before the House, he quite agreed that the final settlement of the disturbing element in the air of Ireland was more to be looked for in the satisfactory working of the Bright Clauses than any other; but as yet they had been quite imperative. He trusted, however, that as they had been particularly alluded to in the debate, they would receive the consideration of the Prime Minister. He was glad to hear there was a prospect of that part of the Act being revised; but probably the Government were awaiting the result of the inquiry in "another place."

Mr. T. A. DICKSON said, he thought it was a matter beyond dispute that something must be done in regard to the administration of the Land Act, and the Prime Minister, if he understood him rightly, promised him that something should be done when the proper time arrived. Taking into consideration the administration of the Act in a few counties in Ulster, he thought the proper time had arrived when something should be done to facilitate the working of the Act, or else it would be, and would remain in many counties, a dead letter. In one small district in Ireland—that where he resided—there were 1,500 cases entered for the fixing of fair rents. These cases were entered in November last, and up to the present only 23 of them had been decided. The Commission had only sat once in the district to which he referred. In the counties of Tyrone and Armagh, with which he was intimately acquainted, there had been 10,000 cases entered, and only a few hundreds had yet been decided. No matter how speedily the Commissioners did their work, fresh cases would take the place of those settled out of Court; and, at the present rate of progress, it would take seven years for the present staff sitting in Tyrone and Armagh to get over the cases already entered for hearing. He estimated that during that time about 10,000 or 11,000 more cases would be entered for hearing, so that the Commissioners would always be about that number of cases in arrears. Under the present system of working, the benefits of the Land Act could not be extended for six or seven years to tenants in whose interest the measure had been passed. They were all anxious for the restoration of peace and settlement in that country; but that was utterly impossible so long as the benefits of the Land Act were withheld from the people. He advocated the amalgamation of the valuators and the Sub-Commissioners, in order that the tenants might have the advantage of trained and skilled witnesses to give evidence to the Court. The Government might, perhaps, succeed in adjourning the question now, on the ground that it would interfere with the working of the Land Act; but they would yet have the difficulty, and he would suggest that they should, by taking counsel with the Land Commission, see in what way the working of the Land Act could be facilitated and the benefits of the Act conferred upon the people within a reasonable time.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he very much concurred with the observations of the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry). He thought the hon. Member who brought forward the Bill (Mr. Findlater) would have acted better if he had brought forward a Bill which would amend the Land Act in other particulars as well as in those special parts to which reference was made. He (Mr. Biggar) held that the Bill before them would be of no particular value, and that it would not meet the requirements of the case as regarded the fixing of a fair rent. The four hon. Gentlemen whose names were on the back of the Bill were sterling Supporters of the Government, and, by becoming parties to the Bill, they admitted that the Land Act, at any rate with regard to the fixing of a fair rent, had hopelessly broken down. [" No, no ! "] So far as he could see, it was something like treason to the Government to find any fault whatever with the Act of last Session. [Mr. T. A. DICKSON : I never said so.] He did not mean to say that the hon. Member said so ; but that was the contention of the Liberal caucuses of England and of the supporters of the Government in different parts of Ireland. The cases before the Court represented only one-eighth part of the number of tenancies in Ireland, and at the present rate, according to the calculation of the hon. Member for Tyrone, it would take 48 years for all the holdings in Ireland to get a judicial rent fixed. If that was not a very considerable amount of failure he was very much mistaken. The only advantage he saw from the present discussion was the intimation by both right hon. Gentlemen—the Prime Minister and the Chief Secretary for Ireland—that it was possible that at no distant date—in fact, within a couple of months—the Government would review the state of affairs with regard to the Land Act of last Session. He thought that was a very valuable concession. With regard to the present Bill before the House, he did not think it was of much value, except as an expression of opinion of the failure of the Bill of last year. He did not think there would be any practical advantage derived from it, because the valuators would be gentlemen of less social standing than the Sub-Commissioners, and their decisions would have even less value than the decisions of the Sub-Commissioners. Their appointment would be only loss of time. With regard to the Purchase Clauses of this Bill, he did not think that they would have any appreciable advantage with regard to the matter to which they referred. The purchase system was the only one that could settle the Land Question. A deal more of reform was necessary than that proposed in the Bill now before the House, which would have no appreciable effect upon that part of the Act of last Session. He thought that, but for the expression of opinion it contained, the provisions of the present Bill did not meet the case. As the Bill was before them on the second reading, he would vote for it, because, although he did not think it would do any good, it would, were he not to do so, be proclaimed on every Whig platform that himself and other Irish Members sitting on his side of the House did not want any reform, but wanted to keep up the agitation, and would oppose everything except what was proposed by themselves. He did not believe it would do the smallest amount of good; but he would vote in the way he had said for the purpose of saving himself the trouble of defending his own personal conduct hereafter.

MR. LEWIS said, he had no doubt that this was only the commencement of a long series of discussions that they would have on the subject. All he had to say was, that all the remedies he had heard suggested from the other side of the House with reference to the strengthening of the Sub-Commissioners seemed to him to be entirely beside the mark. The real question of increasing the number of Commissioners he thought should be with reference to the full Court of the Commission. It was all very well to send 12 or 20 Sub-Commissioners all over Ireland in the first instance; but the real business, after all, in the shape of final and conclusive re-hearings, was before the full Court in Dublin. He wanted to know whether the suggestions he had heard with reference to the appointment of additional Sub-Commissioners were not really playing with the difficulty? The real point was the strengthening of the Commission trying the cases finally. There could be no advantage in increasing the number of Sub-Commissioners, if that only tended to block up the Court of Appeal. He had expressed the opinion on a former occasion, and it had been found, according to their experience, that the disposal of 500 or 600 cases by the full Commission in the course of the year would be about as great a rate of progress as they could expect. He wanted to know what possibility there was of the Chief Commissioners disposing of the number of cases which were certain to arise upon the books of the Land Commission? He agreed with the hon. Member for Tyrone (Mr. T. A. Dickson), when he stated that in his district it would take seven years for the Sub-Commissioners to dispose of the cases, and he ventured to say that the full Court would not get through these cases for 14 years. They should remember that all the small streams of the Commission flowed into the main channel of the full Court. The discussion to-day was only the beginning of a number of similar discussions. ["Oh, oh!"] He was perfectly certain that such discussions would be endless. They must necessarily progress from day to day, because the Act had been taken up and worked from the wrong end; and that was why they found the country in the dilemma in which it now stood. As he had said over and over again, he believed every one of these so-called remedies was of very little value, because the only way to settle the matter was by turning the occupier into the owner by parchment. Any other way of attempting to solve the question would be only rolling stones up a hill to have them roll down again—only a change of place. The only chance of a permanent settlement of the Irish Question would be to give the go-by to the clauses that were obnoxious to the landlords and the tenants of Ireland, and to take up and endeavour to work to their best advantage, with the greatest and most impartial assistance that the Government could by any possibility devise, those clauses which were found to work well.

Mr. GRAY said, he thought that if the Bill was passed it might do some good; but the really important point in the discussion was, that the Government had at last come to realize, by the mention of some legislation, the fact that the present machinery of the Land Act was not working. Once the Government recognized that, they would see that the principle of the Act was deficient. He (Mr. Gray) desired to see the Act work; but it was evident to everyone that it was not working, and something better than the clauses in the Bill would be necessary to make it work. In fact, if the Act were not entirely re-modelled, it would be useless to expect any good from it. The hon. Member in charge of this Bill (Mr. Findlater) had made a proposal to meet the difficulty, and it was a very sweeping one. His (Mr. Gray's) suggestion, however, would be simply to fix a Governmental valuation, which should be payable pending the fixing of the judicial rent, and if the judicial rent, when fixed, was different, let the difference be paid. That would settle the whole question at once. The Prime Minister, in a remarkable speech made some time ago, stated that there were only two living powers in Ireland—the Land League and the Land Act. He (Mr. Gray) would read a letter to show him how one of these powers—the Land Act—was working, and in order to show the House that until something was done to facilitate the progress of business the Act could not work. He would read a portion of the letter. It was from Kildare, and dated the 13th instant, and was from a reverend gentleman, who at one time was a very warm admirer of the Prime Minister. There were 50 cases listed for hearing at Athy, and the Sub-Commissioners just heard five of the cases, and then adjourned *sine die*. A parishioner of the reverend gentleman's, Mr. Edward Lee, had entered the Land Court, on his advice, to have his rent fixed. He had his solicitor in attendance on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, and he had his barrister, Mr. Adams, and his valuator also in attendance; and on Wednesday at luncheon-time, the Sub-Commissioners adjourned the Court *sine die*, leaving him to continue paying his rack rent, and to pay the £20 costs he had been put to. There were 44 poor tenants left in precisely the same position. The proceedings of this Court were a complete farce, lawyers raising points of law, and Mr. Romney receiving them, and the Court being unable to decide anything. The tenants and those who represented them were indignant at the farce enacted, and at one time there was a proposition to retire from the Court in a body and not attempt to seek redress through that channel. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Who is the letter from?] It was from the Rev. James Cavanagh, parish priest of Kildare, who was well known to the right hon. Gentleman, who had met him. He was at one time President of Carlton College, and was at present parish priest of Kildare. [Mr. GLADSTONE intimated that he knew the reverend gentleman.] The matter should be dealt with in a sweeping manner, as it would be utterly hopeless to meet it otherwise.

Mr. HEALY said, he thought it was strange to find on the back of the Bill the names of four of the staunchest Supporters of the Government. He was equally surprised to find the name of a Gentleman who had stated "that the Land Act of 1881 was a final settlement of the question."

Mr. T. A. DICKSON, interposing, said, he wished to correct the hon. Member, who had several times made that statement. What he (Mr. Dickson) had really said in his election address was that he thought the Land Act was the first instalment of justice.

Mr. HEALY said, the next time he made the statement, which he hoped soon to do, he would show chapter and verse for it from the letter written by the hon. Gentleman to his constituents on the occasion of his election. According to the Bill the Land Commission should have the appointment of the valuators, and they would appoint men like John E. Barrett. What possible advantage would it be to the tenants to have their lands valued for them by gentlemen appointed by the Land Commission? He agreed with the hon. Member for Carlow (Mr. Gray) as to the injustice consequent upon the present working of the Act, which this Bill would not mitigate in the slightest degree. At the same time, as a protest against the existing measure, he would not be prepared to vote against the Bill. He should say that the entire way in which matters were working in Ireland went to prove the great wisdom shown by his hon. Friend the Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell) in the action he took in connection with the Irish Land Question. He considered it most fortunate in regard to this matter that he was arrested by the Government, for if he had not —— [Mr. Warton: Question!] It was the question. If his hon. Friend (Mr. Parnell) had, if he might so term it, been let loose, and the Act had then become discredited, it would have been said that he had discredited it, and the Party who worked with him. If the hon. Member had not been muzzled, and locked up in gaol, and confined with his staunchest supporters —— [*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "Question!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: I must call upon the hon. Member to speak to the Bill before the House.

Mr. HEALY explained that he was only pointing out the defects of the Act of last year, which were proposed to be remedied by this Bill. Temporary measures of this kind were altogether inadequate. The newspapers which had been engaged in pointing out the defects of the Act had been suppressed, and there was no adequate expression from Ireland as to what the real defects of the Land Act were. The gentlemen who would have pointed out these defects had been muzzled. In consequence of that state of things hon. Gentlemen brought in Bills such as the present, thinking that they would remedy the case before there had been any expression of opinion from Ireland as to the working of the Land Act. He did not think the present Bill would be of the smallest service, or mend matters in the least degree, and upon that ground he was not altogether sorry that the Government had taken the step of proposing its postponement. That was perfectly in accordance with their policy in Ireland, which was to let matters drift. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland argued for the postponement of the Bill for two months. In two months' time, he (Mr. Healy) might tell them, the situation in Ireland would be precisely what it was to-day.

Mr. SEXTON said, he could not help feeling that the Land Act was a mass of imperfections. That was disclosed every day by its inability to cope with the situation. The effect of the passing of the Bill would be to create a misleading impression in the minds of the Irish people that the Land Act did not require immediate amendment on very important points, and it was because he was unwilling to lend himself to holding out such a false impression that he should vote against the measure.

Mr. FINDLATER said, he would accept the Motion of the hon. Member for Galway (Mr. Mitchell Henry). With reference to the remarks of the right hon. Gentleman the late Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. J. Lowther), he (Mr. Findlater) wished to say that in bringing in the Bill he was not actuated by any hostility to the Land Act. Indeed, he should distinctly say that he entirely repudiated any intention of the kind, and he must express his regret that the right hon. Gentleman had found it necessary to make such an insinuation.

Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA (who rose amid great interruption) said, he was of opinion that the House ought to decide upon the Bill at once, one way or another, and, so to speak, put it out of pain. It appeared to him that, after the Resolution they came to the other day, questioning the propriety of making even an inquiry into the Land Act, it would be altogether absurd to send a Bill to the Upper House proposing to amend that Act. He should therefore be most happy to vote against the Motion for adjournment; and afterwards, when the Main Question was put, he should also be happy to vote against the Bill. Not that he was disposed to characterize the Bill as "peddling," or, to use a more familiar Parliamentary expression, "tinkering," though he thought there had been scarcely any Bill presented to that House which was more amenable to such an imputation. The Land Act was not working so badly after all, nor was it working so slowly. He himself had some experience of it; he had a tenant who, since the passing of the Act, appealed to the Land Commission to have a judicial rent fixed. Forty-three years ago the rent of his farm was £113 10*s.* 10*d.*; but it was afterwards reduced to £93 10*s.* 10*d.*, and while under that reduction he (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) became the purchaser of the estate 25 years ago. Although the times had improved very much since then, he never raised the rent, but continued the reduction. The tenant, taking advantage of the Act, however, as he had a right to do, came before the Commissioners, who reduced the rent to £75, or £38 10*s.* 10*d.* less than the rent he came in under 43 years ago. Inasmuch as he (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) contributed to the passing of that Act, perhaps as much as any individual Member of a quiet class sitting on that side of the House, he had sufficient good taste not to object to it, when fairly administered, though he felt the effect of it himself; but he wished to ask the Government how they could expect any class in Ireland to be satisfied with that Act out and out, through and through? When the Bill was before the House, he ventured to say that it did not go sufficiently far for the tenant; that, though it took something from the landlord, it did not take enough; and that it did not compensate the landlord for what it proposed to take away. He was then met by hon. Gentlemen opposite saying the Act would take away nothing; but he had some idea of what it would do, though he assured the House that he was not thinking about himself. The Irish people felt that no legislation was safe or was calculated to attract and retain the confidence of the community, unless it was fair on both sides. In his opinion, the only way of arriving at a settlement of the Irish Land Question was by a complete and thorough modification, in a liberal and Imperial spirit, of the Purchase Clauses of the Land Act. He did not say that as a follower of the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), because he had held those opinions long before that hon. Gentleman had expressed them. Fortunately, or unfortunately, however, he (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) had expressed them Constitutionally, and in a mild sort of way, that produced no ill effects, nor any appreciable good. The hon. Member for the City of Cork, however, had expressed his views in a way that produced a very dolorous effect on himself. [Mr. Healy: No, no!] The hon. Member for Wexford said "No, no!" He was glad to hear the hon. Member did not think so.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. Member to address himself to the Chair, and also to the Bill before the House.

Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA said, he could assure the House that he did not rise for the purpose of talking the Bill out, but rather with the object of leaving sufficient time for two divisions upon it. He would, therefore, now leave the matter in the hands of other hon. Members.

Question put.

The House *divided*: — Ayes 171; Noes 86: Majority 85. — (Div. List, No. 48.)

Debate *adjourned* till *Wednesday* 10th May.

MOTIONS.

—:0:—

PATENTS FOR INVENTIONS (NO. 2) BILL.

On Motion of Sir John Lubbock, Bill to amend the Law relating to Patents, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir John Lubbock, Mr. William Henry Smith, and Mr. Compton Lawrance.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 104.]

SCHOOL BOARDS BILL.

On Motion of Mr. REGINALD YORKE, Bill to alter the incidence of the expenses of School Boards and the period for the election of School Boards, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. REGINALD YORKE and Colonel KINGSCOTE.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 103.]

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 16*th March*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*First Reading*—Payment of Wages in Public-houses Prohibition * (41).

Third Reading — Slate Mines (Gunpowder) * (28), and *passed.*

PARLIAMENT—CLAIMS TO VOTE FOR REPRESENTATIVE PEERS FOR IRELAND—STANDING ORDER LXXX.

MOTION.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) moved that Standing Order No. LXXX. be amended by inserting after the words ("admitted by the House of Lords") the following words; viz.,

> ("or by virtue of any Peerage in which the limitations in the Irish Patent, the Petitioner being a Peer of England, Great Britain, or the United Kingdom, shall be the same as the limitations in the Patent in right of which the Petitioner sits in the House of Lords as a Peer of England, Great Britain, or the United Kingdom.")

Motion *agreed to.*

EGYPT — FOREIGN AND EUROPEAN RESIDENTS AND EMPLOYES.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

EARL DE LA WARR asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether there is any objection to laying upon the Table of the House a Return of the number of Foreigners and Europeans in the employment of the Egyptian Government, and of the amount of the salaries which they receive; also any correspondence or information on the subject of exemption from certain taxes enjoyed by foreign residents in Egypt? The noble Earl said, he did not wish upon this question to say anything that might lead to a discussion at this time; but since the financial affairs of Egypt were, to a great extent, under the control and under the regulation of the Anglo-French Agents, he thought it was not unreasonable to ask that the Papers relating to the facts to which he had referred should be laid before Parliament; and, therefore, he hoped that the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs would not see any objection to granting the Returns which he now asked for.

EARL GRANVILLE, in reply, said, that with regard to the first portion of the noble Earl's Question, he had to state that a short time ago instructions were sent to Sir Edward Malet to obtain Returns with reference to the number of Europeans employed in Egypt, with a statement of their salaries. The Government had not yet received any answer, and he was not sure whether he would be able to give full and accurate Returns. If the information should be received, he did not anticipate that there would be any objection to laying it before Parliament. With regard to the second portion of the noble Earl's Question, he might say that about a year ago — namely, in March, 1881 — Her Majesty's Government had some correspondence with the Egyptain Government as to the right of the latter to impose taxes upon foreigners resident in Egypt. That Correspondence was not yet complete; but when it was there would, he believed, be no objection on the part of the Foreign Office to laying it upon the Table.

PAYMENT OF WAGES IN PUBLIC-HOUSES PROHIBITION BILL. [H.L.]

A Bill to prohibit the payment of wages to workmen in public-houses and certain other places—Was *presented* by The Earl STANHOPE; read 1ª. (No. 41.)

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 16*th March*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee* —NAVY ESTIMATES.

Resolutions [March 13] *reported*.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Second Reading*—Turnpike Roads (South Wales)* [101]; Places of Worship Sites* [97].

Committee—Bills of Sale Act (1878) Amendment [8]—R.P.

QUESTIONS.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—ILLEGAL USE OF FIREARMS.

MR. BIGGAR asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If his attention has been drawn to a case decided at Arva Petty Sessions, on the 1st instant, before a Mr. Tanner, J.P. who fined a man named Robert Connolly in the nominal sum of 1*s*. for firing a revolver at a girl named Brady; and, if he intends to remonstrate with the magistrate for what appears to be a miscarriage of justice?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Connolly was summoned to Arva Petty Sessions under the Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland) Act, 1851, section 10, for "discharging a firearm on the public road." The maximum penalty for that offence is 10*s*, and Connolly was fined 1*s*. It is not within the province of the Attorney General to review the judicial action of a magistrate; but, if it was, I see nothing illegal in the present decision.

POST OFFICE—REPLY TELEGRAMS.

MR. ALDERMAN W. LAWRENCE asked the Postmaster General, If he would consider whether it would not be of advantage to the public, and profitable to the Post Office, if a prepaid reply telegram form, available for ten words, were issued on payment of an additional sixpence to the price of a telegram sent?

MR. FAWCETT: I regret to say that, after giving careful consideration to the subject, I do not see my way to accede to the suggestion contained in the Question of my hon. Friend.

IRELAND — BLESSINGTON ROAD SESSIONS.

MR. SEXTON (for Mr. HEALY) asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been called to the action of the magistrates of Blessington, who, at a road sessions on the 10th of January last, gave the works presented for by Miles Quin, Patrick Byrne, and Joseph Leggrew, to others whose tenders were in each case double theirs; whether this is in direct violation of the statute; and, whether the grand jury can be directed to give the contracts to the lowest tenders at the approaching assizes at Wicklow?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he was informed that it had been decided by the Judges that the lowest tender for public works was not necessarily to be accepted, and the Government had not any authority to interfere.

POST OFFICE—TELEGRAPH AND SORTING CLERKS.

MR. ARNOLD MORLEY asked the Postmaster General, Whether pre-transfer or post-transfer telegraph clerks can be legally compelled to do the work of sorting clerks in post offices?

MR. FAWCETT: There can, in my opinion, be no doubt that the power to which reference is made in the Question can be legally exercised.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. G. O'TOOLE.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If Mr. George O'Toole, farmer, of Baltinglass, in the county of Wicklow, has been confined as a "suspect" in Dundalk Gaol, 100 miles from his home, for the last five months; whether Mr. O'Toole recently asked to be let out on parole for a few days to buy seeds for his farm and give directions as to sowing his crops, and was refused; whether he is aware that Mr. O'Toole has no male relative or friend to manage his affairs during his imprisonment; and, whether, under these circumstances, he will consent to his liberation on parole for a week or ten days for the purpose indicated?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that there would be no objection to this man being liberated for 10 days on the understanding that his return to Baltinglass would not be made the occasion of any public demonstration or display, and that he would strictly confine himself to private business.

LAW AND POLICE—THE SALVATION ARMY.

Mr. ONSLOW asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the performances of a so-called religious body entitled the "Salvation Army;" and, whether he will issue special instructions to the local magistrates to suppress the street processions of this body, processions which have caused, and are likely to cause, serious rioting; which tend also to create gross profanity; and which have been the means of greatly disturbing the peace and quiet of respectable citizens?

Mr. HUGH MASON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he will be so good as to devise some means of protection from mob-ruffianism and occasional magisterial weakness for the loyal and law-abiding people called the "Salvation Army," who are endeavouring to rescue from vice and crime the very dregs of the population not hitherto cared for by the great religious organisations of the Country?

Mr. CAINE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he has received a Memorial, accompanied by sworn information, from several of the leading tradesmen of Basingstoke, with regard to the riots which have taken place in that town recently, and at recurring intervals during the last twelve months, caused by the persistent efforts of an organised gang of roughs to suppress by violence and intimidation the processions and meetings of a religious body known as the "Salvation Army;" whether he has instituted any inquiry, with a view of ascertaining the names and position of those who are well known to be the ringleaders of this dangerous mob; and, if he will take prompt and immediate steps to secure for the "Salvation Army" that protection from injury and outrage which the magistrates and police of Basingstoke do not afford them?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: There are no less than seven Questions on this subject on the Paper, and, if the House will allow me, I will answer them all at once. First of all, I will say with reference to most, if not all, the Questions, that they seem to be founded upon an erroneous impression as to the relation of the Secretary of State to the magistrates. They ask me if I would give directions to the magistrates to do this, or not to do that. Now, the Secretary of State has no power to direct the magistrates, either in their judicial or in their executive capacity. Those who are in the Commission of the Peace have the responsibility to preserve the peace as they think right. If magistrates come to the Secretary of State, he is bound to give them such advice as he can, and to render such assistance as he is able. Now, as respects Basingstoke, there were great disturbances this time last year. The Mayor and magistrates did what was very proper. There being these processions of the "Salvation Army" attacked by the mob, they made every effort to protect the "Army." They had out their own constables, which were, I believe, 16 in number, and swore in 100 special constables, and had, besides, a detachment of Artillery. Then the magistrates, expecting the thing would happen again, came to me, and said, what was very reasonable, that they could not expect to have a detachment of Artillery every Sunday, and that special constables, with their best clothes on ready for going to church, did not want to fight with the mob on Sunday. They asked me what, under the circumstances, I would advise them to do. I naturally looked to see what my Predecessors had done. I found that the matter had been settled by eminent Law Officers of the Crown—first of all, Sir John Karslake, Lord Justice Brett, and afterwards confirmed by the present Lord Chief Justice, the present Master of the Rolls, and Lord Young. I wrote the letter, which has always been written for several years, applicable to those circumstances, and which I saw in some of the newspapers was said to be bad law, and worse sense. I have quoted the authorities for the law, and, as for the sense, it was acted upon by Mr. Gathorne Hardy, Mr. Bruce, and by all their successors. The magistrates accepted the advice in that letter; and, as there is such high authority for it, I shall be happy to lay it on the Table, if the hon. Member who has asked the Question with reference to it (Mr. Caine) will move for its production. Having accepted the advice contained in the letter, they issued a proclamation forbidding the procession, and peace was preserved in Basingstoke from April to August. But a change took place, either in the *personnel* or the opinions of the Bench. They disregarded the advice I had tendered, and withdrew the proclamation. [Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH: No, no.] Well, I beg pardon. The right hon. Gentleman says "No;" but I had my information from the Mayor, who, finding there was a majority against him, no longer issued the proclamation, and, therefore, a disturbance took place. The consequence was that there had been disturbances ever since. The magistrates made no further application to me, as it is not very likely they would do. I have given them my advice, and it was not followed —that is all I can do in the matter. I offered that advice at Exeter, at Stamford, and at Salisbury. It has been followed in all those places, and, as far as I know, it has answered its purpose—namely, the preservation of peace. It is not in my power to compel the magistrates to do what they do not see fit to do. If they do not preserve the peace they are liable to a criminal information for failing to do their duty. In 1832 proceedings of that kind were taken with regard to the Mayor of Bristol. I cannot, as I am at present situated, issue any instructions to the magistrates. If I am asked for an opinion I am, of course, bound to give it. I may say that those people cannot be too strongly condemned who attack persons who are only meeting for a lawful and, I may say, laudable object; but, on the other hand, I cannot but condemn the imprudence of those who encourage these processions, which experience has shown must lead to disorder and violence.

MR. CAINE said, that, in consequence of the answer he had received, he should move for the whole of the Correspondence between the magistrates of Basingstoke and the Home Office.

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL GOVERNMENT AND MONTSIOA.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether, in accordance with the Transvaal Convention, the British Resident has been the medium of communication between the Transvaal Government and the Native chief Montsioa, who was recently attacked by other Natives, aided by a Boer contingent; whether the provision of the Convention, under which such a dispute might be referred to the arbitration of the British Resident, was acted on; and, whether a Report of the Resident's proceedings in the matter has been called for and will be presented to Parliament?

MR. COURTNEY: As far as the information at present received by Her Majesty's Government and communicated to Parliament goes, the Transvaal Government has had no disagreement or dispute with these Natives, and therefore no communication to make to them through the Resident under Clause *b* of sub-section 3 of Article 18 of the Convention. No dispute has been referred to the Resident by Transvaal residents and Natives outside the Transvaal under Clause *c* of sub-section 3 of Article 18. A telegram recently sent to Sir Hercules Robinson explained to him that a Report upon the recent fighting was expected from the Resident; and a despatch will be sent by to-night's mail repeating the request for such a Report.

ARMY—THE ROYAL HIBERNIAN MILITARY SCHOOL, DUBLIN.

MR. W. J. CORBET asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether an inquiry has been recently held relating to the government of the Royal Hibernian Military School, Dublin; and, if so, by whom, and what was the immediate object of that inquiry?

MR. CHILDERS: If the hon. Member was in the House when I moved the Army Estimates early on Tuesday morning, he may have heard me say that in consequence of the effect of short service on the number of pensioners, and on the marriage of soldiers and the number of soldiers' children, it had become desirable to institute a thorough inquiry as to the present condition and the prospective requirements of the two great hospitals at Chelsea and Kilmainham, and the two schools, the Duke of York's and the Royal Hibernian. The Committee to whom this inquiry has been intrusted, and who are now conducting it, consists of Lord Morley, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, Lieutenant-Generals Sir Beauchamp Walker and R. C. H. Taylor, Major-General Harman, the Rev. J. W. Sharpe, Sir P. Keenan, and Mr. C. Dilke Loveless. Considering the recent changes at the Hibernian School, it was considered desirable that they should visit that institution and Kilmainham first. When Her Majesty's Government have decided what action to take on the Report of the Committee, which, however, is not likely to be completed for some time, it is probable that I shall be able to lay it on the Table of the House.

METROPOLIS—NEW METROPOLITAN FISH MARKET.

MR. DUFF asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, If the attention of the Metropolitan Board of Works has been called to the fact that, during the last month, twenty-one tons of fish have been seized by the officers appointed by the Fishmongers' Company as being unfit for human food; that seventeen tons of that amount were land-borne fish; that Mr. Spencer Walpole, in the Report to the Home Secretary in 1880, attributed much of the loss in fresh fish to the distance it had to be carried from the Railways to Billingsgate; and, whether, under these circumstances, he can state to the House what steps, if any, are being taken by the Metropolitan Board of Works to furnish the public with a suitable fish market, so imperatively demanded, near the termini of the Railways on the north side of London?

SIR JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: In reply to the hon. Member, I beg to say that my attention has frequently been called to the seizure of fish at Billingsgate, and I am cognizant of the Report to which he refers. The Metropolitan Board of Works had the whole question before them last autumn; but the time at their disposal was not sufficient, in the opinion of the majority, to enable them to decide upon a site for a market before the period fixed for the deposit of Parliamentary Bills, and they are not, therefore, taking any steps in the present Session; but the matter is still receiving consideration.

CRIMINAL LAW—VENUE IN CRIMINAL CASES.

SIR WILLIAM HART DYKE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, By whose authority the sitting magistrate at Westminster has had under investigation a case of murder committed at Yalding in Kent; whether several witnesses have been brought up to London from Kent for examination; and, whether such course is in conformity with the usual practice of magisterial investigation, and can be supported by precedent?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have inquired about this matter of the Solicitor to the Treasury, who has charge of it. It appears it was doubtful where the offence was committed; but it was supposed at first to have been within the jurisdiction of the magistrate at Westminster. The point is not even now clearly established; but if it should turn out that the offence was committed in Kent, the case will be remitted to the magistrates there.

STATE OF IRELAND—THE CONSTABULARY AND THE ENNISCORTHY DRAMATIC ASSOCIATION.

MR. BYRNE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that one of the rules of the Literary, Musical, and Dramatic Association, established at Enniscorthy, county Wexford, at the end of last year, is, "That nothing of a political or sectarian nature be discussed at any of its meetings, or on its premises;" that the said Association embraced within its roll of members men of different classes, creeds, and political leanings; that it had permission from George C. Roberts, esquire, J.P. to hold its meetings in the Market House, Enniscorthy, subject to the non-political and sectarian condition; that a meeting was publicly announced to be held about the 20th December last; whether it has been brought to his knowledge that, previous to such meeting being held, the sub-inspector of police (Mr. Innes) informed the chairman that the proposed meeting could not be held, and, should it be proceeded with, he, the chairman, would incur great risk; that he had already gone far enough, too far for his own safety; and that if he did not want to go to Kilmainham he had better drop the business, or he would find himself there before long; whether he approves of such conduct on the part of the police; and, if such proceedings had his sanction?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he understood that political subjects were not introduced into this society. The Sub-Inspector denied having used the language attributed to him.

Mr. HEALY wished to know whether, in a case where complaint had been made against the police, the Chief Secretary had ever ordered an independent inquiry to be made?

[No answer.]

THE COMMERCIAL TREATY WITH FRANCE — THE NEGOTIATIONS — PAPERS.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, If he would state what was the substance of the Report of a Sub-Committee of the Council of the Sheffield Chamber of Commerce, dated the 6th August 1880, communicated to the Foreign Office, and referred to in and necessary to explain, No. 69 of the recently published "Representations from Chambers of Commerce and other Commercial Associations relative to the proposed new Commercial Treaty with France and the French Tariff;" why such Report was not included among the other "representations" published; and, whether a Copy of the same will appear among any papers on this subject to be hereafter laid upon the Table?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The hon. and learned Member appears to have been misinformed, as the Report to which he refers was not communicated to the Foreign Office.

LANDLORD AND TENANT (IRELAND)—CASE OF JOHN HALLORAN, PALLAS, CO. KERRY.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. M. C. Dennis borrowed from the Board of Works the sum of £100, to be expended upon a farm held by John Halloran, at Pallas, in the Barony of Clanmaurice, in Kerry; whether the works in question were carried out to the satisfaction of the Board's engineer and certified by their inspector; whether any representations have been made to the Board by John Halloran to the effect that the works he executed on the farm represented £22 more than the loan, and that, nevertheless, the landlord refuses to allow him more than £30, retaining the balance of £70; whether John Halloran, considering his rent too high, and having served an originating notice to have a fair rent fixed, applied to the Board of Works on the 25th February, sending the usual fee, for copies of the engineer's report and of the inspector's certificate; and, whether the Board of Works returned the money and refused the document, thus depriving the tenant of useful evidence in the Land Court? The hon. Gentleman said he had received a letter informing him that if the Land Court ordered the documents the Board of Works would produce them. He would, therefore, not put the Question; but would ask whether the documents would be produced upon the direct application of the gentleman himself?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he wished for Notice of the Question; but he might add that the loan was made to the landlord and not to the tenant.

STATE OF IRELAND—THE QUEEN'S COUNTY—PRESENTMENT FOR EXTRA POLICE.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the grand jury of the Queen's County were, on Friday last, asked to make a presentment of £112 15*s.* 2*d.* as a charge upon the county on account of extra police sent into the county on some thirteen occasions during the previous half-year; whether the county inspector, on the occasion in question, admitted that the Constabulary Force in the county was seventeen men short of the quota; and, whether, inasmuch as the Act 29 and 30 Vic. c. 103, sec. 14, provides that a moiety of the costs of extra police shall be charged upon a county only when the fixed quota of men shall be increased, he will cause the demand for the sum mentioned to be withdrawn?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had not yet been able to get the information to enable him to answer the first portion of the Question. The second portion of the Question was based upon a misapprehension. By law the sending of police into any other county than the one they belonged to should be paid for by the county into which they were sent.

STATE OF IRELAND—VISIT OF THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO TULLAMORE.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the complaint of Mr. Henry Egan, in a letter in the "Freeman's Journal" of Monday, that for saying "release the suspects" in the course of the Right honourable Gentleman's speech at Tullamore, he was threatened with arrest by a sub-inspector and policeman in attendance, and was put under the supervision of a policeman during the remainder of the speech; and, whether the alleged conduct of the police on the occasion is approved by the Government?

MR. SEXTON: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question, I wish to ask him whether Sub-Inspector Allen, who threatened Mr. Henry Egan, is the same Sub-Inspector who, whilst in command of a party of police, meeting two young men on the road, said to the police, "Punch them on before you," the consequence being that one of the young men has been in bed ever since?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I think the hon. Member who has just spoken will see that in common fairness he ought to have given me Notice of this Question. I do not know whether the Sub-Inspector is the Sub-Inspector Allen to whom he refers, neither do I know if the statement of the hon. Member is correct. With regard to the Question of the hon. Member for Dungarvan, I may say that I saw the letter in *The Freeman's Journal*, and directly communicated with the Sub-Inspector of Constabulary at Tullamore. I have received from him a Report, stating, as I fully expected—for it would have been contrary to my orders if it had not been so—that it is not true that, on the occasion of my speech at Tullamore, both the military and the police were present in large numbers. What I believe is true is that a Sub-Inspector and a couple of men were on duty in the town; but I cannot learn that even those three men were at the meeting. I have reason to believe, however, that one man came, not by my orders, but out of curiosity to hear what I might have to say. The military were not employed in any way, nor were there any soldiers present, except a Dragoon and two Infantry officers, who happened to come up at the time, and who remained to listen. There were no policemen in plain clothes—no detectives—present, except that the Sub-Inspector who was present was not in uniform. I think he rather wished to hear what I had to say. [*Ironical Home Rule cheers and laughter.*] I suppose a good many people did. The Sub-Inspector informs me that Mr. Egan came down from his shop in a very excited state, and several times shouted in an angry manner, and in a loud voice, "Release the 'Suspects!'" evidently, in the opinion of the Sub-Inspector, with the view of exciting the people, who were attentively listening. Some words passed between the Sub-Inspector and Mr. Egan. The Sub-Inspector did not give him in charge; but his brother, Mr. Patrick Egan, then came out and took him away, saying, "This is no place for you." I am also informed by Mr. Blake, the Resident Magistrate, that what really happened was this—that the people wished to hear me, and that Mr. Egan wished that they should not do so. The Sub-Inspector goes on to say that there was no further interruption, that I was heard to the end in good humour, and that I walked about the town afterwards—I am sorry to be obliged to say so much about myself—unattended by a single policeman. That is a simple account of what, according to the observations of the Sub-Inspector, occurred. I have also had a letter from Mr. Blake, from which I will read the following quotation:—

> "The military were not communicated with, either directly or indirectly; and I am in a position to state that it was your express wish on the subject that no precautions of any kind were to be taken, and no change to be made in the everyday police arrangements. That was carried out to the letter—not a single policeman was brought into Tullamore, only two policemen being, as usual, on duty."

One at either end of the town, I suppose. Perhaps I may be allowed to answer another Question put on Friday night by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton), and about which he gave Notice of Motion on going into Committee of Supply, as to the report of my speech.

Mr. CALLAN: I rise to Order. I wish to ask if the right hon. Gentleman is in Order in referring to a Notice of Motion which is to come on this evening?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Perhaps I may ask if it will be in Order if I answer the Question as a personal explanation?

Mr. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman will be perfectly in Order in completing his answer to the Question.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: A statement has been made that I hired, at the expense of the Government, an official reporter to give a report of my speech. What I want to say is, that no official reporter was employed to take my speech at Tullamore. I have made inquiries, and I find that there were three reporters present, one representing *The Irish Times*, and two others the local papers, being also local correspondents of the Dublin papers. One of these reporters, the correspondent for *The Freeman's Journal* and *The Dublin Express*, was in the room. He stood behind my chair, and the others stood under the window. Neither the English nor the Irish papers were furnished with reports of my speech at the expense of the Government. I may say that I saw the gentleman representing *The Irish Times*, although I did not know his name. I had no opportunity of correcting my speech; but, having read the report, I should say that it is very accurate.

Mr. O'DONNELL: I wish to ask whether the Government will grant an independent inquiry into the conduct of the Sub-Inspectors, magistrates, policemen, and officers of the Army, who happened to be on the spot at the time?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: There is no charge against the officers. They simply came there, happening to be in the town, because they wanted to hear what a man speaking out of a window had to say. If the hon. Member wishes for an independent inquiry into the conduct of the police, let him move to that effect.

Mr. O'DONNELL: The right hon. Gentleman has forgotten that there is a charge made against them. One of the listeners was threatened with arrest because he shouted "Release the 'Suspects!'" That could be proved by an independent inquiry,

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: What I said was, that there was no charge made against the officers in the Army or against the soldiers into which inquiry could be made. As to the police, I consider that there is no case for inquiry against them. If the hon. Member thinks that there is ground for any charge against them, let him bring it forward in the usual way, and let the House decide between us.

Mr. SEXTON asked the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary if the reporter of *The Irish Times*, Mr. Murray, was not a Government reporter; and whether he was not employed by the Government to report, among other things, the State Trials in Dublin; and why information as to the right hon. Gentleman's visit was not supplied to other papers. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "Do not answer!"]

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I would rather answer.

Mr. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman appears to have given a full answer to the Question; but if he desires to make a further explanation he can do so.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I do not wish that a false impression should go abroad as to this matter. As regards the reporter, I did not know his name until to-day. Mr. Murray is not a Government reporter. I am informed that he, like many others, was employed to report the State Trials for *The Irish Times*. The fact is that, thinking it possible that I might say something at Tullamore, I sent to *The Irish Times* to say that perhaps they might think it worth while to send a reporter there, and they did so. The hon. Member asks me why I did not inform other newspapers. As a matter of fact, I believe other newspapers were informed, and that, having sent word to *The Irish Times*, I had done as much as I wished to do. I may, however, add that I did not let it be generally known that I was going to speak; because, if I had, I have no doubt the advice given afterwards—that I should not be allowed to be heard—would have been given then.

CORRUPT PRACTICES AT ELECTION ACT—THE BOSTON BRIBERY COMMISSION—THE SCHEDULED MAGISTRATES.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether Messrs. Joseph

Wren and Thomas Kitwood, who resumed their seats on the Boston Borough Bench last July, are the same persons who were scheduled by the Boston Bribery Commissioners, as being guilty of bribery; whether the Mr. Wren aforesaid is the gentleman who gave evidence in the case of Regina *v.* Rowley, at Lincoln, on Monday, July 25th, 1881; whether the Mr. Kitwood aforesaid is the same gentleman who was prosecuted for corrupt practices at Lincoln Assizes in July last, a nolle prosequi being entered, because, as the Solicitor General stated, a statement had been sent to the Bribery Commissioners by Mr. Kitwood, although it had not been read by them, and the Commissioners preferred to treat him as a party who had been examined, although practically he had no certificate; whether it is correct that Captain Henry Charles Allenby, of Kenwick House, Louth, who was scheduled for providing £400 for direct bribery, is still permitted to act as justice of the peace for Lindsey and other divisions of the county of Lincoln; and, why, although another Boston Borough justice, named Samuel Pilley, who was scheduled for paying the sum of £5, in small amounts, to eighteen men, for work done on the day of the poll and previously (which employment it was contended was perfectly legal, and for the receipt of which the employés were not scheduled), was struck off the Borough Roll, Mr. Wren, who provided £750, and Mr. Kitwood, £100, for direct bribery, are still permitted to act as justices?

Mr. T. COLLINS: Before the Attorney General answers that Question, I wish to appeal to you, Sir, on a point of Order, and to ask you whether the hon. Member for Northampton is justified in stating in a Question put in this House that a gentleman is guilty of a direct act of bribery, who, by a jury of his countrymen, has been found not guilty?

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member for Northampton has put the Question on his own responsibility, and I have no desire to interpose between the hon. Member and the House.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): As I understand the Question, it does not say that this gentleman is absolutely guilty of bribery, but only that he was scheduled by the Commissioners. [Mr. T. Collins: I am speaking of the fifth paragraph.] I will not enter into that matter, except to say that the suggestions contained in the first three paragraphs of my hon. Friend's Question are substantially correct. As regards Captain Allenby, I have to say that the fiat of the Lord Chancellor for the removal of this gentleman from the Roll of Justices was issued three weeks ago. As to the last portion of the Question, there are special circumstances attending these cases; but they are receiving the careful consideration of the Lord Chancellor, and his decision will shortly be given.

Mr. HEALY asked, whether, in view of the further consideration of these cases, it would be borne in mind that Mr. Parnell was removed from the list of Justices merely because he was reasonably suspected of inciting to intimidation?

[No answer was returned to the Question.]

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. JAMES HEGARTY.

Mr. LEAMY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true that Mr. James Hegarty, of Falcurragh, county Donegal, recently confined in Derry Gaol in default of finding sureties to be of good behaviour, was deprived of the privilege of receiving visits oftener than once a week; was not allowed to receive newspapers sent to him by his friends; was compelled to take exercise with prisoners committed for trial on serious charges; and was sentenced to twenty-four hours' solitary confinement on a charge of whistling in his cell, although the warder of that part of the prison in which Mr. Hegarty was confined declared that the charge was untrue; and, if he can state why Mr. Hegarty was subjected to such exceptional treatment?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he would make inquiries into this matter. He had not as yet been able to ascertain the truth of the allegation contained in the Question of the hon. Member.

STATE OF IRELAND—ARRESTS.

Mr. BELLINGHAM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will have any objection to lay upon the Table of the House, an official Return giving the names and occupation of those persons who have been from time to time either arrested for, or convicted of, having taken part in nocturnal attacks, with a view to ascertaining how many, if any, Militiamen have been implicated in them?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the Question was very vague. "From time to time" was really very indefinite; no time at all being given. He did not think the Return would be of any practical use; but if the hon. Member really wished for the information he would ask him to set forth the nature of the Return in more definite form, and he would then consider whether it could be granted.

AFGHANISTAN — NATIVE AGENT AT CABUL—APPOINTMENT OF MOHAMMED AFZUL KHAN.

MR. ONSLOW asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether it is true that Mohammed Afzul Khan has been appointed agent to the Viceroy of India at the Court of the Ameer of Afghanistan; and, if so, whether he will lay upon the Table of the House any instructions which have been given to him regarding his duties while so employed?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Yes, Sir; it is true that Mohammed Afzul Khan has been appointed agent of the Government of India at Cabul; but no copy of instructions to the agent has as yet been received.

STATE OF IRELAND — CAR OWNERS.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that on Sunday last, during the hours of Divine Service, the officers of the Military force stationed at Carndonagh visited the owners of cars in that town, and threatened them with heavy fines and the forfeiture of their licences if they refused to supply cars for the conveyance of troops to the scene of pending evictions in the neighbourhood, and insisted that, even where the cars had been previously engaged by other persons, they must be given to the Military; and, whether such action is legal?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I understand that this occurred, not during the hours of Divine Service, but afterwards. The military officers sent round to the car-owners to say that the cars would be required; but I am not aware that they threatened them in case of refusal. As a matter of fact, they would be liable if they refused in such a case.

MR. O'DONNELL said, it could be proved that the cars were previously engaged. He would put another Question on the subject on Thursday next.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARREST OF MR. THOMAS MAHONEY.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he would have any objection to lay upon the Table Copies of the warrant under which Mr. Thomas Mahoney, Clerk of Union Castlecomer, was arrested on 15th December 1881; of the warrant given by the sub-inspector in Castlecomer to the constable who had charge of Mr. Mahoney from Ballyragget to Naas; of explanation why he was refused admission into Naas Gaol on his arrival there in charge of the Constabulary on the 16th December; of authority of the Constabulary authorities in Naas for detaining him in the police barrack there during the night of the 16th December, instead of being lodged in Naas Gaol as directed by warrant under which he was arrested; of Correspondence which took place between the Local Government Board and Mr. Mahoney on the subject of his arrest; of Correspondence between the Board of Guardians of Castlecomer Union and the Local Government Board, including resolutions in Mr. Mahoney's favour on the subject of his arrest; of Resolution of the Board of Guardians of the Athy Union of the 21st December last on the subject of his arrest; of Mr. Mahoney's letter of the 28th December, written to the Chief Secretary from Naas Prison; and, of the order for his release, dated 4th January 1882? The hon. Gentleman said, if the Chief Secretary had any objection to give some of these Returns, they should take those they had no objection to give.

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he had not yet received the full information that would enable him to answer the Question.

MR. HEALY said, he would repeat it on Monday.

ARMY—THE ARMY VETERINARY DEPARTMENT.

MAJOR O'BEIRNE asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether any decision has yet been arrived at regarding the readjustment of relative rank and retiring pay for the officers of the Army Veterinary Department, with a view of placing these officers on an equality in this respect with the quartermasters and riding masters, and other commissioned officers?

MR. CHILDERS: In reply to my hon. and gallant Friend, I have to say that I have looked into this question, as I promised last year, and before the end of the Session I may be able to give some information on the subject; but the difficulties are much greater than I anticipated when I first took up the question.

NAVY—NAVAL ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS.

MR. STEWART MACLIVER asked the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, If he can explain the reason why an application from Plymouth, made in September last, for a Naval Artillery Volunteer Corps to be enrolled, has only now received a reply, refusing enrolment, while a similar application from Swansea, made some time afterwards, has been granted; and, whether, in future, it is intended to discourage the formation of such auxiliary forces, after the example applied to Plymouth?

SIR THOMAS BRASSEY: The Admiralty, while fully appreciating the patriotic offers of service which they have received, have not felt justified in sanctioning the enrolment of a corps of Naval Artillery Volunteers at Plymouth. They do not consider that a force of that nature will be required at a Naval port where a considerable reserve of Marines and Naval Pensioners already exists. The number of Naval Volunteers enrolled at Bristol being comparatively few, it was thought a contingent from the neighbouring port of Swansea would be useful; and the recent visit of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales afforded a good opportunity for raising a battery.

ARMY (INDIA)—MILITARY CHAPLAINS.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been called to the great difference in the treatment of Protestant and Catholic Military chaplains in India; whether it is the case that, while a Protestant chaplain is paid at the rate of £300 and £500 a year, and is assured of a comfortable pension on retirement, a Catholic chaplain is not only remunerated at a far lower rate, but is totally destitute of any provision for his old age, no matter how long his service with the troops may have been; whether many thousands of Irish Catholic soldiers receive the services of such chaplains in India; whether, in particular, his attention has been called to the case of the Reverend Father Augustine, late chaplain at Dagshai, who retired last month after thirty-three years' service, during which he was never allowed a day's leave or furlough to recruit his health, and who is now, in old age and broken health, an absolute pauper, solely dependent upon a small dole from the poor Bishop of his diocese, and upon the occasional charity of native Christians; and, whether he proposes to remedy this state of affairs?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: This subject was fully explained in Papers presented to Parliament (Return No. 243 of 1876), and I can scarcely give a full explanation in a reply to a Question. There are no military chaplains in India, Protestant or Catholic. There is an establishment of chaplains of the Church of England; because the great majority of civil and military servants of the Crown in India belong to that communion. But wherever there are a sufficient number of Roman Catholic soldiers to justify expenditure for provision of the ministrations of religion Roman Catholic priests are employed for this purpose; and the principles upon which their remuneration is based will be found to be explained in the Papers referred to. My attention has not been called to the case of the Rev. Father Augustine, and the India Office have no information on the subject.

INDIA—INCREASE OF INTEMPERANCE.

MR. O'DONNELL asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether his attention has been called to the three Petitions proceeding from the Mohammedan National Association, Merchants and Bankers of Calcutta, and the Anglican Bishop and Clergy of Calcutta, respectively, recently presented to Sir Ashley Eden on the subject of increased drunkenness, and suggesting the closing of liquor shops on Sunday as a means of diminishing the evil; whether he has noticed the statement of Sir Ashley Eden, in refusing the Petitions, that, "there can be no doubt that there is an increase of drinking among the natives;" and, whether he proposes to take any steps in view of the numerous representations on the subject of the increase of drinking habits among the Indian population?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I have seen the Petitions referred to, asking that liquor shops in Calcutta may be closed on Sundays. The hon. Member's Question conveys an inaccurate idea of the effect of the Lieutenant Governor's reply to the Memorialists. Sir Ashley Eden said that while—

> "No doubt there may be an increase of drinking, it is not among the class that frequents the liquor shops; it is among the middle classes, who drink in their own houses."

That careful inquiry had convinced him that—

> "The alleged increase in intemperance is more imaginary than real."

And that, at any rate, any such increase was not due to multiplication of liquor shops, as the number of these shops had been reduced in Calcutta and its suburbs, with a population of 550,000, from 602 in 1871 to 403 in 1881. Nor did Sir Ashley Eden absolutely refuse the prayer of the Petitioners; but said he could not legally comply with it during the term for which the existing licences were granted, but that he would see that the houses were closed for a part of Sunday when the licences came to be renewed. In reply to the last part of the Question, although I have no reason to think that there is any disposition on the part of the Government of India to adopt measures which may have a tendency to promote intemperance among the population, I shall call their attention to the necessity of exercising extreme care and caution in the matter.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked if there was not a considerable increase in the Excise Revenue during the last financial year, especially in Bengal?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: There has certainly been an increase in the Revenue referred to by the hon. Member; but I do not admit that it has anything to do with the subject of the Question of the hon. Member for Dungarvan.

THE COMMERCIAL TREATY WITH FRANCE—THE NEGOTIATIONS.

MR. ARMITAGE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, When the Correspondence, with reference to the negotiations for a French Commercial Treaty, subsequent to August 22nd, 1881, will be laid upon the Table of this House?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: The Correspondence to which my hon. Friend refers was laid on the Table on Tuesday, and is being distributed this day.

ARMY ORGANIZATION—COMPULSORY RETIREMENT OF PURCHASE CAPTAINS.

SIR HENRY FLETCHER asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether those purchase captains who, having reached the age or service at which, under the Royal Warrants of 13th August 1877, and 1st May 1878, they became ineligible for further promotion or higher pension, were, in order to avoid supersession, compelled to retire and retired on pensions under those Warrants, will be placed on the same footing as regards rank and pension as officers of the same class compulsorily retired under the Royal Warrant of 26th June 1881, the latter having no stronger claims than the former, while enjoying the advantage of not being liable to supersession on account of age?"

MR. CHILDERS: The Question of the hon. and gallant Gentleman relates to certain officers retired under the Warrant of 1877, who, if they had remained in the Army until 1881, might have retired on better terms; and the object of the Question is to obtain for them that the rank and pension on which they retired should be raised to the level of the officers compulsorily retired in 1881. The ground of the claim I take to be that we have cancelled the retirement of certain non-purchase captains, who were compelled to leave the Army at 40 years of age, thus, in a certain sense, giving a retrospective character to the Warrant. The difference, however, between the two cases is that in the latter there was no question of improving the terms of an already-completed retirement, but only of re-admitting to the Army certain officers within a few months retired for age, who, under the new Warrant, need not retire. After well weighing both sides, I feel bound to adhere to the rule that no increase of retired pay can be allowed under a new Warrant to an officer who retired under a former one; and that the only boon which could be conceded would be as to honorary rank, and this has been granted.

ARMY MEDICAL SERVICE.

MR. GIBSON asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether, with regard to the Warrant of January 1880, which directs that—

> "(8) a public and open competition shall be held twice in the year, for the admission of qualified medical candidates as probationers, and that the number of appointments so competed for shall not be less than half of the number of vacancies which shall have arisen in the last completed half-year ending on the 30th June or 31st December,"

and that—

> "(9) not less than half the number of vacancies shall be filled up by competition,"

he could state how many medical vacancies occurred in the half-year ended 31st December 1881; and how many of such vacancies were filled up by competition at the last examination; and, whether the terms of the Warrant, and the engagements it held out to candidates, have been satisfied?

MR. CHILDERS: The right hon. and learned Gentleman puts to me a Question turning on the meaning of the word "vacancy." Formerly, when the medical service was not so popular as it is now, and it was difficult to fill its ranks by competition, it was considered desirable that the Secretary of State should have the power to allow some of the first appointments to the Medical Department to be made by selection through the principal medical schools; but it was provided by the Article which he quotes, that at least half should enter by competition; the word "vacancies," of course, meaning the number of appointments which it was requisite to fill up. As a matter of fact, this power of nomination has never been exercised, and all vacancies have been filled by competition; so that, in the direction of the right hon. and learned Gentleman's Question, we have gone far beyond what the Warrant required. I may add that there were, in reality, no vacancies at the end of the December half-year, 30 medical officers having been thrown on our hands from India; and the gentlemen who succeeded at the last examination will be appointed to vacancies as they occur from time to time. In reply to the second Question, it is evident that the terms of the Warrant have been more than satisfied.

PARLIAMENT — PUBLIC BUSINESS — COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND SESSIONAL COMMITTEE ON PRINTING.

MR. MONK asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the continued postponement of the appointment of the Public Accounts Committee, and of the Sessional Committee, whose duty it is to assist Mr. Speaker in all matters relating to the Printing executed by Order of this House, and to select and arrange for Printing the Returns and Papers presented, in pursuance of Motions made by Members of this House, is in any way detrimental to the Public Service; and, if so, whether he will state to the House why he postpones from Tuesday to Tuesday the Motions which stand in his name in the Order Book for the appointment of those Committees, when no steps are taken by the Government to prevent constant counts-out on Tuesdays?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: The postponement in the appointment of the two Committes referred to in the Question of my hon. Friend is of very serious inconvenience, more especially that of the Public Accounts Committee. After having proved by experience that it was useless to place the Motion for the appointment of these Committees on days on which the Orders of the Day have precedence of Motions, I came to the conclusion that my best chance of success was to place the Motions down for Tuesdays. Having been detained by business on Tuesday afternoon I was on my way to the House on Tuesday evening, when I found to my regret that it had been counted out. I only hope that I shall meet with better success next Tuesday.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PRISONERS UNDER THE ACT.

Sir ARTHUR OTWAY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he will cause such arrangements to be made in the various prisons in Ireland in which political "suspects" are confined, as will shorten the time of their solitary confinement; whether he sees any objection to a relaxation of the rules which confine the "suspects" to their cells from about six o'clock in the evening until the following morning; and, whether he will cause permission to be given to them to assemble, in such place and manner as is consistent with prison discipline, for two or three hours after their early supper?

Mr. DILLWYN: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers the Question I should like to ask him whether his attention has been called to a letter in *The Times* of this day, signed "Audi Alteram Partem," giving extracts from letters alleged to have been written by some of the "suspects;" and if the description therein given of the treatment of "suspects" in Ireland is substantially true?

Mr. DAWSON: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers, I wish to point out that the hour at which prisoners are confined in the evening is 5 o'clock and not 6, as stated in the Question of the hon. Baronet.

Sir ARTHUR OTWAY: I put in 5 o'clock.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: With respect to the Question of my hon. Friend, I certainly saw the letter to which he refers. The letter certainly states that in *The Tuam Herald*—a paper of rather strong views in the direction of hon. Members opposite—two letters had appeared from persons at present confined as "suspects," in which they certainly gave the impression to their friends that they did not find the prison arrangements inconvenient; in fact, rather of a contrary kind. I have not myself seen those letters, but I have no reason to believe that they are not correct; and I have myself received information that several prisoners have taken the same view. With regard to the Question of my hon. Friend (Sir Arthur Otway), it is a matter of importance; and I am afraid I must ask the House to give me a little more time than is usual in answering Questions. Strictly speaking, my hon. Friend's Question would, to my mind, refer to a very small proportion of the "suspects" now in gaol. My hon. Friend uses the phrase "political suspects." As I have frequently stated, I do not think that any of those prisoners can be rightly called "political prisoners," — [Mr. Healy: Oh, oh!] — except those who are detained on reasonable suspicion of treasonable practices. I do not wish to debate the matter now; but I must again state that I do not think persons who are detained on reasonable suspicion of either committing crimes of violence, or intimidation, or inciting thereto, can rightly be called "political prisoners." I take my hon. Friend's Question as if he meant to apply it to all the "suspects;" and, undoubtedly, it would be undesirable that arrangements should be made for some and not for others. I can only again state what I stated last year. When asking Parliament to assent to the Act I stated that we intended to use it for the purpose of prevention, and not of punishment; and although I do not expect any credit from hon. Members opposite, I may say that I have carried it out irrespective of anything said about too much forbearance or too much relaxation, upon the principle of listening to every complaint, by whomsoever it was made, that reached me, and simply on this ground—that the regulations that were made were to be as easy as is consistent with being in prison, provided these three conditions were fulfilled—first, the observance of prison discipline, which, hon. Members must be aware, is necessary; secondly, provision for the safe-keeping of the prisoners; and, thirdly, the prevention of the carrying on from the prison these incitements to outrages for which the "suspects" were detained. And I do not think I need do more than refer to what are notorious circumstances to show that this last has been a provision necessary to be kept in view, and which it is necessary still to keep in view. As regards the six hours' association, I must remind the House that the matter was debated last year, and though I do not mean to say it was approved by hon. Members opposite—[Mr. Healy: Hear, hear!]—because they were opposed to every matter connected with the Act—it was accepted by the House as an arrangement which was fair and reasonable, and which was believed to have worked well in the Westmeath Prison; and the case shown in the House was not against having the six hours adopted, but against the adoption of the general rule of prisons allowing only two hours. I stated a day or two ago, when the matter was brought forward, that I would immediately make inquiry as to whether more could not be given in the evening. I did so at once, and I am very glad to say that I find more time can be given. I propose that, without delay, this modification of the rule shall be made. There shall be half-an-hour allowed for exercise. [Mr. HEALY: Oh, oh! *and laughter.*] Perhaps hon. Members will allow me to finish. Half-an-hour more for exercise will be given in the morning, and an hour and a-half given in the evening after supper. The prisoner will not be compelled to take exercise at these hours if he does not wish to do so; it would be at his option whether he preferred to be in the association hall or taking exercise. I do not deny that there is some degree of danger in this; because it is an undoubted truth that such a letter as my hon. Friend (Mr. Dillwyn) alluded to does represent some portion of feeling in Ireland, because we not unfrequently have had cases in which we had reason to believe that people wished and preferred to be arrested. I think myself it is better to err on the right side; and, therefore, I am glad to be able to make this modification. As so much has been said about the authorities in Dublin Castle, I may say I am entirely supported by them on this subject. I wish to say one thing. If blame is to be attached to anyone for the administration of this Act, and if it can be proved afterwards that there is blame, it must fall upon me. I alone am responsible for it. I have carefully looked into the details of the cases, as much as I possibly could; and nothing could be more unfair than for me to allow the House for a moment to suppose that anything that may be considered harsh—although, I am sure, it has been my endeavour to make it as little harsh as possible—is due to the authorities at the Castle. I say at once that is not the case. I wish, with the permission of the House, to refer to one or two other matters bearing on this subject. It was stated by hon. Members opposite that the time for Divine Service was taken from the time during which the "suspects" associated. I promised to inquire into this, and stop the practice, if it did take place. My information is, that there was only one prison in which this was done. Half-an-hour was deducted at Kilkenny. [Mr. HEALY: And Armagh.] Well, that will be looked into; but it has been stopped at Kilkenny. Then it was stated that visitors came to gloat over the sufferings of the prisoners. This I did not believe to be true. [Mr. HEALY: I can give you the name of one man—Townsend.] Very numerous applications have been made to see the prisons in which the "suspects" are detained; but the rule is, and the order is, that these applications shall be refused. Then it was stated how hard it was that the prisoners should not have any recreation; and the hon. Member for Sligo descanted upon my barbarity in not permitting chess to be played.

MR. SEXTON: I said nothing whatever about it.

MR. HEALY: You refer to me.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Well, the real truth is, that from the very beginning the game of ball, which is very good for exercise, was allowed, and when the matter was laid before me, I at once approved of chess, draughts, and similar games. Certainly, since last November, there has been no restriction on such games, and, so far as the game of ball is concerned, the permission has existed for a longer period. If permission was not given before, it was because it was not asked. Then it was said that the prisoners were not allowed to rest at night in peace, and that the lanterns of the turnkeys were flashed every now and then upon sleeping prisoners. This, I am told, is quite untrue. The warders have not, in fact, keys in their possession after 10 o'clock; and, besides, the prisons in which this was said to have occurred were not specified. I have only further to add, although they are not contained in this Question, that in other statements I believe there was either very great exaggeration or great mistakes. I think it is only fair to the members of the General Prisons Board that I should read the concluding words of a letter from one of the members of the Board in answering these questions. He says—

> "I regret to have not had sufficient time to enable me to inquire at each prison on the various questions raised; but I believe the treatment to be the same in all prisons. But the statements made are, in many instances, untrue, and in others much exaggerated."

This is what I wish to impress upon the House—

> "The extreme unfairness of not at once bringing to the notice of the Board any cases of complaint I need not again point out; as if the Board did not immediately remove any real ground for complaint any prisoner could at once appeal to the Chief Secretary."

I may just say to those in the House who will believe me—it may be the large majority—that I never would have thought of neglecting to examine any case in which it was stated the Board had refused to redress a grievance.

SIR ARTHUR OTWAY asked whether he was right in supposing the right hon. Gentleman to say that after the usual time for locking the prisoners up they would be allowed to assemble together for an hour and a-half in the evening?

MR. W. E. FORSTER intimated that that was correct.

SIR ARTHUR OTWAY asked his right hon. Friend whether, in regard to the Question put to him by the hon. Member for Swansea, there was reason to believe that the letters in *The Times* were invented for a purpose; if not, whether he had any reason to suppose that, in all probability, they were the letters of an Irish prisoner; or whether it was not possible that they might be an Irish joke?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I do not think they were more than the mere expression of what the writers felt. I know that similar statements have been made before in Ireland.

MR. SEXTON: I ask the indulgence of the House to say a few words. The right hon. Gentleman has stated, on the authority of the Prisons Board, that some of the complaints made were exaggerated, and some untrue. I have made two statements in this House of my personal experience in prison, and these have attracted considerable attention. I wish now to say, most solemnly, in the presence of this House, that every statement I made was accurate; and that there were other matters equally accurate with which I have not troubled the House. I am prepared to substantiate all I stated, and much more, before any tribunal.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I am glad the hon. Member made that remark. If he will give me Notice of a Question on the subject to-morrow I will give him an explanation, and, to a considerable extent, a refutation of the statement he made about himself.

MR. HEALY: Will the right hon. Gentleman state whether it is not a fact that "suspects" have to sweep their cells, or pay men for doing so?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Perhaps the hon. Member will give Notice of that also.

LAW AND POLICE—DISORDERS AT BASINGSTOKE.

MR. CAINE asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been called to a paragraph in the "Daily News" of yesterday, headed "Uproarious Meeting at Basingstoke," describing a meeting held by Mr. Arch in that town, in the Corn Exchange, to consider the question of the agricultural labourer. It states that—

> "The room was occupied before the proceedings commenced by a gang of roughs. Mr. Arch attempted to speak, but was refused a hearing, and was pelted with rotten eggs and ochre. Mr. Mitchell shared the same fate. After an hour and a half had been vainly spent in endeavouring to obtain quietude, the meeting was brought to an end amid much uproar;"

whether the authorities of Basingstoke were aware that this meeting was broken up by the same organized gang whose violence towards the members of the Salvation Army has more than once been the subject of Parliamentary inquiry; and, if the Home Office will take the matter into immediate consideration?

SIR WILFRID LAWSON asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is true that, on September 21st 1881, ten of the Basingstoke roughs were released from Winchester Gaol, where they had been suffering a fortnight's imprisonment for attacks on the Salvation Army; whether they were brought home to Basingstoke in a carriage and four, escorted by outriders in fancy costumes, and accompanied by their supporters, the brewers and publicans of Basingstoke; whether, in the evening, a banquet was given to the released prisoners in the Corn Exchange, which was granted for the purpose by the Corporation, the proceedings being wound up by a free fight, in which the police were powerless; and, whether any communication has been made from the Home Office to the authorities of Basingstoke, with a view to the better preservation of order?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I know nothing of either of these two circumstances referred to in the first Question. I have had no communication whatever on the subject with the local authorities. The circumstance referred to by the hon. Member for Carlisle has not been brought under my notice.

Mr. CAINE gave Notice that, in consequence of the Home Secretary's reply, he would, on an early day, call attention to the fact that the Magistrates in various parts of the Country fail to provide adequate protection to Her Majesty's subjects, assembled in lawful public meeting, from the attacks of disorderly persons; and to move a Resolution.

POLICE (METROPOLIS) — SALE OF PAPERS IN THE STREETS.

Mr. M'LAREN asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If he is aware that a young man is being prosecuted in the City of London for selling a religious periodical called the "War Cry" in the streets; and, whether he is prepared to direct the prosecution also of the persons who habitually obstruct the streets of London by offering for sale the indecent periodicals, with offensive contents bills, which have been hawked in public for the last nine months without any interference on the part of the police?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I know nothing of the circumstances, and I have no authority over the City Police or the City Magistrates in this matter. In regard to the latter part of the Question, it would be the duty of the police to prevent the public sale of such papers as the hon. Member refers to.

BANKRUPTCY BILL.

Mr. H. S. NORTHCOTE asked the President of the Board of Trade, If it is his intention to introduce the Bankruptcy Bill before Easter?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: In answer to the Question of the hon. Gentleman, I may say I am extremely anxious to introduce the Bankruptcy Bill; but, considering the present state of Public Business, I am not sangine of being able to do so before Easter.

ENGLAND AND SPAIN, ITALY AND PORTUGAL—COMMERCIAL TREATIES.

Mr. MAC IVER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true, as stated in the Madrid Correspondence of the "Times,"

> "That Spain has offered England the 'most favoured nation' terms, on condition of Spanish wines being admitted at a shilling per gallon, up to 36 degrees of Sykes' alcoholmeter, but that England is trying for concessions on English imports, especially textiles and machinery, which makes an understanding somewhat difficult;"

and, whether it is the case that Her Majesty's Government, notwithstanding their protestations to the contrary, have so far reconsidered their position as to be actually in negotiation, at the present moment, with Spain, Italy, and Portugal, with a view to the conclusion of Commercial Treaties based precisely upon that principle of reciprocity which the Government has hitherto repudiated?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: My answer to the first paragraph of the Question is that it is not true. My answer to the second paragraph is that it is not the case.

THE CIVIL SERVICE ESTIMATES.

Mr. COCHRANE-PATRICK asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the sum of £10,000 mentioned in the Civil Service Estimates, issued on the 10th instant, as a grant in aid of the Medical Relief given to Parochial Boards in Scotland, is the whole sum proposed to be given this year, taking into consideration the statement made by him on the 2nd of August last, that—

> "There must be equalisation adaptable to this and some other particular Votes, but that adoption must be immediate. He meant that they must not again present the Votes in the shape in which they now were?"

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Gladstone): I beg to disown rather emphatically the words which this Question ascribes to me. I am reported in this Question to have said that—

> "There must be equalisation adaptable to this and some other particular Votes, but that adoption must be immediate."

Sir, I am not a great master of the English language; but I must distinguish between the form and the substance, and the substance of what I said, I think, was this, and it will convey a clear idea to the mind of the hon. Member. I did say, last year—I am now speaking from memory, but have no doubt about it—that the question of these particular Votes would have to be reconsidered before they were again proposed, either upon their own merits, and alone, or in connection with some more general proposal. That is the fact; and, likewise, the other day, in refering to the present form of the Estimates, I mentioned the matter, and I said that no inference was to be drawn from the present form of the Estimates as to the intention of the Government to propose them, as they stand upon this and some other points. But I said it would be impossible to recast the Estimates until Parliament had determined upon the principle and the substance of its proceeding.

PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION—THE VACANT SEATS.

Mr. WARTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether it is his intention to bring in a Bill for the purpose of filling up the six seats in this House rendered vacant by the disfranchisement of certain boroughs?

Mr. GLADSTONE: This is a Question of great importance, upon which Her Majesty's Government have not yet thought it necessary for them to arrive at any positive determination; but they will take good care to announce their intention at such a time that Gentlemen will have the power, not only of comprehending it, but of taking any course of action which they may think proper.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. N. H. DEVINE AND MR. J. O'CONNELL.

Mr. SEXTON asked the First Lord of the Treasury, If his attention has been drawn to the "Freeman's Journal" of the 14th instant, containing letters from Mr. Nicholas H. Devine, lately detained under the Coercion Act, and Mr. James O'Connell, at present detained under the said Act; and, whether he regards these letters as presenting the kind of evidence invited by him, with a view to inquiry into the administration of the Coercion Act, so far as regards the prison treatment of "suspects?"

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I will, with the permission of the House, answer this Question. I have seen the letters referred to, and they seem to me to afford further proof that the proper course to be taken by prisoners wishing to make complaints is to communicate with the Prison Board, who, of course, cannot examine grievances unless they are told them. If, however, the hon. Member will ask me definite Questions as to the facts alleged in these letters, and will give me time to make inquiries before replying, I shall be obliged to him.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.

Mr. SCLATER-BOOTH asked the First Lord of the Treasury, How the first new Rule of Procedure, if adopted, would operate in the case of a series of Amendments on going into Supply; and, whether the term "Question under discussion" will mean the original Motion that Mr. Speaker do leave the Chair, or whether it will have reference to each of the series of Amendments in succession as they become the subject-matter of debate; and, in the latter case, what is to happen when, the first of such series having been negatived, the subsequent Amendments can only be debated, and cannot be put from the Chair as substantial Amendments to the main question? The right hon. Gentleman said he asked this Question because he apprehended that the Rule of Procedure to which it referred was rather a development of the existing practice of the House with regard to the Previous Question. It was a well-known incident of that practice, and laid down in the work of Sir Erskine May, that the Previous Question could not be moved on an Amendment.

Mr. GLADSTONE: That, I believe, which the right hon. Gentleman has just mentioned is a well-understood portion of the Procedure of this House; but this Rule, which establishes a new Procedure, will not, of course, be governed by the practice. Of course, I have no authority to expound any Resolution which the House may adopt; but the right hon. Gentleman is quite entitled to ask me in what sense we understand the proposed Rule. We understand the Resolution in the strict sense—that is to say, that the step taken shall refer to the actual Question then under debate, which the Speaker shall next put from the Chair, and to no other. For example, if the Question be an Amendment on going into Committee of Supply, the Question will be, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question;" and it is to that Question so put, and to that alone, that the terms of the Resolution will apply.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH called the Prime Minister's attention to the latter part of his Question relating to a series of Amendments subsequent to the first.

MR. GLADSTONE: I think I have answered that, Sir. I have said that the Rule will have no application whatever except to the Question immediately to be put from the Chair.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH: In the case I have put there would be no such Question.

MR. GLADSTONE: As I understand it, it would have no reference at all to subsequent Amendments.

PARLIAMENT—PUBLIC BUSINESS—THE WAYS AND MEANS BILL.

MR. SHIELD asked the Prime Minister a Question, of which he had given him private Notice—namely, whether his attention had been called to a letter which had appeared in *The Times* of Wednesday the 15th of March, signed "A Conservative M.P.," impugning the correctness of the Prime Minister's statement as to the time necessary for carrying the Ways and Means Bill through its various stages; and, whether the right hon. Gentleman adhered to the statement that it was necessary to take the Report on the 20th of March, in order to avoid a breach of the law?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, this is, I may say, the first time in my experience that the statements of the Government in regard to a matter of this kind have been called in question, especially that they are called in question by a Gentleman who has held Office in former Governments, and who has held Office in the Treasury. As this has been done, however, probably it will be the wish of the House that I should fully answer the Question of my hon. Friend behind me. I think this Question terminated with the words, "in order to avoid a breach of the law." But I shall answer the Question as if it had run "in order to make a certain compliance with the law." As there are some steps and stages of this matter which do not depend on the discretion of the Government, or even on the discretion of the House, and we have no command over them, it is quite evident with regard to these that all we can do is to form our computations on reasonable principles. That is what we have done, as I think, and I adhere most strictly to the declaration I made in this House on Monday last. With regard to the Question of my hon. Friend, my attention has been called to the letter to which he has referred; but I do not think it necessary to enter into the letter, which I have not studied with great care, because the letter, as I understand, rests entirely upon the postscript, which contains the heart of the matter; and it is very evident that the "Conservative M.P.," whoever he might be, is a gentleman who has never served in the Treasury, or he could never have written the postscript to that letter. The errors I should call three. Two of them are matters of fact; the third is matter of opinion, and the House will be able to form its own judgment. The writer of the letter says that if the Royal Assent is to be given on Wednesday, March 29, there will be two days to spare. Well, when we say there are two days to spare, the meaning of that is that there are two days not wanted for the transaction of Business. That is totally and absolutely incorrect. On the contrary, the two days will be closely filled with the complex and various proceedings that are necessary, after the Royal Assent has been given to the Ways and Means Bill, before an expenditure of public money can be made. If inquiry were made into the matter I have not the least doubt that the practical officers who conduct these operations—for they are not political operations — would satisfy every reasonable demand upon the subject. It is also to be observed, in order to make more intelligible the present state of the case, that it is only within the last 12 or 14 years that proceedings, especially where they touch the Exchequer and Audit Board, in compliance with rules now laid down, require somewhat longer time and somewhat greater care and deliberation in carrying them through than used to be the case in the old time when the rule was different. These two days, therefore, are not days to spare; and in illustration of that, I may say that on no occasion since the year 1871, when the new system of audit was hardly in full operation, has the Ways and Means Bill been passed later than the 29th of March. Only twice has it been passed so late as the 29th of March, never later since 1871. But then the writer of this letter says that the Bill having been read a first time in the House of Lords on Friday, March 24, it would pass through all its stages on Monday, March 27, and a messenger might be sent to Mentone on that evening. Now, what is necessary is this. Of course, I assume that the House of Lords proceeds in its ordinary form. The Bill, it is said, would be read on Friday the first time in the House of Lords, after being read a third time in the House of Commons. On Monday it would go through all its stages in the House of Lords. But the House of Lords begins Business at a quarter past 5 o'clock. You will say that the Business might be concluded, perhaps, as soon as 6 o'clock. That having been done, intelligence that the Bill has passed through all its stages must be sent by telegraph to Mentone. The time occupied by the message in travelling is uncertain; but, unquestionably, it would amount to several hours. According to the "Conservative M.P.," this procedure having terminated, we will say, at 6 o'clock, and the telegram requiring four or five hours for transit—and certainly less could not be prudently allowed. ["Yes!"] Well, I will not quarrel with you on that point, and will take it at three hours, or a further rationally shorter period, and supposing it does, you will see the effect immediately. Supposing, then, the message arrives at Mentone at 10 or 11 o'clock. It is stated in the postscript to the letter that the messenger would leave Mentone that night; but the objection to that is that the only express train he could leave Mentone by departs in the afternoon at 4 o'clock. It would not be easy for the messenger to leave by that train, when the proceedings here do not conclude till 6 o'clock, and the telegram does not reach Mentone till three or four hours afterwards. Then, thirdly, the assumption of this postscript is that one of the stages of the Bill is to be taken on Wednesday, the 22nd. Now, I say we should have been grossly culpable if we had assumed that a stage of the Bill would be gone through on Wednesday. When this matter was first brought under my notice I immediately struck out Wednesday, and I am responsible for that striking out. We have had a little illustration to enable us to judge whether that was a prudent course or not, for at 10 minutes to 6 yesterday my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War proposed to take a stage with the Report of the Votes obtained the night before. An objection was taken and the proposition fell to the ground. We are absolutely at the mercy of any single Member of Parliament as to a stage being taken. I have shown, therefore, I think, how far from trustworthy the writer of this letter is in his computations. But that I may expose myself to criticism, I will give what I call a safe assumption as to progress upon this matter. But though it is a safe assumption as to progress, it would leave the financial part of the work which succeeds the passage of the Ways and Means Act in a condition of such compression that it might readily become confusion. Suppose that on Monday, the 20th, we obtain Report of Supply, and that under the present altered Resolutions of the House the Bill is read then a first time. On Tuesday, the 21st, the Bill would be read a second time. On Thursday, the 23rd, the Bill would go through Committee. On Friday, the 24th, it would go through the third reading, and have its first reading in the House of Lords. On Monday, the 27th, it would go through its remaining stages in the Lords. This would be telegraphed to Mentone, and a messenger would leave Mentone by the next express train at 4 P.M. on Tuesday. He would arrive on Wednesday evening, the 29th, and the Royal Assent would be given on the 30th. Now, that is the only computation perfectly sound as regards Parliamentary procedure. But I hope we shall do much better than that; because, as I said, the Royal Assent on the 30th imposes such difficulties upon the Departments that it is impossible for any reasonable person willingly to subject himself to those difficulties. On the other hand, as I hope might be the case, if no impediment were offered on Wednesday, then the advantage gained would be very great indeed to the Department of the Treasury, and the Audit and the Treasury would at once be relieved; because if the Bill passed through its stages on Friday a telegram would be sent to Mentone, and the messenger would come from Mentone in such time that the Royal Assent would be given on Tuesday, the 28th, or possibly even on Monday; and if it were, it would not be a bit too soon to insure perfect deliberation and regularity in all the proceedings. You say the House of Lords is bound, of course, to accelerate its proceedings. We have no right to expect the House of Lords to alter its procedure in order to enable Members of the House of Commons to debate at a certain length a Motion that they may bring forward. I adhere, therefore, in the strictest manner to the statement I have made. I think I have shown that the errors in this postscript are such as to render entirely unsafe this letter as a basis of calculation.

Mr. B. SAMUELSON: I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman a Question having relation to the answer he has just given. I have not given him private Notice; but I believe he will be able to answer it. I wish to ask if he can state whether, in his experience, it has ever occurred before that a charge of misrepresentation on the part of the responsible Ministers of the Crown, purporting to come from an hon. Member of the House, has been made anonymously?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I am not a great student of anonymous letters in newspapers. I am not aware that I have ever written an anonymous letter in the course of my life, and I must confess that I have no wish to encourage the practice by noticing them. I may frankly own that I did not dwell on the letter itself as much as I ought to have done. It seemed to me that, like a lady's letter, the virtue of it lay in the postscript. I hope it does not charge me with misrepresentation; but if it does I am sorry for the writer.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVATE BILLS—SALE OF CANALS TO RAILWAY COMPANIES.

Mr. SALT asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether, in view of the importance of maintaining the waterways of the Country in an efficient condition, he will consider how far it may be convenient and desirable to refer other Bills that contain powers for the sale of Canals to Railway Companies to the Committee to which the Bill affecting the Regent's Canal has been referred?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, that there were only two Railway Bills before Parliament this Session which proposed to acquire Canals. One was the Regent's Canal Bill, which had already passed the second reading in this House, and been referred to a Hybrid Committee; and the other was the Thames and Severn Canal Bill, which had passed the second reading in the House of Lords. If the latter came down from the Lords, he would consider whether it might not be well to move a Resolution, referring it to the same Committee. The Board of Trade intended to make a special Report as regarded both of those Bills, and those Reports would be in the hands of hon. Members when the Bills were referred to the Committee.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. GOSCHEN wished to ask a Question of his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin). The hon. Member had a Notice on the Paper to call attention to-night to the block in Irish Land Courts. The subject was discussed yesterday at some length; and now, if the hon. Member proceeded with his Motion, it would be again discussed. Many Members on both sides of the House were anxious to discuss the Navy Estimates; and he wished to ask the hon. Member whether, in order that that might be done, he would not proceed with his Motion in regard to the Land Courts?

Mr. CHAPLIN said, he was absent from the House yesterday; but he had noticed that a discussion had taken place on the subject to which he wished to call attention. He was not at all anxious to proceed with a further discussion now, because he thought that the subject had been already pretty well threshed out, and because the block in the Courts appeared to be universally admitted. He was, however, anxious that the definite sense of the House should be expressed on the subject, and was, therefore, desirous of moving the Resolution. As, however, there would be very little probability of a division being taken that evening were he to do so, he was willing to yield; and the Resolution would, therefore, not be brought forward. He did not wish to interfere with the discussion of the Navy Estimates, especially as so much time had already been consumed by the unusual length of the Ministerial replies to Questions.

Mr. J. R. YORKE asked when the Easter Recess would commence, and what would be its probable duration?

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that next week—probably on Monday—he hoped to be able to make a communication to the House on that subject.

Mr. W. H. SMITH appealed to his noble Friend the Member for Chichester (Lord Henry Lennox) to postpone the Motion which stood in his name on the Paper. That Motion dealt with the subject of the strength and condition of Her Majesty's Navy; and it would be quite impossible to do justice to it that evening if the Estimates were to be brought forward subsequently, unless the latter were not to be adequately discussed.

Lord HENRY LENNOX said, it was with very great regret he felt bound to relinquish that opportunity of bringing before the House a question of great interest to the country. He recognized, however, that, after all, his statement could only be a statement of a private Member, and could not forget that the country was looking forward to the Financial Statement of the Secretary to the Admiralty in hopes of learning what steps the Government intended to take in the present critical period of their Naval history. Taking these matters into consideration, and remembering that when he should bring his Motion forward he should have to occupy more time than he usually did in that House, and that the discussion would probably last many hours, he could not refuse to agree to the request of his right hon. Friend; and he would, therefore, postpone his Motion. He accompanied that renunciation with a special appeal to the Prime Minister for an assurance that an early day would be devoted to the discussion of the subject to which he had intended to call attention.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that, in the present condition of Public Business, it would be impossible for him to name a Government day for the discussion of the noble Lord's Resolution. He admitted that the subject was one which ought to be debated, and hoped that an early day for the discussion would be obtained by the usual methods at the command of private Members. If, however, a considerable portion of the Session should elapse and no day be obtained in the manner which he had indicated, it might be reasonable for the Government to make some proposal.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE asked the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) whether he intended to proceed with his Motion on the subject of the Treaty signed by Lord Lyons and M. de Freycinet continuing the existing state of things with regard to fisheries, trade-marks, and navigation? The Treaty was not yet in the possession of the Members of the House, because there were a few words which did not correspond in the English and French versions, but which were at present being put right by the two Governments concerned. Until they were so put right, the Treaty could not be placed before the House; and as it had not even appeared in the newspapers hon. Members must as yet be ignorant of its terms.

Mr. MAC IVER said, it was his intention to proceed with his Motion that night.

Mr. H. SAMUELSON wished to ask Mr. Speaker whether it was in Order for an hon. Member to call attention to a Treaty, which he declared had been signed, but which had not yet been laid on the Table, and of which, therefore, the House had no official cognizance?

Mr. SPEAKER: The course proposed to be taken by the hon. Member is, no doubt, very unusual; and a Motion made under those circumstances would be very disadvantageous to his own interest. But if the hon. Member thinks it right to go on he is in Order.

In reply to Sir Stafford Northcote,

Mr. GLADSTONE said, he hoped to be able to take the Report of Supply on the Army and Navy Estimates to-morrow evening. With regard to Report on the Supplementary Estimates, he should state to-morrow whether it would be taken as the first item of Business on Monday.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the Prime Minister whether, if it was intended to proceed with the Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill to-morrow, he would give an assurance it would not be gone on with after 9 o'clock?

MR. GLADSTONE said, the answer given by his right hon. Friend (Mr. Dodson) was that the Bill would not be gone on with after half-past 10; but with respect to to-morrow evening, he did not think there was any reasonable expectation of bringing it on at all.

MR. HEALY asked the hon. and learned Member for Bridport whether it was his intention to proceed that evening with his Motion on the subject of the sale of Patent Medicines?

MR. WARTON replied, that the course which he should follow must depend upon the advice which he might receive from the Leader of his Party.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I would appeal to my hon. and learned Friend not to proceed with his Motion.

MR. CAINE: May I ask the hon. and learned Member for Bridport who is the Leader of his Party?

[No answer.]

NOTICES.

LAND ACT (IRELAND), 1881 (DORMANT PROVISIONS).

MR. W. H. SMITH: I beg to give Notice that on an early day after Easter I shall call attention to certain dormant provisions of the Land Act (Ireland), 1881, and move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, further legislation is imperatively required to provide increased facilities to enable tenants to acquire the freehold of the land in their occupation on just and reasonable terms."

MR. O'DONNELL: On Monday I will ask the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government, Whether, in view of the admission by the Government of the necessity of inquiring into the Land Act, he will take steps to rescind the recent Resolution condemning an inquiry into the Act by the other House of Parliament?

THE COMMERCIAL TREATY WITH FRANCE—RESUMPTION OF NEGOTIATIONS.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he had seen a statement that negotiations were either resumed, or about to be resumed, between England and France with reference to the Commercial Treaty. He should like to get some information from the Government on the subject as to the correctness or otherwise of the statement.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE replied, that no instructions had been given to Lord Lyons, and that there had been no re-opening or resumption of negotiations. But a desire had been shown on the part of certain Representative Bodies in France that negotiations should be resumed, and it was possible that some conversation might have been held on the subject; but no instructions had been given.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

MAJOR BOND, STIPENDIARY MAGISTRATE (IRELAND).

RESOLUTION.

MR. CALLAN rose to call attention to the appointment of Major Bond as a stipendiary magistrate in Ireland, and the conduct of the Chief Secretary for Ireland in relation thereto; and to move—

> "That this House regrets that the Chief Secretary did not exercise more care and better discretion in appointing this gentleman to such a responsible office."

The hon. Gentleman said, that the first intimation the Irish Members had as to the antecedents of Major Bond was the Question put to the Chief Secretary in that House on the 10th of February by the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings). The facts, as disclosed in that Question, and not denied in the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, were startling in themselves; but the reply of the Chief Secretary was of a much more startling and surprising character than any of the statements in the Question. The question was one vitally affecting the character of a gentleman appointed to a most responsible office in Ireland. It was a question whether he had been guilty of swearing recklessly in open Court; and whether he had been dismissed from office by an English Corporation. What was the answer given by the Chief Secretary? The House would bear in mind that, at the present time, in Ireland, the ordinary safeguards of personal liberty were suspended, and that everything, so far as regarded the maintenance of order, depended upon the accuracy of the evidence and of the care and discretion of the stipendiary magistrates. Here they had a gentleman appointed to a responsible office who had been dismissed, not more than a month previously, from the office of Chief Superintendent of Police in Birmingham. In reply to the Question put to him by the hon. Member for Ipswich, the Chief Secretary said it was not his duty to enter into the question. He asked the House what was more incumbent upon the Chief Secretary than to inquire into the antecedents of Major Bond? The right hon. Gentleman stated that he hoped his hon. Friend would believe that the Government had good reasons for the appointment of Major Bond, and that it was not his duty to go into the charge to which his hon. Friend had referred. He would now content himself with reading a true statement of the facts of the case as copied from the English Press. He would read a report of the proceedings at the Warwickshire Quarter Sessions. It was a report, the accuracy of which had not been impugned, and it appeared in *The Birmingham Daily Post*—a journal that supported the right hon. Gentleman, and was also in favour of the Caucus. Among the applicants for the renewal of licences was one Stevens, and it appeared that on his case being called on, the Justices, without hearing evidence, said they should refuse to renew his licence, although it was a rule that an applicant was always entitled to a renewal, unless he had done something disentitling him to a licence at all; and, in fact, Stevens' counsel informed the Justices that their refusal to renew was entirely at variance with the Act of Parliament. At the meeting of the Justices Major Bond was examined, and said he had received a report from some of his subordinates in reference to the case. Prior to the annual meeting of the Justices on August 25, he had made no communication to the Justices with reference to the case; but at the last meeting he made a verbal report to them in their private room; but Mr. Dugdale, one of the Justices, asked Major Bond whether the report was in the nature of an objection, to which a reply was given in the affirmative, and continuing said that after considering the report the Justices went into Court, and said the application would be postponed until next meeting. At the adjourned meeting Major Bond stated that he "believed" he saw the record of Stevens' conviction before the Justices. After hearing several cases he continued that the Justices renewed several licences, but refused that of Stevens. Ultimately, the magistrates before whom the appeal was heard stated their belief that Major Bond's case had broken down. The question to be decided was, in their opinion, one of fact, and they were clear in their view that it would not be right to grant a case for an appeal. The result of the appeal was reported to the next meeting of the magistrates, an immediate opportunity being thus afforded Major Bond of denying the accuracy of the report of the case, or of explaining his evidence; and his explanation was considered by the magistrates at four meetings, and their opinion thereon was communicated to the Watch Committee, at a meeting of the Watch Committee on November the 29th. The Chief Secretary must have read it, unless he was either badly served or neglectful of his duty. If he did not ask for the magistrates' Report, he showed great negligence; if, on the other hand, he did ask for it and read it, it was an extraordinary statement for him to make that it was not his duty to go into the question. A communication was received from the borough magistrates which recited the facts of the case, and then stated further—

> "At the meeting of the Justices on the 25th of October, 1881, as the evidence of Major Bond was contrary to the facts of the case, he was called in, and an opportunity given him of explaining it, when he replied that he was not even present in Court at the adjourned Licensing Sessions on the 15th of September; and on being asked why he had not, therefore, refused to answer the questions as to what had taken place at that meeting, he answered that he understood he was only answering supposititious questions. The result of these remarkable proceedings appear to be (1) that a grave miscarriage of justice has taken place in consequence of the magistrate at Warwick being seriously misled by erroneous evidence as to facts; (2) that the principal witness in giving this erroneous evidence was Major Bond, the Chief Superintendent

of Police, who stated that judgment was given in the matter by the Birmingham Justices without a public hearing of the case, and when called before the Justices for the purpose of explanation, stated that he was not even present in Court at the hearing of the case upon which he was then giving evidence; (3) that the interests of the public are compromised by the decision of the Justices of Birmingham being overruled, and a licence granted by the Warwickshire Justices, in consequence of such evidence, to a person who, in the opinion of the Birmingham Justices, is most unfit and improper to hold such licence. (Signed),

"THOMAS ARCY, Mayor.
J. C. SNEYD KYNNERSLEY, Stipendiary.
J. JAFFEREY.
J. D. GOODMAN.
THOMAS MARTINEAU.

"At a subsequent meeting of the Committee they passed a Resolution in which they concurred in the Resolution of the Justices in ceasing to regard Major Bond with confidence."

The matter, however, was further adjourned, and Major Bond was again heard in his own defence; and, after denying statements which he had previously made, he again returned to them. The only member of the Committee who dissented from the Resolution was Alderman Manton; but he afterwards disclaimed all attempt to justify Major Bond. Finally, at a meeting of the Watch Committee, the following Resolution was adopted:—

"That the Council be informed that the magistrates, having passed a Resolution to the effect that they could not continue to regard Major Bond with confidence, and this Committee, after full and fair inquiry, have passed this Resolution—'That having regard to the difficulties that have arisen on previous occasions between this Committee and Major Bond, and the want of confidence now expressed in him by the magistrates of the borough, in which this Committee has concurred, it is, in the judgment of this Committee, necessary to the interests of the public service that he be called upon to resign.'"

This was the comment of *The Birmingham Daily Post* upon the matter—

"Unless Major Bond has some much more satisfactory explanation of his conduct to offer," *The Post* said, "than those which were forthcoming at this interview with the magistrates, we fear he must not look for a favourable verdict."

A fortnight having elapsed, he (Mr. Callan) found forthwith a report in *The Post* that, at a meeting of the Watch Committee to consider the matter, Major Bond admitted, according to his own statement, that there could be no graver subject than the object for which the meeting was convened. His conduct, the Major went on to say, must either be more than "eminently unsatisfactory," or else the charges amounted to nothing. The Chairman of the Committee (Mr. William Hart), however, put it succinctly enough, and in language which he (Mr. Callan) would adopt. Addressing Major Bond, he said that they further had relied upon his statement as a matter of fact, as the head of the police had led them to believe that he was present—when, as a matter of fact, he was not—at the proceedings, which constituted an important element in the decision of the Justices. The charge against Major Bond was that he had been guilty of making a statement that virtually amounted to false swearing. The question was, did Major Bond, when he applied to the Chief Secretary, state that he had been obliged to retire from the office of Chief Superintendent of Police at Birmingham? No doubt he had given the Chief Secretary glowing accounts as to how he had preserved the peace in Birmingham. On leaving the Police Force of Birmingham Major Bond addressed to the men—he (Mr. Callan) was going to say a pastoral—but a declaration somewhat Napoleonic in its tone. It ran—

"Major Bond, in resigning the position of Chief Superintendent of the Birmingham Police Force, wishes to express to the officers and men his high appreciation of their conduct, discipline, and energy, as a consequence of which this once turbulent town, over which he had been placed as a guardian of life, property, and public morality, has settled down into a most satisfactory state of quiet and good order."

[A RADICAL MEMBER: Hear, hear!] But, nevertheless, he had been dismissed by the Borough Justices, dismissed by the Watch Committee, and dismissed by the Town Council of Birmingham by a majority of 48 to 10—that was to say, that if he had not resigned when he did he would have been dismissed 48 hours afterwards. What was the next event that happened to Major Bond? They next found him installed by the Chief Secretary as a stipendiary magistrate in Ireland. The Chief Secretary's defence was that it was not his duty to investigate a charge like that—a charge amounting substantially to one of false swearing. He wished, then, to know whether Major Bond had concealed from him the fact that he had been obliged to retire from his post in Birmingham? Had the case been one of emergency there might have been some excuse for the appointment; but it was well known that there were numbers of deserving retired officers in Her Majesty's Service who had applied for, and would gladly have accepted, the post. He would like to know what was the private influence that was brought to bear upon the Chief Secretary; for surely no public influence could be brought to bear with such a declaration, not a snatched vote of the Dublin Corporation, but the reiterated vote of the guardians of the peace and order in Birmingham, expressing their disapproval of Major Bond's conduct, and their want of confidence in him. Anything in the way of comment that he could offer on the facts he had stated would be so superfluous that it would be absolutely thrown away. He (Mr. Callan) appealed to English Members opposite, however anxious they might be to follow the lead of the Government, to say if Major Bond was the sort of person to be sent to Ireland in the responsible position of a resident magistrate? He would endorse as his own the words of *The Birmingham Daily Post*, which were that—

> "The real point was this. Major Bond had given evidence of a matter as having occurred in his presence, when he afterwards admitted that he was not present, and which he did not witness himself."

But having been removed from his office by the Corporation of Birmingham, the Chief Secretary had absolutely promoted him, either recklessly or without due inquiry, in defiance and in spite of the vote and decision of the Town Council of Birmingham. He charged the Chief Secretary with recklessness. When even a servant was engaged the first thing an employer inquired into was his character. But in this case, where it was of the highest importance that the selected candidate should be trustworthy and faithful, the Chief Secretary selected a man who had been dismissed for false swearing. If the liberty of the people of Birmingham was likely to be endangered by the retention of Major Bond as Chief Superintendent of Police, surely the liberty of the people of Ireland at the present juncture was more likely to be endangered by his presence there in the capacity of a resident magistrate. The hon. Member concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Amendment proposed,

> To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "this House regrets that the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland did not exercise more care and better discretion in appointing Major Bond to the responsible office of a stipendiary magistrate in Ireland,"—(*Mr. Callan,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, the Motion of the hon. Gentleman was a Vote of Censure upon himself for not having exercised more care and discretion. In appointing Major Bond to such a responsible office there were really two questions to be considered—one, whether he (Mr. W. E. Forster) was justified in making the appointment; and the other, whether, having made that appointment, he ought to have cancelled it. The hon. Member for Louth seemed to suppose that he knew all the circumstances of the case before he made the appointment.

Mr. CALLAN: No, I beg pardon; I said distinctly that either you were wrong in making it without due inquiry, or else you made the appointment with a reckless disregard of the circumstances.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Well, those were the words with which the hon. Member had concluded; and he (Mr. W. E. Forster) would have to reply to the two charges, the real point being—was he justified in making the appointment? He trusted that he might be allowed to give some of the grounds on which he made the appointment. The hon. Member seemed to suppose that the post of temporary resident magistrate was a promotion for a man who had held the office of Chief Constable at Birmingham; but his own opinion was that the position was certainly an inferior one—at any rate, so far as the emoluments were concerned. Owing to the state of Ireland it was necessary to appoint several temporary resident magistrates, and Major Bond was one of those last appointed for a period of three months, their continuance in office after that time depending upon the state of the country and the manner in which they discharged their duties. Major Bond made his application for an appointment in the usual way, and private influence was not brought to bear in the matter. He heard that Major Bond had been an efficient officer at Cardiff and at Birmingham. He had never seen stronger testimonials than those of Major Bond. Mr. Kynnersley, the stipendiary magistrate at Birmingham, wrote that he should at all times have pleasure in bearing testimony to the admirable manner in which Major Bond had managed the police force, and spoke of his judicious dealing with crowds in the streets, and of his good humour, courage, and firmness. There was also a testimonial from the Recorder of Birmingham, who stated that Major Bond had raised the police force of the town to a very high state of efficiency, and wished him every success in the application he was making. The hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings) had also given him a testimonial, in which he stated that Major Bond had discharged his duties in a most efficient manner, especially with regard to the great public meetings which had been held in Birmingham. The brother of the right hon. Gentleman who was President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain) likewise testified to Major Bond's efficiency, and it was on the strength of the various testimonials he received that the appointment was made. The hon. Gentleman, in making his statement that night, said that he (Mr. W. E. Forster) had declared that it was not his business to investigate the charge against Major Bond; but what he had said—or, at any rate, what he had meant to say—was that he did not consider it his business to try the matter in the same manner as it was the business of the magistrates of Birmingham to try it. He had thought it, however, his duty to look into the charge, and he lost no time in doing so. At the time he was speaking of Major Bond had been appointed; but he sent for him, and said it had become necessary for him to inquire into the charges that had been made against him, and to consider whether he would have to cancel the appointment. Cancelling the engagement after Major Bond had been appointed was a very serious thing, and it would have been a gross act of injustice if he had not, at any rate, waited three months. When he came to examine into the matter, however, he confessed it did not appear that he should be justified in doing so. Major Bond had made a mistake; but that was all. He stated—

> "I also was examined as a witness, but only to prove a formal notice of objection, and up to the moment of entering the witness box, I had no idea I was called upon to make any other statement. I was about to leave the box when the Bench addressed me, asking about the procedure of the magistrates already spoken of."

If it had been clear that it had been perjury he would not have hesitated a moment about dismissing Major Bond; but he did feel a great doubt whether he ought to dismiss him without being sure it was not merely an accidental circumstance. Upon that matter he went on with the examination; and, in the first place, it appeared to him quite clear that what Major Bond had done had had nothing to do with the decision of the magistrates in the case. This was fully shown in a letter written by the Recorder to the Mayor of Birmingham in reference to the subject. He personally was inclined to believe that this was a pure mistake on Major Bond's part; and he believed this was the general opinion at Birmingham, so far as he could make it out. The stipendiary magistrate had written a letter, in which he expressed his belief that Major Bond was taken quite by surprise, and had confounded two altogether different transactions, and added—

> "I can only state that there was hardly a magistrate on the Bench who did not rejoice at his appointment and believe he was well fitted for the post."

What was the opinion of the Town Council after having had the whole matter before them? It was this—An instruction was given to the Town Clerk to inform Major Bond, in answer to his letter, that the magistrates had no intention of imputing to him, nor did they impute in their Report to the Watch Committee, the wilful misstatement of facts. The Town Council, on the motion of the Mayor, also passed a Resolution to the effect that the resignation of Major Bond be accepted, and that it regretted the circumstances that led to it. They also allowed him six months' salary. The Mayor, in proposing this Resolution, said he entirely acquitted Major Bond of all intentional misrepresentation, and believed that he might say the same of every member of the Council, and every member of the Watch Committee, and he completely exonerated Major Bond from any intentional wrong-doing. In the face of such a statement, in the face of the testimony of the Recorder, and of the Resolution of the magistrates, would he have been justified in inflicting upon Major Bond a stigma which never could have been removed, and which would have appeared as if the Government entirely believed in the charge? He would at once acknowledge that had he known that there was this dispute about Major Bond he would not have appointed him. ["Hear, hear!" *from Irish Members.*] In saying that he was not giving an opinion against Major Bond; but he had difficulties enough in Ireland, without raising a Major Bond difficulty, and he should have looked about for somebody against whom nothing could be said. He, however, entirely acquitted Major Bond of any misrepresentation to himself. If he himself had been to blame at all—although he thought that anybody else would have done the same as he did with the strong testimonials that he had before him—it was in not doing in this case what he had done in almost every case—namely, to write and make personal inquiry. He thought, however, he was justified in taking the course he did under the circumstances, for the Government were under considerable pressure to find good men, and he had reason to suppose that Major Bond was well fitted for the post. He was appointed only for three months, and his continuance in his appointment must depend on two things—whether they wanted those temporary magistrates any further, and whether he was a person who ought to be so continued. Although he had subjected himself to much trouble in that matter, which he might, perhaps, have avoided by taking a different course, he yet felt that he should have acted in a cruel and harsh manner towards Major Bond if he had cancelled the appointment. Nothing had been brought before him which led him to suppose that Major Bond would make a bad magistrate in Ireland, although that gentleman had made a mistake which certainly ought not to have been made, but which was not likely to occur again, and one which he honestly thought almost any Member of the House might have fallen into.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he did not think the right hon. Gentleman had been very successful in the defence he had made in that case. The right hon. Gentleman himself admitted he had been careless in making the appointment. If the position of temporary resident magistrate in Ireland was inferior to the position of Chief Superintendent of Police in Birmingham, ought it not to have struck the Chief Secretary that there was something peculiar in a man resigning his position for one of lower emolument and less honour? Ought it not, at least, to have produced in the mind of the Chief Secretary sufficient suspicion to cause him to institute some inquiries in Birmingham, or to learn from Major Bond himself the circumstances of his resignation? Major Bond did not give him the slightest information on the subject, merely stating he had resigned. Major Bond, at least, seemed to have been very unlucky and somewhat careless in his way of stating important matters, both to the Chief Secretary and the magistrates for Birmingham—unlucky as regarded what he did state and what he did not state. He could well understand the magistrates acquitting Major Bond of wilful misrepresentation, and no Member of that House wished to charge him with it. But he was guilty on both occasions of carelessness and indifference about the truth, or lack of presence of mind regarding the truth, or he was, at least, very loose in his way of putting very important facts. The House had to consider whether such a man was suitable for holding an important position in Ireland, where the liberties of the people depended on truthfulness and scrupulous care in representing words and acts. Might there not be the same lapse of memory about the truth, the same indifference or carelessness on the part of Major Bond in his dealings with Ireland? Nothing could be more fatal to a man in his present position than that he should be liable to make such mistakes. If the Chief Secretary had seriously considered the interests and the feelings of the Irish people he might, on learning the facts of the case, have risen to the height of the occasion and have cut short Major Bond's career. Since the days of Cornwallis the standing complaint in Ireland had been that discarded men who could not, or would not, be trusted in England were sent to fill important positions in Ireland. He begged to support the Resolution.

MR. WIGGIN, as a magistrate of Birmingham, testified to the accuracy of the account given by the Chief Secretary of the proceedings relating to Major Bond. He knew nothing of Major Bond's judicial capabilities; but, having been chief magistrate of Birmingham, and being long connected with that borough, he could state that that gentleman had succeeded in organizing there one of the most efficient police forces in the Kingdom; that he had improved the condition of the town, and put down rowdyism for which it had been notorious a few years ago; and under his *régime* the town enjoyed greater peace and tranquillity than under any of his predecessors. Major Bond undoubtedly made a great mistake in the evidence he gave at Warwick; but, at the same time, Major Bond had the sympathy of the great proportion of the people of Birmingham, and there was rejoicing when it was found that he had got another appointment, and great regret expressed when the question was raised in Parliament by the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Jesse Collings). The Chief Secretary for Ireland could not have acted otherwise than he had done in the circumstances. It would have been a harsh and cruel course for him to have dismissed Major Bond.

MR. LEAMY said, he thought the Chief Secretary had virtually conceded the whole case. He said if he had known that this question would have been raised about Major Bond he would never have appointed him; but now, notwithstanding that this question had been raised, the Chief Secretary said he had testimonials in his possession which would justify him in retaining him in his appointment. The Chief Secretary had stated that no miscarriage of justice had resulted from the evidence of Major Bond; but the very first sentence of the magistrates' Report stated that a great miscarriage of justice had taken place in consequence of his evidence. The result of a most exhaustive examination by three different bodies was that he was called upon to resign. They were told that Major Bond brought the police of Birmingham to a high state of efficiency. Well, then, why did not the magistrates of Birmingham retain him? But now, when the liberty of the subject no longer existed in Ireland, a man who had lost the confidence of all his employers in Birmingham was appointed a magistrate in Ireland. He would ask hon. Members whether that was an appointment which ought to be maintained? He could understand the Chief Secretary saying that, having appointed Major Bond for three months, he did not wish to get rid of him before the time was out. But now that the three months were about to expire, Irish Members had a right to ask the Chief Secretary not to continue Major Bond in an office to which the right hon. Gentleman said he never would have appointed him had he known of the charges which were brought against him.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER) said, he was glad the hon. Member for Longford disclaimed imputing any intention to deceive on the part of Major Bond. The Motion before the House was a censure upon the Chief Secretary for Ireland for appointing as magistrate in Ireland a man who, by his efficiency and energy, had won the confidence of the community of Birmingham. The facts of the case were these—At a licensing sessions a man applied for a renewal of his licence. On the original occasion the magistrates refused the application without hearing any sworn evidence—an irregularity which caused the subsequent proceedings to be set aside. Major Bond was examined, and, having proved certain formal matters which he was called upon to prove, he was asked some question, and in reply spoke of matters of common knowledge and not in dispute at all. He did not intend what he said to be taken as if he spoke on oath; and the statement which he did make was really in the nature of an admission. It was an act of indiscretion on the part of Major Bond; but anyone acquainted with Courts of Law must know that such things were done frequently, when a witness in reply to questions forgot that he was speaking not from his own knowledge but from hearsay. The magistrates, whose decision had been reversed, were indignant at the slur cast upon their proceedings, and there was a disposition on their part to censure Major Bond. When the Resolution calling for Major Bond's resignation was carried into effect the Mayor, on the part of the Bench of Magistrates, said that one and all heartily wished him a great measure of success in his future career; he was presented with a half-year's salary; a sum of £450, being contributions towards a superannuation fund, which they could have retained, was returned to him by the Corporation; and a testimonial was got up in a few hours signed by 4,000 inhabitants of Birmingham, wishing that he should be retained in his position. The question, so far as concerned his right hon. Friend, was whether he was in any degree censurable for having engaged Major Bond. It was conceded that he was not. ["No, no!"] He certainly understood that the hon. Member who last spoke—in particular the hon. Member for Wexford—said Major Bond's testimonials were admirable.

Mr. LEAMY said, that what he stated was that assuming that the right hon. Gentleman was not to be blamed in making the appointment, yet when it was said that had the Chief Secretary for Ireland known that charges could be brought against Major Bond he never would have made the appointment, the question then was whether the Chief Secretary for Ireland should continue the appointment after having had an opportunity for inquiry?

The SOLICITOR GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Porter) said, the testimonials which came before the Chief Secretary for Ireland being exceptionally high, he did not think any fair man would blame the Chief Secretary for Ireland making the appointment originally. He did not understand his right hon. Friend to say that if he had known everything he would have considered Major Bond an unfit person; but only that, rather than raise any question, he would not have made the appointment. Then, was the House to pass a censure on Major Bond because he had made a very natural mistake? Such a proceeding would be foreign to the practice of the House of Commons. Major Bond had been guilty of no misconduct in any other position of life. What he had said upon the occasion referred to constituted a serious mistake. Who had not made great and serious mistakes in the course of his life? Major Bond had been appointed to the position in Ireland, which he was eminently qualified to fulfil, by previous training and previous conduct; and, therefore, he considered the foundation for this Motion had entirely failed.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, that, as a Warwickshire magistrate, he was well acquainted with Mr. Kynnersley—the stipendiary magistrate of Birmingham—and Mr. Dugdale—the Recorder—and he believed that a fair representation of their views had been made. They had no wish to justify any inaccuracy into which Major Bond had been betrayed; but they set against the inaccuracy—which he (Mr. Newdegate) thought was very severely dealt with—the conduct of Major Bond in a most responsible position for many years. He thought he gathered from what had been quoted by the right hon. Gentleman, and from his own knowledge of these two eminent magistrates for the county, that they thought the right hon. Gentleman had done well—whether he had done so by accident or intentionally—to overlook a trifling mistake on the part of a most efficient officer, against whose character, before this unhappy occurrence, he (Mr. Newdegate) had never heard a whisper. He knew something of Birmingham, and something of the police. He believed it was perfectly true that Major Bond had brought the Birmingham Police Force into a state of efficiency which it never before attained. If the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was somewhat careless and did not consult the two right hon. Gentlemen the Members for Birmingham, he might be excused. He believed the right hon. Gentleman would have found, if he consulted his right hon. Friends, that their opinions were quite in accordance with those of the Mayor. He should not think it was likely they would have differed from the Mayor; and he protested against that which he considered to be a harsh proceeding on the part of the Corporation of Birmingham towards this efficient officer being used in the House of Commons for his further condemnation. He thought the right hon. Gentleman had acted with a sense—which did him honour—of what was due to his own decision and courage in refusing to remove Major Bond from his present position. He felt that they might well entertain much jealousy of the working of the Coercion Act, at present so unpopular in Ireland. He had never voted so unwillingly for any measure in his life. He would much rather have seen Ireland placed under military law, because that would have formed no precedent for future legislation, as he feared this Coercion Act would. He was compelled to deprecate much of what had happened in Ireland; but, while lamenting the state of Ireland, and confessing that he would have voted for even more stringent measures, he could assure the House that, in his opinion, as an old Warwickshire magistrate, Her Majesty's Government had in Major Bond a person who would act with good temper and with courage in the position to which he had been appointed.

MR. HEALY said, it had been forgotten that the gentleman who gave Major Bond a testimonial was the very man who had signed the declaration that a gross miscarriage of justice had occurred in consequence of Major Bond's conduct. In reference to the friendly expression of the magistrates and people of Birmingham, he had never known any man who had passed a long time in a public office that something good had not been said, especially so as in the case of Major Bond, who appeared for the 30 years to have acted efficiently with regard to a turbulent population. He was not surprised, and was very glad that a solatium had been given; but that was not the point. The point was, that they had got a Coercion Act in Ireland, and that any magistrate in the position of Major Bond could send any man he liked to prison as a "suspect" whatever his position.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: I cannot permit that statement to go forth uncontradicted even for a single moment. No magistrate has the power to send any person to prison under the Protection Act. He has to report to me, and I have differed in opinion from the magistrate in many cases.

MR. HEALY, continuing, contended that the Chief Secretary for Ireland must rely for his information on the stipendiary magistrates, such as Major Bond. They claimed that such an appointment would not be so grave were the condition of Ireland normal. Now, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General for Ireland stated that Major Bond had committed an indiscretion; and the Chief Secretary for Ireland stated there was no intentional misrepresentation, that there was no paltering, and that he made a mistake. Were not these extraordinary euphemisms for what was something else — blank perjury? ["Oh, oh!"] He maintained the expression. It was to be borne in mind that Major Bond was on his oath. It was to be borne in mind that he was a practised witness—not a witness brought up for the first time, and in a state of hesitancy and in confusion as to what was going on in the Court. He was an old expert, he was a trained and hardened witness, and he was a man who was accustomed to taking the oath. He was there in the witness-box, an accustomed, trained witness; and were they to be told that this statement, made upon his oath, was not that which was untrue, but simply an indiscretion? He had never known anything so absolutely ludicrous as the Chief Secretary for Ireland's description of perjury. He said that if Major Bond had not remained so long in the box he would not have committed perjury. That was just like saying that when a warrant was presented to the Chief Secretary for Ireland for his signature it would not have been a warrant if he had not put his name to it. Many other hypotheses might be suggested as well as that. If Major Bond had never been born he would not have committed perjury. Major Bond got a number of excellent testimonials 10 days after the occurrence of this scandal; and in presenting them to the Chief Secretary, with the statement that he resigned his position, did it not appear to the right hon. Gentleman that he was, at least, guilty of disingenuousness? Did it not occur to him as a remarkable thing that Major Bond resigned a position of £900 a-year in Birmingham, and solicited one of £500 a-year in a remote district of Ireland? Were all the right hon. Gentleman's appointments made in this way? How was it that upon charges of a much lighter description than that of perjury men without a stain upon their characters had been obliged to resign by the Chief Secretary for Ireland? But Major Bond filled the office of reasonable suspector, and he supposed the Chief Secretary for Ireland thought any character good enough for a position of that kind in Ireland. Major Bond's evidence led to a grave miscarriage in connection with a licensing case in Birmingham. One of the chief matters he would have to deal with in Ireland was the giving of licences. That was a matter into which political feeling largely entered, and already a number of men had been deprived of their licences because they were arrested upon the warrant of the Chief Secretary for Ireland as "suspects." Major Bond would have to decide in cases of that kind; and what were they to think of his action when, in a case into which no political feeling entered, and in which there was no object involved, he gave evidence which led to a gross miscarriage of justice? The Chief Secretary for Ireland, with unusual frankness, confessed that had he known the facts he would not have appointed Major Bond; but, considering that he had only appointed him for three months, he ought to be in a position now to state whether he would continue him in his office. He knew nothing about Major Bond; but the Chief Secretary for Ireland told them, and the people of Ireland, that they were to be obliged to respect law and order. Before they could get the people of Ireland to do this, however, they must have gentlemen carrying out law and order whom the people were able to respect. Nobody would be able to respect Major Bond, because he had committed an indiscretion, which, according to the Statute Book, merited seven years' penal servitude. If a man committed perjury——

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I do not admit that in the slightest degree; and I do not admit that the statement which Major Bond made was untrue. The witness gave second-hand information, which I believe was correct, and which he ought to have given out of the witness-box.

Mr. CALLAN said, that no such statement as that then made by the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland appeared in the report of the case.

Mr. HEALY, resuming, said, the Chief Secretary for Ireland had put a very strange gloss on this conduct; but he would accept the theory. Major Bond was now in charge of an important district in Ireland, and when he sent up information about "suspects" he would not be upon his oath. There would also be no counter statement, so that the Chief Secretary for Ireland would have to deal with the information simply upon the Major's *ipse dixit.* What, then, were they to think of a man who, when he was in the witness-box, would make a statement which was admitted, on the authority of Mr. Kynnersley, to have led to a gross miscarriage of justice? What was the view which would be taken of Major Bond's character in Ireland? The people of Ireland would say—"We have to live under the *régime* of this man, who will have almost the power of life and death in his hands. If the English are so nice in their sense of justice, is a man to be sent over with these extraordinary powers — with his sword of tyranny hanging over our heads—who has been discharged by the Town Council of Birmingham by 48 votes to 10." He would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman, and ask if the ordinary just feelings of the people of Ireland were not to be weighed in this matter? Major Bond might be an angel in disguise; but, unfortunately, there was a stain upon his character. His point was—ought the Government, who had said they were so careful as to their dealings with Ireland, to allow this man to remain in office? He agreed with the Chief Secretary for Ireland that it might have been unkind to have appointed Major Bond and immediately to have sent him adrift; but now the three months were up, his appointment had expired, and the Government ought to say they could not give him further employment. The right hon. Gentleman, however, would not do that. This man would be appointed again; and in time to come Major Bond would step higher up the round of the official ladder, and they would have him on the carcase of the country for all time to come.

Mr. WILLIS said, he could not allow the speech of the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) to pass unnoticed. The charges the hon. Member had brought against Major Bond were preferred absolutely without any evidence. Major Bond had not committed perjury, and, in his opinion, had not been guilty of any act even deserving censure, or which could constitute a stain upon his character. The only mistake he made was in not specifying the source from which he derived the information he communicated; but, in a person of his position, having the superintendence of a large body of police, that could hardly be called an error, for it was quite usual for a Superintendent of Police to state as facts not only those things which were within his personal knowledge, but also those which were communicated to him by his men. The hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) was the first person to charge him with intentional misrepresentation. It was now admitted that every statement made by Major Bond was perfectly true; and those who conducted the investigation into the matter had absolutely acquitted him of any intentional misrepresentation. He did not think that the Birmingham magistrates were justified in the course which they had adopted. He protested strongly against the injury which had been done to Major Bond by the utterance of these unfounded statements; and he thought the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was perfectly right in not cancelling the appointment.

MR. BIGGAR said, he thought that not only had the people over whom Major Bond was appointed reason to complain, but the resident magistrates of the country had strong ground of complaint in the appointment, as one of their number, of this dismissed police-constable. It seemed to him that the issue before the House was whether or not, seeing that Major Bond had notoriously given evidence which was contrary to the truth, the Chief Secretary for Ireland used proper precaution and care in regard to his appointment, and whether Major Bond was a person of a character which justified his holding the position, which ought to be one of very great honour, and which gave very great power to the person filling it? He did not think the Chief Secretary for Ireland was justified in appointing a gentleman who had given evidence which led to a miscarriage of justice. They all knew that testimonials, while saying everything in a person's favour, said nothing against him; and when the Chief Secretary for Ireland had before him the fact that Major Bond resigned a lucrative position in Birmingham for an inferior one in Ireland, he should not have trusted to testimonials merely as to his character. The Chief Secretary for Ireland had referred to the very hard case it would be for Major Bond if the appointment were cancelled, saying that it would be a slur upon him for the remainder of his life. He should look at the logic of the other side. There were other parties whose interests should be consulted as well. There were the unfortunate people who were placed under his jurisdiction—the jurisdiction of this gentleman who had sworn in rather a careless manner. He did not see with the Chief Secretary for Ireland that Ireland should spare the feelings of Major Bond, seeing that the Town Council of Birmingham, who knew him for many years, did not spare him. There was, he thought, very great negligence shown in this appointment; and the right hon. Gentleman had shown a want of consideration for the feelings of the Irish people in not making the three months the full limit of Major Bond's stay in Ireland as an official of the Government. If he was such a very valuable officer as his friends represented, why did not they keep him in Birmingham, instead of relegating him to a remote district in Ireland at a much lower salary?

SIR EARDLEY WILMOT said, that, as an old Warwickshire magistrate, he took very great interest in this case. Having listened to the reasons which had been urged against the appointment of Major Bond, he entirely acquitted the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of anything approaching misconduct in this matter. He was pleased to be able to make this statement, because there were many things with which he disagreed in respect to the Irish policy of the Government. His right hon. Friend (Mr. W. E. Forster) had received testimonials of the very highest character of Major Bond from gentlemen with whom he (Sir Eardley Wilmot) was well acquainted. One of these was Mr. Kynnersley, Deputy Chairman of the Sessions; and the other (Mr. Dugdale) held the high and honourable position of Recorder of Birmingham. His right hon. Friend said that if he had known the whole of the circumstances, perhaps he would not have appointed Major Bond; but the question now was, having appointed him, should Major Bond, with those high testimonials in his favour, be dismissed? The hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy) had introduced the word "perjury" many times in the course of this discussion; but he (Sir Eardley Wilmot) had yet to learn that anything in Major Bond's conduct in any way amounted to perjury. Was it likely that two gentlemen like the Recorder of Birmingham and the Deputy Chairman of Quarter Sessions would write those testimonials if Major Bond had been guilty of perjury—a crime for which he was liable to seven years' penal servitude? What were the facts of the case? Major Bond, after giving in evidence facts which he knew, went on to give hearsay evidence of what had transpired in his absence. No doubt, that was a very wrong act to do; but still they knew that those who had the largest experience of Criminal Law were often themselves betrayed into stating as facts things which they had learnt on hearsay. The question was whether those facts, having come to the knowledge of his right hon. Friend, he had done right or wrong in not cancelling Major Bond's appointment? So far as he (Sir Eardley Wilmot) thought, the right hon. Gentleman did perfectly right. He thought his right hon. Friend had done right, not by accident, as had been stated by his hon. Friend the Member for North Warwickshire, but with honesty of purpose, uprightness, and with excellent intentions, and that he would have done wrong, after having made the appointment, to cancel it. He had much pleasure in recording his opinion respecting the appointment made by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, who had done what he thought was best in the circumstances of the case; and he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would not now be induced, from any expression of opinion on the part of Irish Members, either in that House or out of it, to cancel the appointment of Major Bond, who had been known for many years as an excellent police officer.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN could not help thinking that this question was a very unfortunate one. The plain fact was that Major Bond was practically dismissed by the Birmingham magistrates, and after that he was thought good enough to be sent to Ireland to administer the law there. They had heard a good deal of the character of Major Bond; but would it not be possible to find a place for him in all England, without sending him to Ireland, where it was surely desirable that men should not be appointed who had the slightest stain on their character? If Major Bond was a man of such excellent merit as he was represented to be in that House, why should not Birmingham have him back again? He would strongly advise the Chief Secretary, for the sake of law and order in Ireland, to undo the mistake which he made in appointing Major Bond to administer the law in Ireland.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 78; Noes 14: Majority 64.—(Div. List, No. 49.)

Main Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

NAVY—VICTUALLING—THE ROYAL MARINES.—OBSERVATIONS.

Sir HERBERT MAXWELL said, he wished to call attention to the system under which the Navy was now supplied with Foreign instead of British beef. It seemed to him that this new practice in their history of the British Navy, the obtaining of the food supplies of a belligerent Service from foreign sources, was open to criticism on more grounds than one. If the salting establishment at Deptford, from which the Royal Navy had hitherto been supplied, was to be discontinued, or had been discontinued, it ought not to have been done without some public discussion. He might anticipate, in some degree, the answer which the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan) would give on this subject. He would be referred to the shibboleth of the Party of which he was such a distinguished ornament—namely, "Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform." Well, it was well known that the best way to insure peace was to be prepared for war; and he wanted to know, if it was known by Foreign Powers that we drew our supplies for our Naval Force from foreign ports exclusively, if that would give the impression of being prepared for a state of war, in which those supplies would infallibly be cut off? It had been stated to him that there would be an estimated saving of £5,000 a-year under the new scheme. That was, of course, an important sum; but out of whose pockets did it come? It came directly out of the pockets of those who contributed most directly and most ungrudgingly to the taxation of this country—the agricultural classes—and he also wanted to know how that saving was calculated? The hon. Gentleman said that the price of the beef now being obtained for the Navy from America was 27 per cent cheaper than it had been when obtained from home sources. He believed he was speaking with strict accuracy when he said that the price of beef at New York and Liverpool was very nearly the same at the present moment. The difference was not more than ½*d.* per lb., and there was every indication of an assimilation in price as between the two countries. Why, then, for the sake of saving a comparatively small sum in the Estimates for one or two years, when there was no probability of continuance, should such a very serious blow be struck at English producers as was conveyed in this proceeding? There were two separate grounds on which he was inclined to object to it. First, the English Navy was intended for belligerent purposes, otherwise it had no *raison d'être,* and therefore it ought to be prepared at all times for a state of war; and, secondly, discouragement was given to agriculture by the change. Was this the time when it was fair to offer any discouragement to that class of men who had passed through, and were still passing through, a period of the greatest trial and depression in their industry—a trial and depression borne with the most exemplary patience? While he was no believer in the plan of seeking relief for agriculture by payments from Imperial sources, there was, he submitted, another way in which agriculture might fairly look for encouragement from the Government. They had on the West Coast of Scotland, to which he belonged, a homely proverb, which the House, he trusted, would pardon him if he quoted. When the herring fleets came in, the fish had to be cleaned, and at these times there were often to be seen large quantities of sea birds—called locally "sea-maws"—which came to feed upon the offal, and this had given rise to the somewhat homely proverb—"Keep your ain fish-guts for your ain sea-maws." That proverb might apply in this case. As far as possible and prudent, let the money obtained by taxation be spent among the people of this country; let the producers of this country, who did not hesitate to send their strongest sons and to spend their best blood in its service, have, at all events, the refusal of that which that which they considered their birthright—namely, the custom of the purchase departments of the Military Services. He might be told it was no duty of the Admiralty to protect agriculture. If it was not the special duty of the Admiralty, it was the duty of the Government, as a whole, to afford the legitimate encouragement and protection to agriculture which might be looked for. If it was necessary to draw from foreign sources, why not go to Colonial sources? Unless the hon. Gentleman could give some strong grounds for the continuance of the practice in question, a very great impression of dissatisfaction would be apt to arise in the minds of many.

SIR **HENRY FLETCHER** said, he wished briefly to call attention to the reconstruction of the Board of Admiralty, and to invite the opinion of the House as to the desirability of appointing a General Officer of the Royal Marines, who would fully understand the requirements of that branch of the Service, a member of the Board. For many years past the Marines had been under the control of the Board of Admiralty, which consisted of the First Lord of the Admiralty, three Naval Lords, and a Civil Lord. His contention was that the Marine Force, which composed something like one-third of the fighting men of the Navy, ought to be represented at the Board by one of their own officers. The senior Naval Lord of the Admiralty was, he believed, immediately charged with the administration of the Royal Marines. However much he might desire to do full justice to the Corps, it was impossible that the many other duties he had to perform could permit him to give sufficient attention to their requirements. This year it was proposed to make a reduction of something like 600 men in the Marines. He would venture to say that that reduction was not altogether wise, because the Marines were a most useful body of men, who were able to act either on sea or land. If a General Officer of Marines were appointed to the Board of Admiralty, the requirements of the Corps would be fully inquired into, and the grievances which he was sorry to say existed would be removed. A few years ago a battalion of Marines 1,000 strong was sent to take part in the Zulu War; but they were not allowed to land, while regiments composed of young soldiers, unable so well to stand the fatigues of a campaign, were sent to the front. On every occasion on which they had been called upon the Royal Marines had always done good service to the country. Not to go back further than the Ashantee War, he would remind the House how Colonel Festing and a handful of Marines so gallantly defended our interests before reinforcements arrived, and performed deeds far greater than any that were done in the subsequent stage of the campaign. Another grievance of the Royal Marines was that in the Transvaal War, when Laing's Nek was occupied by the Boers, 300 seasoned men of the Royal Marines were kept on board ship at the port, and the Blue-jackets—against whom he was the last man to say a word of complaint—were sent to the front. He did not say that the Blue-jackets did not do their duty; but he maintained that the Marines ought to have had the preference in being sent to the front. It was true that there were a Deputy Adjutant General and an Assistant Adjutant of Royal Marines connected with the Board of Admiralty; but this was not the same thing as their having a Representative on the Board, because they were subordinate officers, and, although their advice was given to the First Lord, they did not take any active part in the administration of the Admiralty. He believed he was right in saying that the Force of the Royal Marines was not so popular now as it was some years ago; and as there was a difficulty in procuring both officers and men, there must be something not quite sound in connection with the Corps. He hoped that the whole question would be considered seriously by the Board of Admiralty. The Marines were a force the country could not afford to lose; it was one of the most useful branches of the Military Service, and, up to the present time, had nobly done its duty. He trusted, therefore, that the Government would see their way to placing a General Officer belonging to the Corps upon the Admiralty to take care of this branch of the Service.

Colonel MAKINS wished to endorse the observations of the hon. Baronet. It had been stated that we were always liable to little wars, for which the Royal Marines would be one of the most useful branches of the Service; and it was therefore necessary that the force should be kept in a state of thorough efficiency. One of the greatest grievances of the Royal Marines was in having no direct Representative on the Board of Admiralty. The First Naval Lord only knew the Marines from his acquaintance with them on board ship, and was not well informed as to their general organization, or as to their capacity to serve as troops in the field. The Royal Marines felt that there was a certain stigma attaching to them, that they were "nobody's children," and that nobody was charged with looking after their interests. There was great stagnation in promotion amongst the officers, and their position had been greatly prejudiced by the new Warrants issued with respect to promotion in the Army, because officers in the Army, who were junior to the officers in the Marines formerly, could not now sit on courts martial, when on garrison duty, as their seniors, in addition to which they had lost from 80 to 100 steps by the changes that had taken place. The stagnation was so great that there was no chance of promotion for senior captains till 1885, as the senior major would not be obliged to retire till that year. When officers of the Marine Force compared their position with that of the other branches of Her Majesty's Services they found that, whereas in their own Corps it took at least 23 and probably 28 years' service to obtain field rank, in the Royal Engineers and Royal Artillery field rank was attained in 20 or 21 years; in the Infantry in 18 or 20 years; and in the Cavalry in 12 years. A scheme of promotion similar to that for the Army was urgently needed for the Marines. He hoped to hear from the Secretary to the Admiralty that some such plan as that suggested by the hon. Baronet the Member for Horsham (Sir Henry Fletcher) would be adopted. The Marines were a very valuable branch of the Service, and as such ought to be put on a par with the other branches of the Service.

Sir JOHN HAY said, he regretted extremely the arrangement which had been made by the Admiralty for abolishing the curing establishment at Deptford. That establishment had been instituted in consequence of the recommendations of a Committee some 20 years ago, which was appointed to consider the question of preserved meats. A great quantity of preserved meat was supplied at that time by a German, named Goldner; and the result of the supply was, he thought, not only illness on board the ships, but when the packets came to be opened they were found to be filled with anything but what they were represented to be. That was extremely unsatisfactory, and the result of the inquiry was a recommendation that they should kill their own meat, cure it themselves, and know what it was. In consequence of the recommendation the curing establishment was set up at Deptford. The plea for doing away with that establishment was that the course proposed by the Admiralty would be a gain of £5,000 a-year to the country. He thought that gain would be a great loss. We ought not to rely on a supply of meat which might fail us, nor to run the risk of deteriorating the supply of meat to the Navy. He therefore viewed with some alarm the announcement that the establishment in question was to be done away with. He trusted the House would hear from the Secretary to the Admiralty how they proposed to guard against the evils which might be supposed to accrue from their arrangement. With reference to the other topic which had been discussed, he some years ago brought forward a Motion of the same character as his hon. Friend's with reference to having a general officer on the Board of Admiralty. He had always thought that, looking to the great number of Marines and Marine officers who served under the Board, there might be some considerable advantage in having such an officer; and now that the Admiralty was being re-arranged, he thought it would be worth while considering whether the suggestion of the hon. Baronet the Member for Horsham might not be incorporated into the new Board. He trusted that before the Speaker left the Chair, in order that his hon Friend might make his statement, they would hear from his hon. Friend that arrangements would be made for discussing the Navy Estimates, if not Vote I., at least Vote II., on the first day after the discussion of the Army Estimates. If the hon. Gentleman would be good enough to arrange for this with those about him, it would be a very great convenience to the House, and, perhaps, to the hon. Gentleman himself. He would then get his first Vote without much difficulty, which would enable him to go on till June. He thought it would be discreditable to this great naval country if, while the Army Estimates were discussed the first day after the Easter Recess, the House would have no opportunity of discussing the Navy Estimates till nobody knew when.

MR. PULESTON said, he concurred in the remarks of the right hon. Baronet (Sir John Hay) as to the proposed abolition of the curing establishment at Deptford. He would also join in expressing the hope that the Secretary to the Admiralty would rise and be able to assure the House that a day would be afforded for the full discussion of the Navy Estimates. The feeling amongst the Royal Marines was that, notwithstanding the recent re-organization, the tendency was to legislate that splendid Corps out of existence altogether, and as long as that feeling prevailed certainly the efficiency of that Corps could not be very well promoted. He trusted that the suggestion of the hon. Baronet the Member for Horsham (Sir Henry Fletcher) would be carried out, that the Royal Marines should be represented on the Board of Admiralty, as there was no reason why a body composing one-third of the constituents of the Admiralty should not have at least one efficient representative on the Board.

MR. TREVELYAN said, he was really as much obliged to the hon. Baronet the Member for Wigton (Sir Herbert Maxwell) as he could be obliged to anyone under the circumstances for having called attention to the system under which the Navy was supplied with foreign instead of British beef. There was no Department in the Service which did harder, and, as he believed, better work than the Purchasing Department of the Navy, and it was a good thing that the strenuous public spirit with which that Department carried on its many-sided and most important business should sometimes come before the light of day. In no branch of the work had it less reason to dread that light than the one to which the hon. Baronet had referred. To begin with, it was worth knowing that the use of salted beef had relatively almost gone out in the Navy. The entire amount used in the year all the world over was under 1,000,000 lbs., while in the home ports alone 5,000,000 lbs. of fresh beef were annually used, not to speak of the enormous consumption which took place on the foreign stations, which was calculated at 3,500,000 lbs. This fresh beef was bought from contractors, who, at the home ports, it was needless to say, were Englishmen. He could hardly imagine that the hon. Member would maintain for a moment that it should be specified in the contract that the carcases should be those of English cattle;

though the terms of his Motion would almost appear to imply it. At Plymouth and Portsmouth as many as 60 or 80 cattle had to be brought in and slaughtered weekly; and he presumed that it was almost certain that the contractors did not obtain them altogether or to any great extent from home sources if it were only for the difficulties of Board of Trade regulations. Indeed, a clause in a contract to insist on beef being English would in its nature be so inquisitorial that it was doubtful whether we could get any respectable contractor to serve us at all on such terms. Could the hon. Member suggest to the Admiralty a method for distinguishing whether dead meat was of home or foreign origin? With regard to salt meat, a change had been recently made which affected the public purse, but which he very much doubted to have any bearing on the question as between home and foreign cattle. Up to 1870 all the salt beef for the Navy was cured at Deptford, the meat being supplied by contractors. The right hon. Member for the Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay) spoke about their having killed their own meat at Deptford. They had never killed a single animal at Deptford. The meat was not purchased in carcass, as the Admiralty only took certain portions; it was bought in the London market, and was supplied at the rate of 20,000 lb. every two days, while the process of curing lasted, and, in the opinions of those best qualified to judge, it was probably chiefly, and sometimes entirely, foreign meat. In 1870 one-third of the supply was procured in the shape of salt meat from America. It had been used in that proportion since that day in the Navy, and there had been no complaint at all of its quality. The very top market price was paid to the best curers, and yet the saving on the curing at Deptford was no less than 27 per cent. A hundred pounds of salt beef cured at Deptford cost £3 3*s*., omitting fractions, and 100 lbs. of American salt beef delivered at Deptford cost £2 6*s*. 1*d*. With this knowledge before them, the Admiralty this year determined to give up curing at Deptford, and by so doing they saved £5,000 a-year, and, as far as he could learn, very little less English beef was eaten in the Navy. But, apart from this consideration, in his opinion, the Admiralty had no choice in the matter. The Admiralty was, among other things, a great business Department, and unless it was managed on business principles, there would be no knowing where they might be landed. If the Admiralty were to begin to buy for other reasons than because goods were the best and the cheapest they would first have bad things and dear things; but the evil would not stop there, for if once the principle were established of buying for any but commercial reasons the door would be opened to favouritism and jobbery. He could give hon. Members the very gratifying assurance that if the Admiralty bought for no other reasons than those of goodness and cheapness, it was not our home producers who would suffer. He knew not what was the experience of private firms; but this he knew, that the Admiralty, whose only object was that the public should be served well and cheaply, found that it was best served from home sources. He had asked the head of their Purchase Department to name some articles produced at home which they found it better to procure abroad, and the list was ludicrously insignificant. Some black silk neck-handkerchiefs, for which the sailors had a special fancy, some electrical machines which were a speciality of a Paris company, and one or two trifles of that sort almost completed the list. The unworked metal, the coal, all the enormous mass of textile articles in use, all the wrought metal articles whatsoever, from 20-inch steel plates down to tin tacks, were of British production; and as long as that was the experience of a Department which bought on the scale of the Admiralty, he did not think British trade could be in a very unhealthy state. But there were other considerations besides trade considerations; and he trusted that hon. Members would allow him to show that those had in this case been attended to. He found in a Paper, dated the 17th of September last, the following questions asked:—

"1. What alteration of staff would take place at Deptford? 2. Can the required staff for curing beef be got in readily in case of war? 3. Are there any beef-curing firms at home equal in merit to the American?"

The answers returned were as follows:—

"1. No decrease in permanent staff, the men being taken on for curing as required, but saving in money of £188. 2. Yes; the labour is chiefly mechanical, not skilled. 3. The home industry is practically obsolete in face of the American competition, but could be readily revived if the necessity arose."

Having ascertained that in no possible contingency could any national inconvenience or military disadvantage arise from the change, the Admiralty had no choice but to adopt the course which had been adopted, and he trusted that that course would meet the approval of hon. Members. In regard to drawing supplies from the Colonies, he had every reason to believe that New Zealand would very soon be in a position to supply us more cheaply than we were supplied at present by America. He had been exceedingly interested with what was said about the Marine Corps; but if the hon. Baronet the Member for Horsham (Sir Henry Fletcher) and the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for South Essex (Colonel Makins) had heard what he had to say on that matter on the Estimates, much of their speeches would have been unnecessary. The Earl of Northbrook and his Colleagues had introduced a considerable change in the direction indicated; but he was authorized to say there was no prospect of any fresh change being made for a period which he could call an approximate period. In the opinion of the Board, the questions relating to the Marines, which were not questions referring to the Navy in general, were comparatively few, and on these questions the Marines were represented by the Deputy Adjutant General and his distinguished second in command. That the interest of the Corps had not been neglected the hon. Gentleman would see when he explained what had been done for the Marines. There was no part of the Navy in which anything like so great a change for the better had been wrought as in the Marine Corps, and in order to hear what the change had been hon. Gentlemen had only to wait until his speech on the Estimates.

STATE OF IRELAND—VISIT OF THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO TULLAMORE.

OBSERVATIONS.

MR. SEXTON, who had given Notice that he would call attention to the Press reports of the speech of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant at Tullamore, on Monday, the 6th instant, which appeared in the Dublin daily papers of the following day, and to the letter of Mr. Henry Egan, Chairman of the Tullamore Town Commissioners, which appeared in the "Freeman's Journal" of the 13th instant, with reference to the presence of soldiers and the presence and conduct of members of the police force at the meeting addressed by the Chief Secretary at Tullamore; also to call attention to the fact that the same report of his speech appeared in all the papers; that it was supplied to each of them by the same person, free of charge; and that the person who acted as reporter to the right honourable Gentleman on the occasion in question was in the habit of acting officially for the Irish Executive; and move—

"That, in the opinion of this House, it is undesirable that official reporters should be employed to report the political speeches of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant, and that the Constabulary forces of the Crown should be employed to intimidate the public, and prevent any expression of public opinion at the Chief Secretary's meetings in Ireland,"

said, although he was shut out by the Rules of the House from taking the sense of the House as to the Motion which was down on the Paper in his name, he was very glad to have the opportunity of bringing the subject before the House. He did so for two reasons. In the first place, the Motion had a personal bearing upon one who held the very distinguished position of a Minister of the Crown; and he thought hon. Members would agree with him that the sooner the Motion was disposed of the better. In the second place, the Easter Recess was close at hand, and as the Chief Secretary for Ireland might be tempted, during the Easter Recess, to repeat the proceedings in which he lately indulged in Ireland, he thought it would be for the public interest to ascertain as soon as possible under what conditions he proposed to repeat them. The question he concerned himself with was the method which the right hon. Gentleman took for bringing the substance of the speech which he delivered at Tullamore before the public. He need scarcely point out that when any person of the eminence of the right hon. Gentleman—a Minister of the Crown responsible for the affairs of Ireland—took upon himself at a time of great excitement and great tension of feeling to address public audiences in the country, it was of great importance that able and impartial Pressmen should be present to act as witnesses for the public, and note the demeanour of the people. The right hon. Gentleman had no right, by the agency of an official reporter, to manufacture public opinion. Now, there were three daily papers in Dublin. There was *The Freeman's Journal*, *The Irish Times*, and *The Daily Express;* and the invariable custom on the part of any public body or any public man who had public proceedings in contemplation was to inform those journals of his purpose. The right hon. Gentleman did not inform *The Freeman's Journal* or any member of its staff. *The Freeman's Journal* was the popular organ in Ireland. It was the organ to which the representatives of the public habitually resorted for information. Neither did he send information to *The Daily Express*, a very ably-conducted journal, the organ of what was called in the House the regular Opposition, and known as the Tory Party in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman confined it to a member of the staff of a third-rate newspaper in Ireland—*The Irish Times*. It was a newspaper of undefined politics, but at present was a supporter of the agrarian policy of the right hon. Gentleman. There was upon the staff of *The Irish Times* a gentleman named Murray. He wished it to be understood that against Mr. Murray he had not a single word to say. He believed him to be a gentleman of amiable disposition and affable manner; but Mr. Murray was practically—that was to say, in the financial sense of the word—an official reporter in Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman declared himself to be ignorant of the fact that Mr. Murray had been a reporter of the State Trials in 1880. He (Mr. Sexton) had occasion to be present at the State Trials, and he could testify that Mr. Murray was present from day to day in charge of the official reporting. Furthermore, he was aware that Mr. Murray habitually received from the Government in Ireland commissions to make official reports, which were very lucrative. He wished to impress upon the House that it was a matter of common knowledge in Dublin that Mr. Murray, who was the gentleman selected by the right hon. Gentleman to report his speech at Tullamore, was repeatedly and continually employed by the Executive upon lucrative official business. The right hon. Gentleman, when he proposed to deliver his speech, avoided giving notice to *The Freeman's Journal* or *The Daily Express*, and sent for a member of the staff of *The Irish Times*. Mr. Murray, therefore, had reason to be grateful to the Government, and to feel that gratitude which was supposed to spring from a lively sense of favours to come. When he did that, the right hon. Gentleman must have known that he was inviting a gentleman who was prepared to play a friendly part towards him. The right hon. Gentleman said there were three reporters present. No doubt, the local reporters were present. The report produced by Mr. Murray gave them abundant reason to think that the Chief Secretary for Ireland showed a very wise discretion in selecting him. He did not wish to make any charge of bad faith against Mr. Murray, but simply to say that he was so bound by ties of gratitude to the right hon. Gentleman that he was prepared to put the most favourable gloss on the whole proceedings. The report of the speech was headed "The Chief Secretary on the State of Ireland;" and it had as a second heading, in large type, "Favourable reception by the people at Tullamore." The introduction to the report stated—

> "Mr. Forster was listened to, not only with deep attention, but respectful silence, there being scarcely an interruption, and some of the sentiments being cheered."

So spoke the official reporter. There was a system of comment by parenthesis, the use of which was well understood by accomplished members of the Press, and indeed by members of the Press who were not accomplished, and that consisted in throwing in a "hear, hear," and "applause," "cheers," and "laughter," at such points of a speech as either in imagination or in fact might have provoked these demonstrations of feeling from the audience; and they found that Mr. Murray had justified the choice which had been made of him by the liberality with which he had thrown in these parenthetical comments in his report. It was a practice not entirely unknown to Gentlemen occupying the position of the right hon. Gentleman, to overlook their speeches and to revise them. Perhaps Mr. Murray felt an interest in seeing the right hon. Gentleman had the advantage of his co-operation and assistance in this way. At any rate, the Chief Secretary for Ireland had credit in the report two or three times of "hear, hear," twice for "applause," occasionally for "laughter," which might or might not have been complimentary, and three times for "cheers." The speech ended with a "round of cheers." The whole thing, in fact, looked very much as if the right hon. Gentleman had been the idol of the people and had gone down to Tullamore to be borne on the shoulders of the people, and to meet with a surging demonstration of welcome. Then there were other points in this report of an interesting character. When the right hon. Gentleman told his audience why he had gone down, the report said—"A Voice: We admire your pluck." He (Mr. Sexton) was quite unable to see where the pluck appeared in the whole transaction. The right hon. Gentleman was surrounded by official subordinates of every degree, and it did not require the courage of a Bayard to pop one's head out of a hotel window and address a small crowd collected outside in a little town where there were not only police magistrates in the room, but also in the streets; and perhaps if *The Freeman's Journal* and *The Daily Express* had been invited to attend, and if one of the able gentlemen who composed the staff of these journals had been in the window looking on and listening to what had been said, they might have been able to learn who it was said—"We admire your pluck." Was it a citizen, a constable, or a soldier?—[Mr. BIGGAR: Or a detective?]—or, as the hon. Member for Cavan suggested, was it a detective? These gentlemen, he believed, were also in attendance on the scene. [Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I deny it entirely.] He (Mr. Sexton) fancied the voice came from one of the soldiers who were drawn to the meeting, according to the right hon. Gentleman's own statement, with the laudable desire of drinking at the fountain of his eloquence. The right hon. Gentleman also said—"I know I may say many things you dislike." Then a voice was reported to have said, "Very few." He would leave the House to judge whether such an observation as this was likely to have been made by an ordinary member of the public. The report conveyed the idea that the right hon. Gentleman was met with a great demonstration of popular support, and that his observations were met with shouts of enthusiastic approval; that "hear, hear," "applause," "cheers," and "laughter" punctuated his speech as it would do, say, in the House of Commons. But the whole thing was worthy of *Baron Munchausen* or of *The Arabian Nights.* It did great credit to the right hon. Gentleman's penetration in not giving notice to the other papers, and in taking down only one reporter, who was in the pay of the Executive. But was that the way the affairs of the country were to be conducted? But he had not done yet with Mr. Murray. Between *The Irish Times* and *The Freeman's Journal* there was the greatest commercial rivalry, and they were always very glad to have a special report or piece of news to keep it for their own paper. What did Mr. Murray do with his special and exclusive report? He appeared at night at *The Freeman's Journal* office and offered this report for nothing. Why did Mr. Murray make himself the agent for distributing this cooked report? Why did he give it to his rival *The Freeman's Journal* and to *The Daily Express* and to *The Irish Times,* and also telegraph it to all the papers in England? And who paid for the telegrams? The English papers all got the report for nothing. Out of what fund did the money come? The whole thing was to him a mystery beyond the power of calculation, and he could only account for it by the fact of Government influence being brought to bear on *The Irish Times.* Where did the money come from to pay for those telegrams? Did it come out of the public funds? If not, why did Mr. Murray display such extraordinary energy, and how were the managers of *The Irish Times* persuaded to so far forego their natural jealousy of *The Freeman's Journal* as to offer a copy of the speech to that journal unasked? If the reporters of *The Freeman's Journal* and *The Daily Express* had gone down the public would have seen the real character of the reception accorded to the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman up to the present had shown a great disinclination to give any information on the matter. He did not know that Mr. Murray reported the State Trials in 1880. In fact, he did not know that police and soldiers were present at the meeting. He could only say that, for a person who lived in an atmosphere of politics, in this sophisticated age, the right hon. Gentleman must be a masterpiece of innocence. Fortunately, however, a few days ago he (Mr. Sexton) had received a letter from Mr. Henry Egan, of Tullamore. Mr. Egan was a gentleman of the highest character and position, and by his actions and the whole tenour of his life he had earned and retained the best esteem of his fellow-townsmen. It was true that he had been imprisoned under the Coercion Act; but that was of little consequence, as there was no man in Ireland of any influence with the people who had not shared that fate. This gentleman, the Chairman of the Town Commissioners, the principal civic person in the place, was drawn more by curiosity than by sympathy, he should imagine, into the streets to see and hear the wonderful man who could throw everybody into prison of his mere will and pleasure; and this was Mr. Egan's account of the proceedings—

> "There was a small crowd of about 200 persons there, a very large proportion of whom were landlords and officials, together with all the small Tory fry of the town. There were a number of policemen and some soldiers. The presence of the parish priest in another window of the hotel secured the Chief Secretary for Ireland a respectful hearing. I had the hardihood to cry out, 'The suspects should be released,' when a policeman and a soldier placed themselves on each side of me. They said if I did not conduct myself I should be put back again, meaning that I should be re-arrested. The police-constable's name was Allan."

Such was Mr. Egan's story. Could English Members realize the reprehensible character of this conduct, occurring in the case of the chief civil person in the town, who had simply made an observation. He would remind the House of what had occurred towards the end of last year. This same man, Allan, and two other policemen, for no earthly reason, ordered two inoffensive young men named Cowen and Ryan to be beaten by the police at Newtown, in the King's County; that one of them was still in a precarious state. Yet this truculent bully was one of the policemen in plain clothes who, while the right hon. Gentleman was speaking, lent an appearance of popular assent to the proceedings by threatening the principal person in the town. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on the stage manager or fugleman he had at Tullamore to direct the little comedy which was enacted there. Having laid before the House what he believed to be an honest account of the transaction, he should be glad to hear from the Chief Secretary for Ireland out of what fund Mr. Murray was compensated, and how *The Irish Times* was prevailed on to communicate the report to *The Freeman?* He would also be glad to know whether on future occasions the right hon. Gentleman, when he proposed to address public meetings in Ireland, would invite the public Press to attend? The right hon. Gentleman confessed with excessive frankness that if he had informed the people of his intended speech he would not have obtained a hearing. If it was necessary for the right hon. Gentleman in order to make speeches in Ireland to steal a march on the people and to communicate the fact only to an official reporter, he thought the political capital to be made henceforth out of such demonstrations must be very little indeed. He could only say that the political capital made out of the speech at Tullamore was obtained, he would not say by false pretences, but by an ingenious device, and he hoped they had seen the last of such measures.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he did not intend to detain the House more than a few moments, on account of the very important Business before them; but he could not allow those remarks to go without reply, though he had already, by anticipation, made some answer to them. He must again repeat that two charges had been made against him—first, that he had provided in some way or other police or soldiers to overawe the audience at his meeting at Tullamore; and that he had taken means to provide a garbled report of the proceedings. As regarded the first charge, he would again say that he expressed his wish to the authorities of Tullamore that they should take no precautions whatever, to allow the crowd to deal with his speech as they pleased, and practically he believed that was done. The statement that there were police and soldiers present in large numbers he denied. He did not see them himself, and, from the information he had obtained, he did not believe it to be true. An officer and one or two soldiers came there through curiosity, and they were the only military he saw. There was no special force of police drafted into the town, and there were no detectives employed. There were three policemen on duty in the town, and he believed one or two of them came out of curiosity to hear his speech. What happened in the case of Mr. Egan was this. The sub-inspector considered he was interrupting, and asked him not to do so; and afterwards his brother came and took him away. So much for the charge of overawing. He had not revised the report of his speech. It was not a prepared speech —that was, he did not use any notes. As far as his recollection went, and that of others, including his son, it was a completely accurate report; and if it had not been, the correspondents of the Dublin journals who were present would have been glad of the opportunity of pointing out the inaccuracies. As regarded the demeanour of the crowd, the hon. Gentleman did not fairly describe the report. The hon. Member said the report ended with rounds of cheers; but it did not contain that statement at all. The report ended by stating that there was applause, and there was applause. [Mr. SEXTON: It ends with cheers.] He (Mr. W. E. Forster) thought it ended with applause. He did not think there were rounds of cheers; but he was heard with respectful attention, and he thought there was some cheering at the end. The hon. Member asked why he did not send word to all the papers in Dublin. He had two reasons for not doing so. In the first place, he was not at all sure that he would make the speech; but he did think it was possible that he would say something, and he sent to *The Irish Times* telling them so, and stating that if they thought it worth their while they might send down a reporter, and they did so. He would tell the hon. Member why he did not send word to any other paper. He was perfectly prepared to meet the crowd at Tullamore; but he did not wish to give the friends of the hon. Member in Dublin an opportunity of sending down persons to organize opposition to him. The hon. Member said he used sensational language; but he did not think he could use simpler language in describing the outrage on the poor man Moroney, who had been murdered in Clare. What did he read in *The Nation* or *Weekly News* since? One of these papers said this thing must not go on. That was to say, the Chief Secretary for Ireland must not be allowed to speak again. He thought if he had given information to the other newspapers that that would be so, and as he desired to be heard he did not give the information. The pith of the matter was this. After the descriptions which had been given of him, and the speeches made about him right and left throughout Ireland—after the way he had been held up to the people, hon. Members thought it would be impossible for him to be heard with respectful attention in any of the prescribed districts or in a town where it unfortunately had been necessary to arrest some persons. It only proved what he believed would have happened if he or anybody else went to address these people, and enable them to see the other side of the question, which they had never seen at the meetings held in Ireland—that, notwithstanding the endeavours of the hon. Member and his Friends, the Irish people would give him a hearing. If he had given information of his intention, there would have been a very great effort made to prevent his being heard. He had been charged with desiring to make political capital. There was no political capital in the matter. Having seen the outrages which were committed in particular districts, and the terrorism which existed, he believed that what was required was that the people who were opposed to this terrorism should unite to prevent it; and he advised them to do so. The hon. Member, no doubt, disliked his making that statement. He also made a statement showing the terrible results of this system of intimidation, and he thought the audience seemed to agree with him that it ought to be put down. Why did the hon. Member complain of him for making those statements? He could not imagine why that speech in Tullamore had excited so much irritation. What he wanted to do, if he got the chance—and he was not then sure that he would get the chance—was to address an Irish audience, to let them hear the other side of the question, which they had not been in the habit of hearing. They knew the newspapers these people read, and they knew the sort of speeches they generally heard. The hon. Member spoke of letting out the "suspects" before he (Mr. W. E. Forster) attempted to address the people. That was really too much, when they remembered that for a long period he had been attacked right and left throughout the country as no public man was ever attacked before, and that never for a moment had the Government made use of any of its powers to prevent those speeches. He was determined to go amongst the people and speak to them, and see how he would be received. He was not loudly cheered, but he was received with respectful attention. One person in the crowd spoke of his pluck. He did not consider he showed any pluck, for the only danger he apprehended was the danger of not being heard. No doubt, it was very disappointing to the hon. Member that he should have been received in that way; but the hon. Member would have been serving his own interests better had he on this occasion concealed his irritation.

Mr. DAWSON said, he thought the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) had made a brilliant effort on behalf of Ireland in bringing forward this matter and dealing with it as he had done. He himself shared in the wide surprise that followed the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary at Tullamore; and he felt humiliated that an Irish audience in an Irish town afforded such a reception to the Representative of the present Government, and so endorsed its policy. The report was not *bóna fide*—it did not accurately describe the conduct at the meeting. Had it described the meeting, it must have shown that the proceedings were organized by the right hon. Gentleman himself. [Mr. Mitchell Henry: No, no!] Though the hon. Member for Galway cried "No, no!" he believed the right hon. Gentleman hid his movements from everyone except those who would give a specially coloured report of it.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I wish to say that I merely sent word to *The Irish Times* to send down a good reporter. I had nothing to do with selecting the reporter. I also ought to state that I did not revise the report, as the hon. Member for Sligo suggested. I have not paid a penny for it. The Government has not paid a penny for it. I suppose the reporter was paid by the paper.

Mr. DAWSON thought the Irish people would perceive that the respectful silence which the right hon. Gentleman spoke about was due to the action of the police. He congratulated the hon. Member for Sligo upon having dissipated this delusion which was sought to be practised upon the Irish people. They would now see how the thing was got up, and how the police acted, and kept that respectful silence, and got those vociferous cheers from an audience in this remote town. The whole thing would now be exposed. The right hon. Gentleman said the police were not there, that they did not interfere, that it was not their duty to do so. But it was his (Mr. Dawson's) duty to bring under the notice of this House how the police went into a municipal house in Ireland, and threatened members of the corporation as to what would be the consequences of the free expression of their opinions. It was part and parcel of their duty to do this; and if they could do this under the ordinary condition of things, how much better could they perform their duty when the Chief of the Executive, their paymaster, was the subject of their attention? The right hon. Gentleman said he drew his conclusions from the fact that the people were themselves ready to give him their respectful attention. But the right hon. Gentleman was on the horns of a dilemma. He had said there were no police present, and yet he had a quiet, decorous meeting. Let him withdraw the police from the disturbed districts, let him remove his police, his detectives, and the military, and he would not have that commotion which they were creating in Ireland in every way that they had dared to do. During his last absence from the House the Attorney General for Ireland, with that fairness which characterized him, gave a categorical denial to his statement that a policeman informed him that he could not address a meeting in the town of Carlow, which he represented, unless he promised not to attack the Prime Minister or the Land Act. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said he referred to the sub-inspector, who denied having made any statement of the kind; but he (Mr. Dawson) had not alleged anything against the sub-inspector. It was the head constable who made the statement to which he referred. There was a yawning, gaping gulf which separated the people from their rights and privileges and their constitutional power. There was no doubt something had been done by the Government, for when he went to Limerick the other day he saw an abundance of papers brought in containing the right hon. Gentleman's speech, marked with bracketed headings, and sent there for gratuitous distribution. Who, he asked, would go about publishing such papers in Limerick for nothing? He knew the firm which published them was not established for gratuitous workmanship.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: My son had them printed and circulated at his own expense.

Mr. DAWSON: The right hon. Gentleman now admitted that he not only had a special reporter, but that after his speech was delivered his son had it printed and circulated throughout the country at his own expense. [Mr. W. E. Forster: Hear, hear!] It was then perfectly clear that the right hon. Gentleman, from the beginning to the end, lost no opportunity of taking the advantage; that was quite evident from the Tullamore speech and the preparation of it, and the paper in which it was reported; but it was a blessing to England that she might understand from Irish people that the utterances from which he expected so great a return had been scattered to the winds, and the hon. Member for Sligo had done well in dispelling the illusion, and so palpably exposing it to the public gaze.

Mr. T. D. SULLIVAN remarked, that the Chief Secretary for Ireland had stated that certain Dublin newspapers had said that the right hon. Gentleman ought not to receive a hearing; but what those papers really said was, that as long as the Leaders of the Irish people who were capable of arguing the other side of the question were kept in prison and had their mouths closed the right hon. Gentleman ought not to be heard. That view of the case was perfectly sound and right. Those papers counselled the people not to offer the right hon. Gentleman the slightest insult or incivility, but to refuse to listen to him. He stood by that advice to the Irish people, and repeated it from his place in Parliament. The Irish people were quite willing to hear both sides, and when the Land League meetings were allowed to be held it was open for the Chief Secretary and his friends to have appeared on their platform and to have expressed their views there. But they had refused to do that, and preferred to put their opponents in prison. Their letters were stopped, and their conversations prevented by the prison warders, so that they were effectually gagged, and it was under that condition of things that the right hon. Gentleman appeared before an Irish audience, and spoke of Irish affairs, of outrages, and the Land Act. However, if the right hon. Gentleman wished to show fair play, let him now try to argue out the question with them. Let him go to any part of Ireland, taking with him any of the imprisoned gentlemen or any of the Irish Members who were free to speak in the House but not elsewhere, and they would guarantee the perfect safety of the right hon. Gentleman and that he should not be subjected to insult. That, he considered, was a fair offer, and it was a fair, lawful, and legitimate advice for an Irish Member or an Irish newspaper to give to the Irish people.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY said, he was unwilling to interpose before the Estimates came on; but though silence might be golden, under many circumstances silence might be carried too far. And unless there was some answer to the remarks which had fallen from hon. Gentlemen opposite by one who still claimed to be an Irish Member, much injury might result. He would like to ask the hon. Member for Westmeath (Mr. T. D. Sullivan) how he would undertake to guarantee the safety of the Chief Secretary for Ireland? He had made very great professions in that respect; but they had the fact that when the Chief Secretary for Ireland went to a country district there, unprepared and without anybody knowing, and assembled around him the real inhabitants of the town and district—a disturbed district—he was received with perfect courtesy, typical of the Irish character. Well, then, what were the relations of the hon. Gentleman with those who would put the life of the Chief Secretary for Ireland in jeopardy? He wanted that question answered. It was a disgraceful thing to state to this House that the Chief Secretary for Ireland, or anybody else, would want protection when he visited a town in Ireland, and it was no compliment to the Irish people. But the House and the country would see at once that the well-meant attempt of the Chief Secretary for Ireland to come in contact with the Irish people themselves was the cause of this irritation amongst hon. Gentlemen opposite. He did not mean for one instant to say that the people whom the Chief Secretary for Ireland addressed sympathized with his policy or the policy of the Government. On the contrary, they hated it; and they would have no better state of things till this wretched policy was reversed. As long as they had 600 men locked up—some of whom were guilty, but many of whom were undoubtedly innocent—at the will of one man, it was nonsense to talk of peace between the two countries; but when the Chief Secretary for Ireland went amongst the people where the most disorder had taken place, and endeavoured, in an honest, straightforward manner, to meet them face to face, and to tell them what he had got to say, they received him—as he (Mr. Mitchell Henry) would be bound to say the Irish people would always do, and as they would receive anybody else who came to speak to them in a bold, honest and straightforward manner—with respect and courtesy. Had it not been the boast of the hon. Gentleman and of Irish Representatives that ever since the time of Sir John Davis, of all the people in the world those who loved fair play and justice were the Celtic Irish race? That was said by him; but the hon. Members seemed to regret that the Chief Secretary for Ireland was not howled at and prevented from speaking. Was there anything in his speech which they objected to? Was there anything immoral in it? What he said was the opinion every honest man ought to express—namely, to denounce outrage and crime, He said the speech of the Chief Secretary for Ireland ought to be circulated through Ireland, from one end of it to the other; and he was exceedingly glad to hear that the right hon. Gentleman had caused a considerable number of copies to be distributed. He had had experience himself of Irish meetings, and it was perfectly true that the Land League would not now allow him to go into any of the towns to address his own constituents; but he would add this, that he met Mr. Parnell on the platform at Galway before the General Election, and combated to his face, in the midst of an audience that was enthusiastic in his favour, the doctrines which Mr. Parnell had put forward, and he (Mr. Mitchell Henry) was heard with perfect respect and fair play. Further than that, when at Loughrea, he also stood on the same platform with Mr. Michael Davitt, who came unknown to him, and he, to Mr. Davitt's face, combated the views he put forward; and again he was received with perfect respect and fair play. He knew now he could not go. The Land League would take good care that stones and dirt would be used to prevent the people from hearing the other side of the question. The Chief Secretary for Ireland must have felt great difficulty in making his address, because he was obliged to speak in the open air; and that was a chronic difficulty in Ireland—they had no halls in which to speak, but had to do so from open platforms, where their voices could not reach the people, and where, in the outskirts, the well-known tactics of the opposing side could be easily carried out, to prevent the right hon. Gentleman or any other gentleman from being heard. He said this, while he protested against and opposed, as he did and had done throughout, this policy of arbitrary arrest. He welcomed from the bottom of his heart the attempt on the part of the Chief Secretary for Ireland to come into contact with the people. If he would go oftener, and if he had gone more into the towns since he had been in Office—if he had gone from place to place, instead of remaining at the Castle at Dublin, listening to what was told him by centralized officials, the right hon. Gentleman would not have pursued the policy he had pursued; and until that policy was reversed, he (Mr. Mitchell Henry) did not believe they would have any peace or good understanding between the two countries. But, in the name of the Irish people, in the name of fair play, he protested against this attempt to minimize the effect of this honest, straightforward desire to come into contact with the people. In many places where the speech of the Chief Secretary for Ireland was read, and where it would be read on the Saturday night in the weekly papers, people would say—"He is not so bad as we supposed. He is very ignorant of us; but he wants to do what is right. If he will come a little more amongst us he will learn something more than he knows now. He will see that his policy will not stand, that we are made with the same feelings and of the same flesh and blood as himself, and that we are entitled to equal rights with any other of Her Majesty's subjects.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR quite agreed with the hon. Member for Galway with regard to the importance of the speech of the Chief Secretary, and would be glad to see it disseminated throughout Ireland, for he considered it a very useful and very important speech. So far from having any objection to it, he was very glad the right hon. Gentleman had made it. He was glad that the reports of the speech, for which the right hon. Gentleman had paid, were perfectly accurate.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I did not pay for the reports of the speech at all. I have contradicted that statement over and over again. Neither the Government nor I paid for them.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he understood the right hon. Gentleman to admit that he had caused them to be disseminated at his own expense.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Yes; but I did not pay for the report.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, at any rate the report was accurate. The right hon. Gentleman had said in his speech at Tullamore that it was with the earnest desire that God might save Ireland that he thanked them for having heard him. But while the right hon. Gentleman was speaking the cries, which, as his hon. Friend (Mr. Sexton) had said, "punctuated" the whole speech, were—"What about the prisoners?" "Let out the 'suspects.'" The right hon. Gentleman avoided taking any notice of those cries until the end, and then he said—

> "You ask me about the 'suspects.' As soon as I can fairly say that outrages have ceased in Ireland, and that men are not ruined, are not maimed, are not murdered for doing their duty, for doing what they have a legal right to do, the 'suspects' will be released."

He asked the House to consider the full significance of those words. They contained a very important declaration, because they, in effect, amounted to this, that the Irish Members of Parliament now in prison, and a very large proportion of others, were detained no longer as "suspects" but simply as hostages. The right hon. Gentleman said that he would not liberate them until the outrages had ceased. He did not say that he would liberate them as soon as he had ceased reasonably to suspect them of inciting to outrage. The outrages might have been caused by men in the pay of the Government, who were detected committing perjury in open Court, and yet the "suspects" would not be liberated.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The hon. Gentleman has misrepresented what I said, or misunderstood my meaning. As soon as outrages cease there will be no occasion, of course, for the Coercion Act continuing. I never meant to say, and never said, that if I believed I had arrested any man under a mistaken idea or unreasonable suspicion he would not be released. I made no such statement at all.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that he had read from a report which the right hon. Gentleman himself admitted to be accurate. [Mr. W. E. Forster: Read again.] The words were these—

> "As soon as I can fairly say that outrages have ceased in Ireland, and that men are not ruined, are not maimed, are not murdered for doing their duty, for doing what they have a legal right to do, the 'suspects' will be released."

He contended that the admission amounted to a complete abandonment of the previous position of the Government. For, first of all, the right hon. Gentleman told the House that the Government required a Coercion Act to arrest the "village ruffians." But the right hon. Gentleman had arrested a number of men who were not village ruffians, and had nothing to do with outrages. He arrested them on reasonable suspicion, he said. Now he was detaining them because outrages continued, and not because they were connected with outrages. These men were to be detained, not for punishment nor for crimes that had been committed, or that they were reasonably suspected of having committed, but that might possibly be committed hereafter by persons over whom they had no control. He repeated, then, that these men were detained as hostages, not as "suspects." He trusted that the speech of the right hon. Gentleman would be disseminated throughout the country, and that the people of Ireland would understand the significance of the closing words of the right hon. Gentleman.

TRADE AND COMMERCE—THE FRENCH TREATY.—OBSERVATIONS.

Mr. MAC IVER, who had the following Notice on the Paper :—

> "To call attention to the Treaty signed by Lord Lyons and M. Freycinet, which, without the authority of Parliament, binds this Country for a period of ten years to continue the existing state of things with regard to Fisheries, Trade Marks, and Navigation, and to move, that in the opinion of this House Her Majesty's Government is not justified in perpetuating arrangements which leave our fishermen at a disadvantage as compared with French fishermen, which are unsatisfactory as regards trade marks, which leave our seaports at a disadvantage as compared with those of France by reason of the 'surtaxe d'entrepôt, and which enable bounties to be paid to vessels of French ownership sailing in competition with British vessels,"

said, that the course he intended to take had been somewhat changed by an interview which he had had in the Lobby with Mr. Peters, a person well known as representing a large number of people engaged in the sugar trade. Mr. Peters brought a charge so serious against Her Majesty's Government that it was only right he should call attention to it at once. Mr. Peters desired him to ask whether Mr. Robert Giffen, who was at the head of the Statistical Department of the Board of Trade, had received any official or other instructions to interview leading members of the Trades' Union Congress at their last annual meeting held in London, with a view to preventing discussion amongst the representatives of the labour organization on the question of sugar bounties; and, if so, on what grounds? The allegation seemed to be that the interview took place for electioneering purposes; but that was an allegation which, he hoped, was not true, as the trade unions should be for trades' union purposes, and not have any relation to the Birmingham caucus. The subject of his Motion was one which he would not be justified in bringing before that House that night except on the ground of urgency or of its relation to the Naval Estimates. ["Oh, oh!"] Those grounds did not commend themselves to hon. Gentlemen opposite; but he had been some time in the House, and longer than many Members opposite, some of whom would not come back when there was a General Election. His Resolution would justify itself on the plea of urgency, and also on the ground that it had something to do with the Naval Estimates; but the Forms of the House, he was sorry to say, would not allow him to move it. He was afraid that hon. Members opposite did not really appreciate the effect of the French bounty system upon shipbuilding. Although we were now at peace with France, we ought to consider the possibilities of the future. It had been contended that the French, by giving these bounties, were merely imposing a tax upon themselves; but the effect of those bounties had been to fill to overflowing every shipbuilding yard in France. Their private shipbuilding yards were increasing, and in those yards they could produce, and, indeed, were already producing, ships of war. They were, under their bounty system, adding to their Navy in the cheapest possible way; because they were rapidly accumulating useful steamers, many of which would make admirable transports, and be a valuable addition to their Navy as fast cruisers in time of war. The course that the French adopted in the matter was, perhaps, a reasonable and a proper one from their point of view; but our Foreign Office should have taken care to have concluded a Treaty that would have prevented them from taking it, and from getting the whip hand over British mercantile competition at the same time. The bounty paid by the French Government on every French ship constructed amounted to £17 16*s.* per cent of its total cost, while, in addition, they paid 1½ franc per ton for every 1,000 miles sailed. There was some urgency in bringing forward the subject that evening, because he could not trust the Government, and they might wake up one morning during the Easter Recess and find that a Treaty had been concluded which bound them for 10 years, without these matters having been taken into consideration. He thought he had shown that he was justified in calling attention to these questions. The House would be kind enough to remember that he represented a large constituency, and the subject he was speaking on he ought to understand, because it had for years been his every day work. There were two or three other matters to which he desired particularly to refer. First, as regarded the fisheries. The British fishermen were under a great disadvantage, which ought to be remedied. When English vessels were driven into French ports by stress of weather, they were prohibited from selling their produce in open market. They were, however, on special application, allowed to have a certain portion sold to buy provisions to enable them to go out of harbour. That was not fair to the fishermen, and the Government ought not to have renewed a Fisheries Treaty which omitted all reference to that and other real grievances. Then, as regarded the trade marks. The hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs said that the Treaty made no change. But his contention was that a change ought to have been made. He would give the House one instance only amongst many of the injustice to English traders. French watches were sent to this country, and after arrival the names of English makers were stamped on them, and they were sold as English made. That was the practice during many years, and a grievous hardship to British workmen, even although it might suit London shopkeepers; but those who sold foreign wares as British were becoming more bold, and now these watches were sent over to this country with the English makers' names already stamped on them. That was a matter which ought to have been dealt with by the Government, as it had an injurious effect on English trade. What he wanted to emphasize was that the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had no business whatever to agree to any Treaty which allowed this kind of thing to be done. Another question was that of the *surtaxe d'entrepôt*. That was a question which affected Liverpool very much, and was a highly important subject. He would remind the House of the hon. Gentleman's manner when answering questions on this subject. Hon. Members who put questions were not allowed to enter into argument. They had, therefore, to confine themselves to their questions as revised by the Clerks at the Table. But the hon. Gentleman, when replying, presumed on his position, and treated the Interrogator with an air of superiority — with a sort of feeling of "What does he know about the matter!" Was it reasonable the hon. Gentleman should take that stand? It would be impossible for the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to sustain such a position if private Members had a right of reply. Questions in regard to the *surtaxe d'entrepôt* were considered important by the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, who were not an unknown body, and Liverpool was not an unknown place, and they knew quite as much as the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs upon those questions. He wished to read from the Blue Book the copy of a Memorial from that body which would, no doubt, be unacceptable to hon. Members opposite. That Memorial stated that the United Kingdom suffered in a special degree, and the port of Liverpool in particular, from the operation of the *surtaxe d'entrepôt,* which placed importations of foreign produce into France at special disadvantages, *viâ* ports in Great Britain, as compared with importations into France direct. They really did not know what might happen in the next two or three weeks with a Government like the present, and it was in view of negotiations reported to have taken place between England and France that he protested against terms being made in practical violation of the "Most Favoured Nation" Clause. The hon. Gentleman said that the subject would not be forgotten. But what kind of reply was that, and what did the Under Secretary of State really mean? It was no answer to say that the Treaty had nothing to do with the fisheries, trade marks, and the *surtaxe d'entrepôt*. His contention was that the Treaty ought to have had to do with them. The matter had, however, not been dealt with by Her Majesty's Government in the Treaty which had just been concluded. He hoped, however, that before long the subject would engage the serious attention of that House. The Government ought not to have tied the hands of the country by a Treaty with France for 10 years, that perpetuated a system which worked against the interests of the country.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, that before his hon. Friend the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs answered the speech of the hon. Member for Birkenhead, he should like to reply to a pointed inquiry which he was informed the hon. Member had in his absence addressed to him. He had been informed that the hon. Member wished to know from the President of the Board of Trade whether Mr. Robert Giffen had received orders to interview certain trades' union delegates upon the sugar question at a tavern in the Strand, called the Occidental Tavern, on a Saturday afternoon? If the hon. Member required any information in detail from the Board of Trade, perhaps he would give Notice of his Question. But that was a Question within his (Mr. Chamberlain's) own personal knowledge, and he ventured to assure the hon. Member that he had not given any instructions to Mr. Giffen to interview any trades' union delegates with regard to the sugar bounties or any other question, at a tavern called the Occidental or any other place, on a Saturday afternoon or at any other time. He had too much confidence in the good sense of trades' union delegates to imagine that they would require any assistance from the Board of Trade in order to be able to deal with the absurd propositions of the sugar delegates at the Trades' Union Conference.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) began his remarks by saying that he would not have brought the subject forward if it had not been very urgent. If hon. Members opposite will forgive me, I may describe it as an Irish urgency. He has brought the matter forward altogether too soon, and he has called attention to a Treaty which has never been made, and which will not be made. The hon. Member has called attention to some of the difficulties of the bounty system of France, and he has done so without having read the Blue Books which have been distributed within the last few days. The hon. Gentleman has described what has taken place between the English and French Commissioners; but he has told us that he has not had time to examine the Blue Books. He ought, however, to have made himself conversant with their contents before making his remarks. It would be necessary to read through about 500 pages of the Blue Book. Very long discussions took place between the Commissioners. [Mr. Mac Iver: With any result?] The hon. Member had better read the Blue Books. In regard to *surtaxe d'entrepôt,* there were considerable results. If we had made a Treaty with France, and negotiations were only broken off in a very small number of heads—on three out of about 600 heads discussed by the Commissioners—if the Treaty had been concluded, the hon. Member would have received satisfaction on many of the points which he has brought before the House. That shows that the hon. Member ought not to have brought the subject forward without making himself acquainted with what had passed. There can, however, be no doubt in any reasonable man's mind that the French bounty system has, up to the present time, been chiefly beneficial to British shipbuilders. If the Treaty had been made, the hon. Member would have got much of what he wants as regards *surtaxe d'entrepôt.* The hon. Member condemns the Treaty. [Mr. Mac Iver: No.] The hon. Gentleman does not condemn the Treaty?

Mr. MAC IVER: I do not condemn the Treaty except in reference to its omissions. I asked if there was any result from the Conferences, and I say that as regards bounties on shipbuilding and on navigation there was no result.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: The hon. Member has not read the Blue Books, and therefore he does not know whether there was any result or not.

Mr. MAC IVER: Was there any result?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: I have told the hon. Member that, with regard to *surtaxe d'entrepôt*, there was a marked result; but he is not aware of it, because he has not read the Blue Books. I could not exactly understand the drift of the hon. Member's remarks about foreign watches imported into this country, and purporting to be made in this country. All such articles are detained by the Customs authorities. It was only last week that a large importation of foreign watches, purporting to be made here, were detained, and they are in custody at the present time. I may inform the House that the Treaty, roughly speaking, contains a great number of heads and deals with questions of navigation, fisheries, and trade marks; and other subjects, recognizing a state of things which has existed between this country and France from time immemorial. The hon. Member complains of the fishery provisions; but he has not seen them, and I may tell him that they are practically those of the Convention of 1839. As to trade marks, the arrangements are the same as before. If there had been the lapse of a week or two, or even of a single day, almost all our trade marks would have been forged, and a state of confusion would have been created if some arrangement had not been come to. The Treaty preserves the existing state of things, except that there are a few improvements. One of these improvements is of considerable importance. It is as follows:—

> "Article XI.—The subjects of the high contracting parties shall be exempted from military service, requisitions and contributions of war, forced loans, advances, and other contributions leviable under exceptional circumstances, in so far as those contributions are not imposed on landed property."

That is an article the advantages of which had been obtained by a few Powers — Russia, and a few other Powers—from France; but was never obtained by this country before. We have now obtained the same concession. That and other points are entirely new, and some of the provisions are provisions the absence of which, even for a single day, would cause great inconvenience and great confusion. I cannot but repeat my regret that the hon. Member should have brought the subject before the House in such an imperfect manner, because it is impossible that he could have had time to make himself fully acquainted with the details.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—NAVY ESTIMATES.

DEPARTMENTAL STATEMENT.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) 57,500 Men and Boys, including 12,400 Marines.

MR. TREVELYAN: In placing the Navy Estimates before the Committee at this hour of the night (11.40) I must ask for the indulgence of the Committee, and I shall endeavour to observe both clearness and brevity. There is a course into which the Member of the Government charged with that duty naturally falls, and which I propose to pursue tonight—that of dealing with matters affecting the *personnel* of the Navy first, and laying them altogether aside before coming to the Financial Statement. Those questions of pay and rank have an interest of their own, and an importance of their own, which requires that they should have a full and respectful consideration; and this is more than ever necessary when the time has come round for re-considering and re-arranging the pay, position, and prospects of any important class of our men or officers who are paid under Navy Votes. During the past year the Board of Admiralty has found itself able to do something on a large and comprehensive scale for the advantage of a distinguished Corps to which the country owes a great debt, which, in times past, it has been rather slow to acknowledge. There have been long periods in the history of the Royal Marines which were little more than one large story of great services repaid by neglect, and something very like ingratitude. Things have been mending for some time past, and we are far from the day when a single brevet majority was considered an adequate recompense for the gallantry displayed by the Marine officers who fought in such numbers at the Nile and at Trafalgar; but it is only since last July that Marine officers could be expected to acknowledge that, in matters of pay and promotion, they had been but fairly on a level with their deserts. The position of a lieutenant in the Royal Marines may have been said to be deplorable. While a lieutenant in the Artillery obtained his promotion within 10 years, in the Engineers within 12 years, and in a Line regiment on an average within 11 years, a Marine officer did not become a captain until he had served full 16 years as a subaltern. But, much as the Admiralty felt for the grievance, they would have been unwilling to remedy it, if, in order to do so, they had been obliged to force into retirement from the Service officers of the rank of captain who still were in the prime of life and anxious to devote their vigour and energy to the service of the country. It is with great satisfaction that they found themselves able to devise a scheme which would give every lieutenant of the Royal Marines his promotion after 12 years' service, at latest, without forcing any officer out of the Service while in the rank of captain. The number of majors has been increased by six in the Royal Marine Artillery and by 18 in the Light Infantry. Compulsory retirement is not to begin until an officer is a major and 48 years of age; and the certainty that a lieutenant would obtain his captaincy in 12 years, if not before, and that a captain would betimes obtain his majority, has been secured by a considerable reduction in the establishment of captains and lieutenants. The Royal Marines, like other branches of the Navy up to recent days, had come to be largely over-officered; and the staff of 356 officers, as against 391, which the Admiralty has now laid down, will fully suffice for all the duties of the Corps at home and abroad, and will enable that flow of promotion to be kept up, without which no Service can be efficient or contented. And, while attending to the interests of the officers, the Admiralty have not neglected the private men. The non-commissioned officers of all ranks have been raised in pay and rank in exactly the same proportion as the Secretary of State for War has recently raised the non-commissioned officers of the Army. An allowance of a penny a-day has been allotted to non-commissioned officers and privates to perfect themselves in gunnery. The lodging allowance given to married men has been improved in such a manner as greatly to add to their ability to keep their families in comfort; and a vexatious stoppage of pay for a minor purpose has been remitted. I trust that hon. and gallant Members who advocated the cause of the Marines with so much force in the early part of the evening, will remember the amount of advantage which has been conferred upon that Corps. The full amount of advantage conferred on the Marines amounts to upwards of £24,000 a-year, and this additional benefit has been conferred on the Corps without any additional burden whatever on the public. The method by which it has been secured has been by a reduction in the number of officers and men. On the reduction in the number of Marines, I should be glad to say one word. Some little while ago discussion of rather a trenchant sort went on with regard to the Corps of Royal Marines, and proposals were made with reference to that Force, which in some cases amounted to little less than its abolition as an historical Service. These proposals the Board of Admiralty cannot entertain. They regard the Corps of Royal Marines, organized as it is at present, as a Corps of the highest value in times past. It appears to me that, for very good reasons, the changes in the condition of our Naval Service have detracted nothing from the importance of the Marines. In the first place, it is of priceless worth as a Reserve—not to the Army, that I would never allow—but to the Royal Navy. It is difficult to exaggerate the importance, in time of emergency, of having 6,000 trained men on shore, with military habits and with nautical aptitudes, who could be put on board our rapidly-filled ships, and among our newly-gathered crews of Naval Reserve men, there to act as a nucleus of discipline and martial skill. In the second place, it is a very convenient thing to have another mode of recruiting our Navy than through the training-ships for boys. However excellent may be our system of providing our continuous-service seamen, it is always well to have two strings to your bow, and the Corps of the Marines is a very popular channel by which we can secure grown men to recruit our Navy. How popular is the service, how high the class of men we thus obtain, may be judged by the fact that while only 38 per cent of the recruits were rejected by the Army surgeons in 1879 and 1880, in the same years no less than 62 per cent were medically rejected by the Marines. Since the new territorial system has come into vogue for the Army, it must be allowed that the Army competition is much more serious; but as long as we share the pick of the market among men of 20 and 21 with the War Office, for that reason, if for no other, the Corps of Marines well deserves to be continued. But there likewise remains what seems to me the strongest reason of any, and which, I am sure, will at once go home to the minds of hon. and gallant Members who have advocated the cause of the Royal Marines. In these days of complicated vessels and highly-trained mechanicians for so large a part of their crew, you cannot detach a strong force from a ship's company to serve on land without weakening and crippling your men-of-war for their legitimate purpose of fighting at sea. When a naval brigade is landed it is the Marines who ought to be told off first to go on shore. That was the opinion of the greatest sailor whom England or the world ever possessed—Lord Nelson—and, if it was true in his day, it is far more essential to observe that policy in ours. For these three great reasons—exactly the reasons that existed in the days of Nelson—the Marine Corps should continue to be maintained on its present footing; but those same reasons govern likewise the reduced strength at which the Board of Admiralty have fixed it. If Marines are now, as heretofore, to form a certain known proportion of the complements of our ships the strength of the Corps must depend on the strength of our complements. Now, I have taken the complements of specimen ships 20 years ago and at the present date. A first-rate man-of-war in 1862 carried four Marine officers and 156 men. The *Thunderer* and the *Devastation*, in 1882, carry one Marine officer and 39 men; while the largest of our vessels, and those very few indeed, carry three officers and 130 men. A second-rate, in 1862, carried 150 Marines. and a third-rate 122. There is not a second-rate now in the Navy that carries 100 Marines. But perhaps the best comparison is afforded by taking a 40-gun frigate and a modern corvette. The 40-gun frigate of 1862 carried 59 Marines, men and officers. The *Comus* and her consorts, in 1882, carry only some 35. In 1862 the total force of Marines afloat was 8,500 men. In 1882 the force afloat has fallen, by the force of circumstances which cannot be controlled, to 6,200 men; and, as the Admiralty is fully persuaded that, in order to preserve the efficiency of the Corps as a sea-going force, there should be at least one man afloat for every man on shore, they feel themselves bound to place the establishment of the Corps at the figure at which it appears on the present Estimates—about 12,400 men. To name a higher figure, for the sake of swelling the apparent numbers of the Fleet, would be to increase the number, not of Marines, but of bandsmen. And the Board considers itself most fortunate that a reduction of numbers, which was more a matter of necessity than policy, has enabled them, without asking for a penny from the taxpayer, to put on a footing satisfactory, as we have reason to think, to all its friends, including its warm friend, the hon. Member for Devonport (Mr. Puleston), a corps about which that great naval officer, Lord St. Vincent, used this memorable expression—

> "If ever the hour of real danger should come to England the Marines will be found the country's sheet-anchor."

And now, Sir, I pass to the consideration of a very important branch of our Naval Service, with regard to which I gave a pledge last year—a pledge which I have done my very best to redeem. The words of that pledge I must, in justice to the Admiralty, recall. On the 19th of May, in reply to the hon. Member for Plymouth, I used these words—

> "The Engineering Department is the only naval service of importance which has recently sprung into existence, and its organization has not yet been arranged on a final and satisfactory basis. When the Estimates are introduced next year, I shall be prepared, if I still hold the Office which I now have the honour to fill, to submit to the House a scheme which I hope will meet with approval."—[3 *Hansard*, cclxi. 815.]

Now, Sir, the more this matter is looked into the more strongly does the first part of that statement come into relief. All the embarrassments in which we have found ourselves with regard to the engineers arise from the fact that that service was not formed, but grew up under conditions which made it impossible that the shape which it assumed should be satisfactory as a final arrangement. When steam was introduced into the Navy, it was necessary, of course, to find men to conduct the working of it. The Government had to go where such men alone could be found, and to go for them in large numbers. Our earlier engineers were admirable, practical men of their craft, of the same quality and very much the same class as the engineers of steam vessels in the Merchant Navy. Up to 1847 they were not officers at all in the Navy, but ranked with the boatswain and carpenter. But the inconvenience and impropriety of having no commissioned officers acquainted with the working of the motive power of the Navy became so evident that the Admiralty went too far in the other direction—turned all their engineers into commissioned officers, and by the year 1863 had no less than 1,414 commissioned naval engineers—that is to say, about as many as our present establishment of captains, commanders, and lieutenants together. And this great multitude of officers were employed on the most multifarious and ill-assorted duties, because, to speak plainly, there was not officers' work for half the number. There were actually three engineer officers on board a small gunboat with engines of 400 or 500 horse power, which certainly did not want more than one man of the rank and education of an officer. The Admiralty, seeing their mistake, from that time forward began to correct it, and introduced a class of naval mechanics for the practical work of the engines—the class of engine room artificers. The growth of this new class and the diminution of the commissioned engineer officers went on with rapid steps. In 1868, there were 1,247 engineers and 90 engine room artificers; in 1874, 950 engineers and 282 artificers; in 1877, 845 engineers and 493 artificers; and in 1880 there were 775 engineers actually borne and 643 artificers. In this change of system the Admiralty were guided by the principle that the Navy required one class to work the engines and another to do the duties of scientific supervision and be responsible for the military discipline of the engine room. But the Admiralty did not find that by going into the open market they could obtain with certainty the qualities they looked for in a commissioned engineer officer; and they accordingly instituted a system of special training, lasting over a period of six years, which now is carried on in the College at Keyham and on board the *Marlborough* at Portsmouth, and a very fine set of young men that system produces. The present Board are thoroughly satisfied with the sort of young men who come from these establishments. They are determined to make them in all respects commissioned officers, messing from the first with the other executive officers, and doing duties of a nature, and only of a nature, such as shall repay the country for the great cost to which it has been put in training them. The number of engineer officers will for the future be fixed at 650, instead of their present establishment of 832 as now authorized. The duties for which officers, with their long and expensive training and commissioned rank, are not needed will be transferred more and more to the class of chief engine room artificers, who will be increased up to the number of 150 as the existing staff of engineer officers diminishes; and if the Admiralty sees fit, the operation may be continued by increasing the chief engine room artificers and decreasing the engineers as long as their united number does not exceed 800. When I was in the Mediterranean last year I made careful inquiries of the commanding officers of our small ships; and all to whom I spoke were of opinion that, if they had a good chief engine room artificer on board, one engineer officer would suffice for the duties of the ship. In every new ship that is now building arrangements are made for the engineers to mess in the ward-room and gun rooms, and in existing ships the process of amalgamating the messing is being carried out with all possible rapidity. One question on which I was frequently pressed last Session related to the pay of the engineers, and on this subject I have made full and careful inquiries, the result of which I will state to the Committee. I have compared them first with the executive officers of the Navy. No executive officer, except the captain, receives a higher rate of pay than the maximum of a chief engineer. A commander receives the same pay as a chief engineer after 21 years' service. An engineer of only three years' service gets the same pay as a lieutenant. A sub-lieutenant actually gets 1*s.* a-day less than an assistant engineer. And it must be remembered that whereas executive officers pass most of their time on half-pay, the engineer is always on full pay, except by his own default, and a chief engineer has less time on half-pay than a captain or commander. When we come to the navigating officers, a special service like that of the engineers, it will be found that all through his service the navigating officer gets 1*s.* a-day less than the engineer. And when we turn to the Merchant Service, and see what the higher class of naval engineers command in the open market, we find that a chief engineer in our largest men-of-war gets as much as from £400 to £470 a-year, including his charge pay, while the first engineer in the largest packet ships is paid at the rate of from £18 to £22 per month; and the engineer in the Royal Navy has a pension to look forward to, a prospect for which a first engineer in the Cunard or the Inman Line would give a great deal of his less considerable pay. And that the advantages of the position of a Royal Naval engineer are thoroughly appreciated among the class from whom we are desirous of drawing those officers is proved by the fact that during the last four years we have had 774 candidates for 209 posts; and as to the quality of those candidates, I can rely upon the testimony of the hon. Member for South Devon (Sir Massey Lopes), who, both as a Lord of the Admiralty and a neighbour of Plymouth, is well able to speak upon the subject, and who said emphatically that our present engineer students are just the kind of men we want to get. As regards pay taken without reference to promotion, I cannot draw from these comparisons any conclusion but one—that the engineers are not an underpaid service. But it must not be denied that promotion, which, during the earlier history of the Service, was abnormally quick, has of late years been abnormally slow. The older engineers—those who have qualified for the post of chief engineer, but who cannot obtain a vacancy—have reason to complain of their position. Now, as regards the officers of the future, the Admiralty have completely remedied this grievance. Since January, 1877, they have reduced the lower ranks of assistant engineer and engineer from 726 to 418, and they have increased the higher ranks of inspectors of machinery and chief engineers from 180 to 232, and by this process they have very considerably more than doubled the rate of promotion. The only effectual and legitimate method of placing and keeping a body of officers in a satisfactory position is by strictly limiting the entries to what the Public Service actually requires, and so preserving a due proportion between the higher and the lower ranks. A Government which is willing to restrict the number of first appointments will always have cheerful and contented services. As regards the engineers now at the top of the list, the Admiralty propose to recognize their exceptional slowness of promotion by giving them an extra 1*s.* a-day after nine years. As regards the chief engineers, the Admiralty would not be justified in increasing their emoluments; and I think any hon. Member who heard the comparison of pay with other ranks in the Royal Navy and with the Merchant Service will endorse that decision. But the officers who are at the top of all—the chief inspectors and inspectors of machinery—in the opinion of the Admiralty, are not in quite as good a position as should be held by men who are in possession of the prizes of a Service. The chief inspectors will therefore receive 3*s.* a-day more than at present, and the inspectors a somewhat smaller increase. The principal difficulty of carrying out these changes is the small number of engine room artificers who are qualified to take the part of chief. At present an artificer must have served 10 years before he can get his promotion; and as theService was only instituted in 1868, and as there were only 150 to 200 members of it during the few first years, it may well be believed that qualified men are not easily found. The Admiralty have determined to reduce the probationary period from 10 years to six, a space of time quite long enough to ascertain whether a man has the character and the knowledge which would fit him for a post of responsibility. A chief artificer of over six years' service will henceforward get 7*s.* 6*d.* a-day. With these posts of trust improved somewhat in value, and eventually nearly doubled in number, the naval engineers will be supplemented to a greater extent than hitherto by these non-commissioned officers of the engine room. A service cannot be re-organized in a day, and the scheme which I have now described in its leading details is the crown and outcome of the action of several Boards of Admiralty over the space of 14 years; but I am satisfied that if we could look forward 14 years more, the condition of the Naval Engineer Service will then be such as will conduce both to the efficiency of our Fleet and the individual interests of our officers. The Admiralty has likewise been able to confer an advantage upon a class of officers who are, perhaps, and that is saying a good deal, the class which has taken the strongest hold, almost time out of mind, upon the popular imagination. Anything which can be done in justice to the taxpayer to reward the invaluable services of our gunners, boatswains, and carpenters will meet with general approval. At present a warrant officer who serves on board our harbour ships, with some exceptions, is at a pecuniary disadvantage as compared with one serving on a seagoing ship—a disadvantage which increases with his length of service; until after 15 years' service he gets 1*s.* a-day less in harbour than at sea. This difference in pay has been defended on the ground that it affords an inducement to warrant officers not to shrink from foreign service; but the Admiralty hold that if a roster is properly kept, and each man has to go to sea in his turn, this reason does not exist. They accordingly have decided to place every warrant officer holding an actual appointment in a harbour ship on the seagoing scale; though the warrant officers borne for disposal in the Home Reserves, and not employed, will remain, as at present, on what may be considered as a very advantageous scale of half-pay. The amount of this concession reaches something over £2,000 per annum, and here I may be allowed to address a word to the economists of the House as to the principle on which the Admiralty endeavours to act. The Board holds that a great spending Department is in this respect like a private business, that constant and innumerable sources of fresh expenditure are for ever arising, and must be met by constant and equivalent reductions of old forms of expenditure which have now become obsolete. I have explained how the Board has met the increase to the marines and the engineers by changes which make those increases a positive alleviation of the burdens of the country. The same process has been accomplished with regard to the warrant officers. While boatswains are as much needed as ever, and gunners more needed than ever, the change from wood to iron in our ships has brought about a decreasing demand for the services of the third class of our warrant officers—the carpenters. Much of the carpenter's most important work is done by the engineer and engine room artificer. Much of his less important work can be done by an artificer of the rank of petty, and not of warrant officer, and accordingly we propose to make a reduction of 20 in the list of carpenters. Sir, I think I have dealt with the most important matters in Vote 1, and it only remains to ask hon. Members to observe that we propose to vote exactly the same number of men and officers as for 1881-2, allowing for the reduction in the Marines. And now I would ask hon. Gentlemen to turn to their copy of the Estimates, and I will point out what the sum is for which the Admiralty propose this year to ask Parliament. In the present year of 1881-2, including the Supplementary Estimates, £10,945,919 has been voted for the Navy, of which £303,000 is due to the war in the Transvaal. Exclude this £303,000, and the normal Naval Estimates of the current year amount to £10,642,919. But since these Estimates were presented to Parliament a great change has been sanctioned by the Treasury. The Navy has always been allowed to take in aid of its Votes the lion's share of the extra receipts; but certain extra receipts of the Classes shown on page 238 of these Estimates used to be paid into the Exchequer. The sum in question amounted in 1881-2 to about £162,370. This Christmas the Treasury agreed with the Admiralty that extra receipts of all sort whatsoever should go to the credit of the Navy Votes; and those extra receipts, which this year amount to £160,000, will in the coming year reach the figure of £240,000, owing chiefly to the intended sale of old ships, which are now past their work. Well, now we have this sum. In 1881-2 the Navy Estimates — minus the extraordinary expenditure — came to £10,642,919. Deduct from that £162,370 for extra Naval receipts, and the net burden on the Exchequer for 1881-2 was £10,480,549. For the year 1882-3, we ask the country for £10,483,901. That is to say, the burden on the Exchequer will be, within a trifle, exactly the same as last year. But as we shall obtain £80,000 more by extra receipts than last year, the spending power of the Department will be increased by that amount. In other words—for at a time when a considerable change is made in the method of presenting the accounts it is right that the state of affairs should be clearly made known—we propose to spend on the service of the Navy £80,000 more than last year, the extraordinary service for the Transvaal being omitted from the account. But this £80,000 will be covered by an increase in the sale of old ships, which now the Department have an interest in not giving too freely away on the one hand, and in not keeping longer than they are useful on the other. We propose annually to sell these ships—of which there is a considerable number, maintained at some expense to the public, but long ago condemned for service—carefully and gradually as there is a market for them. In order that the new method of presenting the Estimates may not tend to confuse, two statements have been prepared. On page 5 the gross sums have been shown with the entire extra receipts taken into account; but on page 6 hon. Members will find a table which accurately gives the Votes of next year as compared with the Votes of this year. The figures there shown I cannot but regard as satisfactory. All, or almost all, the Votes, the size of which depend upon careful administration, show no tendency whatever to rise. The Victualling Vote is swelled by a transfer of £17,000 from the Transport Vote; but there is a real reduction on it of £6,000. The statesmanlike manner in which General Pasley handles his not inconsiderable budget has enabled the Works Vote to be reduced by £64,000. There is a very satisfactory decrease in Civil Pensions, and the only increase on other than the Shipbuilding Votes is the usual automatic increase of £19,000 for Military Pensions, which advances over our Estimates with the unrelenting and desolating certitude of a sort of financial car of Juggernaut. But the general feature of these Estimates is that, by unremitting diligence and public spirit, the Naval Lords of the Admiralty, and the permanent Heads of Departments, have kept down those sources of expenditure which can be kept down only by patient, minute, and judicious industry, and have presented the country with a large sum to spend upon those shipbuilding enterprizes which the safety of the country demands. On Vote 6, the Labour Vote of the Dockyards, there appears to be no increase; but last year the 53rd week fell due, and absorbed £20,000, so that this year there is an actual increase of that amount. The Naval Store Vote and the Vote for Building by Contract are larger between them by £160,000; so that the general effect of the Estimates is that, with only £80,000 to draw on, we have been able to devote no less than £180,000 more to the all-important task of increasing our Fleet. With this money we have been able to raise the prospective construction of 1882-3 to the amount of 15,502 tons to be built in the public, and 4,640 tons in private yards—that is to say, to 20,142 tons in all, of which 11,466 tons are in armoured ships; and the improved and improving proportion between the Estimate and the execution which is visible in our Dockyard accounts leads us to hope that what has been promised we may reasonably expect to perform. And now, Sir, it will not be necessary for me long to detain the Committee over the destination of the money which we propose to devote to increasing our ironclad Fleet. Towards the close of last Session, with, I think, the concurrence of everyone who takes interest in these matters, I announced that the Board of Admiralty had come to the conclusion not to build ships of very great size and very great cost, or in any great variety. I argued on the importance, when we had once got hold of a good type, of reproducing that type in sufficient number. For economy and rapidity of construction, for facilitating the manœuvring ships in fleets, and for familiarizing our men and officers with the vessels in which they are to live and fight, this policy appeared to hon. Members to be the right one. There was another conclusion to which the Board arrived, and which I had the honour of stating and defending, and that was the firm determination to press on the ships we have in hand and get them afloat as soon as possible. Those are the two leading features of the Admiralty programme of the coming year, and which I foreshadowed last year. The *Agamemnon*, the *Ajax*, the *Conqueror*, and the *Polyphemus* will be actually finished in the course of the year. The *Collingwood*, the *Colossus*, the *Imperieuse*, and the *Warspite* will be pushed vigorously on, and the *Majestic* at Pembroke will be finished to the point at which she can be brought round to Portsmouth for completion. The *Rodney* and the *Howe*, the two ships which belong to what may now be called the British Admiral class, will be put forward at Chatham and Pembroke respectively, and a fourth ship of the same type will be commenced by contract, which will give me the pleasure of fulfilling a pledge I made to the right hon. and gallant Member for the Wigton Burghs (Sir John Hay), and commemorating his favourite old naval worthy, Admiral Benbow; and I think the right hon. and gallant Gentleman will admit *Admiral Benbow* might wisely yield place to *Rodney*. These three vessels will be *Collingwoods*, modified to carry four 60-ton guns, instead of the 43-ton guns which will be carried by the *Collingwood*, the *Conqueror*, the *Majestic*, and the *Colossus*. An addition of 400 tons to their displacement, and some £25,000 to £30,000 to their expense, will not take them out of the class of comparatively moderate-sized and moderate-priced ships, while it will enable them to carry a gun which will do all that a gun needs to do. [Lord HENRY LENNOX: What is the size of the guns?] The *Collingwood*, *Conqueror*, *Majestic*, and the *Colossus* will carry 43-ton guns; the *Rodney* and the *Howe*, which have been recently designed, are intended to carry 60-ton guns; and three ships, which we must at present call paper ships, will likewise carry that gun. I will speak a little more specifically. Before the year is out, at Portsmouth and at Pembroke two new iron-clads will be laid down, the details of which, following the example of last year, I will specify at a later period of the Session. While spending money on fresh construction, the Admiralty have not been neglectful of the condition of our existing iron-clads. The *Bellerophon* will be finished and made fit for service. The *Rupert* will have her boilers renewed, and will be re-armed with the 18-ton breech-loaders of the new type. The *Audacious* will have new boilers. The *Shannon*, which has come off foreign service in exceptionally good condition, will be thoroughly overhauled and made ready for the Coastguard. A novelty, and, I hope, an acceptable novelty, has been introduced into these Estimates by Malta being placed among the naval yards, which are thought worthy of having a programme, and the *Thunderer* and the *Invincible* will be made ready for re-commission in that cheap and very workmanlike establishment. The question of guns, as my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War is only too painfully aware, does not touch the Naval Votes; but in a general review of the condition of our Fleet it would be pedantry not to refer to so important a matter. [Mr. W. H. SMITH: There is the *Monarch.*] The *Monarch* was repaired at Chatham in 1878 at a cost of £46,000, and paid off and re-commissioned at Malta in January, 1882. The present occasion is one of statement and not of controversy, so that I will leave aside all disputed topics and confine myself to specifying what has been done and what is designed to be done; and I do not think that I am exceeding the limits of a statement when I claim for the present Government that from the first moment they entered Office they have been pressing on the substitution of the new gun for the old with all the celerity which the caution necessary in such a critical undertaking demands. The *Conqueror*, within this calendar year, as we confidently hope, will be actually armed with the new 43-ton gun, and that date may be looked upon as the inauguration of the new system, for the *Majestic* and *Colossus*, which come on next for armament, will carry the same weapon; and no large gun of the old type will thenceforward be freshly supplied to any of Her Majesty's ships. The 43-ton gun, by the aid of that chilled shot which we owe to the inventive genius of our lamented Colleague the late Member for Taunton (Sir William Palliser), will really pierce anything that floats, except a narrow belt on the water line of a very few ships, which it is 50 to 1 a shot would never hit in battle. At 1,000 yards the projectile goes through 22 inches of iron and 19 inches of compound steel; and, looking to the material impossibility of armour beyond a certain thickness being carried in any quantity on a ship that can float at all, it is doubtful whether a much more powerful gun is required, and whether increased power in our weapons would not be dearly bought by the loss in number. The belief of the Admiralty is that a 60-ton gun of the new type would probably give as high a power as it is necessary to obtain under the rapidly improving conditions of gunnery construction; and there is reason to believe that the French Government have been led to the same conclusion by the same reasoning, and have fixed on a 59-ton gun as their heaviest weapon in the future. There are five ships in the list of English vessels in the Estimates which will carry this gun. Of lighter armour-piercing guns, if an 18-ton gun, piercing 17 inches of iron, such as that which this year the *Hercules* will carry a broadside, can be included among light guns, we shall have 174 of all sizes of the new type by the end of the next financial year; and the War Office has engaged to supply us with a large quantity of these machine guns, which will play a part in modern naval warfare certainly great, and, perhaps, quite preponderating. Of the Nordenfelt gun, which, during the two minutes that a torpedo boat would be within range, could discharge at it nearly 500 balls, each of which could penetrate its deck and sides, we shall, by the 31st of March, possess no less than 504, while 200 additional Gardner mitrailleuses will be provided during the coming year; and of torpedoes we have 300 afloat, and by the end of this year shall have 250 in store. It may interest the Committee to know that the Admiralty have determined to renew, in a somewhat different shape, a most important experiment. If anything can ever diminish the ruinous expense of naval preparation, it would be the substitution for armoured ships of cheaper and swifter ships formidable for offence. This country, as of right, was the first to devise an auxiliary ship which should assist the iron-clads in battle, and that was the origin of the *Polyphemus*, which was designed to do great things with ram and torpedo, and to look for security in her high speed, in her protection from machine guns, and in the smoke and confusion of conflict, when alone she would venture to approach an armoured enemy. But the *Polyphemus* had her drawbacks. In the first place, she, if we may apply a feminine term to such a monster, was, for a so-called cheap ship, very dear. In the next place, she was not habitable; she could carry a crew only to fight and not to live, according to the ordinary conditions which make human existence endurable. In the next place, she had small coal endurance, and would have been reduced, after a comparatively short spurt, to get her supplies from her consorts. The Chief Constructor, at the personal request and suggestion of Sir Cooper Key, has designed a vessel which will serve as an auxiliary in the combat of iron-clad fleets without losing all the qualities of a cruiser. She will be armed with a ram and torpedoes, under water, fore and aft. She will have watertight compartments and an underwater deck, two to three inches thick, protecting her engines and her torpedoes. She will have two conning towers, with armour 10 inches thick, from which the gear for fixing the torpedoes will be worked and the ship navigated. She will thus be, for the purpose of fighting with ram and torpedo, an iron-clad. Then, she will carry four 6-inch guns and 10 machine guns in turrets, or rather bastions, proof against a mitrailleuse; but, otherwise, she can be searched by machine gun fire through all her upper works, so that she will presumably only use her guns when engaging as a cruiser. For service as a cruiser she will be very reasonably fit, for she will carry coal sufficient to take her a month at from 8 to 10 knots, while at an emergency she will steam up to 16 knots. She will comfortably house a crew of 200 men, and will cost, if all goes well, £110,000 for hull and engines, as against the estimated £150,000, and actual £200,000, of the *Polyphemus*. Of cruisers proper, the *Leander*, the *Arethusa*, and the *Phæton* will pass out of the hands of the contractors, and will come to our own Yards to be completed and fitted with the new 6-inch breech-loader; and the *Amphion*, at Pembroke, will be pushed forward in the intervals of the iron-clad building. Hon. Members will observe that the Admiralty does not propose to construct or buy any sailing ships for training seamen. For many reasons—and, not least, for that of the safety of the crews—our men and officers should be trained in the same class of ships as those in which they are to work and fight. The hon. Member for Penryn and Falmouth (Mr. D. Jenkins), if I understand his views, holds that it is questionable policy to take a large body of men and officers who are accustomed, during the rest of their career, to have steam power to fall back upon in time of danger, and place them for a single twelvemonth, for purposes of practice, in a sailing vessel—a class of which we should never dream of sending to sea in case of war. And therefore it is that the Admiralty have adopted another policy, and have issued an order that the Commander-in-Chief for each station shall collect his ships every season for a combined cruise, in which officers and men may be trained in sailing and in manœuvres performed in company; and anyone who reads the most interesting despatch of Admiral Willes will acknowledge the success which has attended this order. That despatch is accompanied by a Return of each ship, stating the number of days she has been under sail, the number of times she has tacked and wore, and the number of times she has gone in and out of harbour under sail alone. The last words of the despatch run thus—

> "The result to the crews has been an improved physique and knowledge of their profession, which cannot be measured in figures, but which, I hope, may be manifested hereafter. If this combination of ships for cruising is carried out every year, the China Station may

be reckoned one of our best training grounds for young seamen."

With such a training ground in every foreign station, with the Channel Fleet, the Mediterranean Fleet, the Coastguard Fleet, the Detached Squadron, it may safely be said that it is many years since there has been such an amount of practical training of our men and officers as in the last 12 months. And now, Sir, I must conclude, having reserved to the end the mention of a circumstance most nearly concerning us at the Board of Admiralty, and not, I hope, unacceptable to the Committee. In view of the rapid, and ever more rapid, march of science, and its increased bearing on naval matters, the Earl of Northbrook and his Colleagues, as I stated in answer to a recent Question, have determined to call into their councils scientific assistance from both inside and outside the Navy. The Controller—Admiral Brandreth—who has succeeded so admirably at Chatham, has been invited to join the Board; and a new office has been created, to be held by a practical man of science, who shall unite special mechanical and engineering knowledge to wide administrative experience. If such a man can be found, he should not be lightly lost; and, by making the non-acceptance of a seat in either House a condition of the office, we have enabled successive Boards of Admiralty to avail themselves, if they choose, of the experience of the same adviser. Such a man has been found in Mr. George Rendel, who, as a member of Sir William Armstrong's firm, has been a pioneer in the successful application of the principle of hydraulic machinery to the working of heavy guns, and who was the first to devise, for the defence of our coasts, those useful little gunboats, that are nothing more than a floating carriage for a huge gun. His experience as a member of a first-class firm will enable him to apply to the organization of the labour of our Dockyards that knowledge for the want of which men trained within these walls—I speak for myself, and I speak feelingly—cannot always successfully make up by any amount of industry. His experience as a mechanician will enable us with confidence to refer to him in those questions which are growing on us daily, and almost hourly. Hydraulic machinery for turning the turrets, air-compressing machinery for feeding the torpedoes, electrical apparatus for internal communication, for firing broadsides, for illuminating the sea during a nocturnal action—everything is more complicated, everything more special in its nature, everything, above all, the more cruelly expensive. With armour costing £90 a-ton, where, 10 years ago, it cost £40; with the gear for mounting a single pair of guns standing the nation at £12,000, £15,000, £18,000; with torpedoes for offence, and torpedo-netting for defence, required for every vessel of size; defending our coasts; holding our own in the Mediterranean; providing for the protection of our commerce over the globe; surveying and mapping out the sea for the benefit of the entire civilized world; alone among nations making a serious and burdensome effort for the suppression of the Slave Trade, the British Navy cannot fail, under any Administration, to be a heavy call upon the resources even of such a nation as ours, and difficult indeed, and never-ending, is the task of those whose duty it is to see that in security and fighting power the country gets its worth for its money.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I am sure the House will feel that the very admirable and very clear and very satisfactory Statement, on the whole, which my hon. Friend has made, deserves more consideration than it is possible to give at this time of night. I therefore wish to ask, before entering upon any question to which my hon. Friend has referred, whether, in the event of a Vote being given to-night, the Government will name an early day upon which the discussion of the Estimates can be taken? I should be very far from doing justice to the speech of my hon. Friend, or to the great questions which are involved, and which require careful consideration from this House, if I were to venture upon commencing a debate at a quarter to 1 o'clock; and there is no desire whatever to embarrass the Government. If they feel and state that money must be had, money must be given; but, at the same time, an opportunity must be afforded for the full and complete consideration of these very important questions. I may, perhaps, be allowed to make one remark, because it seems to me to be a necessary one, with regard to the appointment of Mr. Rendel. I had the great satisfaction of entering into communication with Mr. Rendel before I ceased to be First Lord, with a view to bringing him to the Admiralty, and I am satisfied that no more experienced and no more capable man could be found to strengthen the Board of Admiralty in a Department in which it was certainly weak, and which needed re-inforcement; and, therefore, without in the slightest degree committing myself to the way in which the appointment has been made—because that is not necessary, and the Board have carefully reserved to their successors full power to act as they think fit—I think there is no doubt that the appointment of an engineer possessing the great knowledge and capacity for the Public Service which Mr. Rendel possesses is a great addition to the strength of the Department, and a great security for the welfare of the country.

Lord HENRY LENNOX said, he wished to join in the entreaty of the right hon. Gentleman to the Government to fix an early day for the serious discussion of the Navy Estimates. Some years ago it was an understood thing that these Estimates, upon which he was sure the existence and safety of this country depended, should be debated, night after night, with care and the most utter thoroughness; but last year the Secretary to the Admiralty made his Statement in March, and nothing more was heard of the Estimates until August, when in one Morning Sitting millions of the country's money were disposed of. He hoped there would be an end to this system this Session, and that the Government would promise a night on an early date for the discussion of these important Estimates. He was sure the Secretary to the Admiralty wished to give that opportunity, and had sufficient influence with the Government to procure one day on which Members might speak out.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: There can be no doubt that what was said on Monday night with respect to the Army Estimates applies to the Navy Estimates. It will be the duty of the Government to give to the House the earliest possible opportunity for a full discussion, which is not possible at this time of night, of these Estimates. I am not able at this moment to say when it will be possible to resume the consideration of this question; but I think I may admit, on behalf of the Government, that a very early day and a convenient opportunity ought to be afforded for the discussion. I believe my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for War (Mr. Childers) will take the Army Estimates on the first day after Easter, and we should wish to take the earliest opportunity after that for this discussion.

Mr. W. H. SMITH: I should be very sorry to request that any exact engagement should be given, because I know the difficulty in which the noble Marquess is placed; but it does appear to me that we ought to have some indication of the time within which this discussion will take place. I do not ask that it shall follow on the next Government night after the discussion on the Army Estimates, because it may be necessary to reserve that for the Budget or some other purpose; but if the noble Marquess will say that within a fortnight after the Easter Recess we shall have a night for this discussion I shall be content, and I think my hon. Friends will be content to give the money which is necessary. But the discussion ought not to be delayed beyond that period; and in mentioning a fortnight I recognize the necessity the Government may be under of going on with measures relating to the Budget; but certainly a fortnight is the utmost limit beyond which we ought not to be delayed in entering upon this discussion.

Sir JOHN HAY said, he thought the Government might at least say that they would allow the Estimates to be discussed on one of the Government nights in April. They had promised that the Army Estimates should be taken on Monday, the 17th of April, and there would then remain Thursday, the 20th, Monday, the 24th, and Thursday, the 27th of April; and if these Votes were taken now, there ought to be an undertaking that one of those three Government nights should be given up for the discussion of the Navy Estimates. If such an undertaking was given, he should be willing to agree to this money being taken; but, if not, it would be for the Committee to decide what course they should take.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF also wished to press the Government to name an early day for this discussion. There was great inconvenience last Session through the discussion being taken on so late a date; and there were many points for discussion in the speech of the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan) which, though so admirable in itself, contained many flaws. In the first place, great eulogy had been passed upon the Board of Admiralty with respect to the engineer officers; but that subject could not pass without remark; and there were many other matters which those connected with the Navy in any way should be allowed to bring before the House as soon as possible. The Government would, therefore, be wise to name an early day for the discussion. He did not wish to interfere with the Public Service, or in any way to stop the necessary Supplies; but he thought the Government were bound by all their promises and by all precedents to give the House a very early day.

Mr. PULESTON said, he wished to remind the Committee that last year very similar promises were made to those of the noble Marquess now; but the exigencies of the Public Business, and so forth, interfered time after time, and the House was obliged to accept that as an excuse, and to be satisfied with taking the Estimates at inconvenient times, in snatches of days and parts of nights, and so there was no sort of opportunity of discussing in anything like a proper way these important subjects. When he and some other Members ventured to discuss the Navy Estimates, and the Government had kept a House with a few Members on the Government Benches, many of them were so impatient at the lateness of the Session that it was with difficulty that he and his Friends could be heard, and were constantly interrupted by hon. Members who had not paid much attention to the subject, and cared less about it than about going home at that late period of the Session. All he asked for was that this time there might be a definite arrangement, and it would be easier for the Government to get through their work by setting a day apart for this particular Business—and a day not too near those for the Army Estimates and the Budget. He would rather it were a week later, so that it might be beyond contingencies; but it should be in the month of April, and he hoped it would not be left to chance, notwithstanding the expressed wishes of the Government to afford an early opportunity for the discussion.

Sir EDWARD J. REED said, he wished to ask the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Trevelyan) a question with respect to the appointment of Mr. Rendel. There might be advantages to the Public Service in that appointment; but it could not be forgotten that Mr. Rendel was the embodiment of antagonism to armour in Her Majesty's ships. It would be in the recollection of hon. Members that on a recent occasion Mr. Rendel's partner (Sir William Armstrong) made a speech in which he not only spoke in the strongest possible manner against our armour-clads, but, in unmistakable terms, indicated his desire to do away with armour altogether. He should be sorry if in this appointment the Government were giving the public an intimation of their intention to adopt those views, because the doing away with armour would be a step fraught with the greatest disadvantage when they came to cope with the vessels of other nations. Therefore, he would be glad if the Secretary to the Admiralty would state whether the appointment had any significance of that kind or not, or whether it was apart from Mr. Rendel's views touching the abandonment of armour, and was solely because of his great skill and eminence as a mechanical engineer?

Mr. TREVELYAN assured the hon. Member, as he himself had been assured, that Mr. Rendel did not hold the views which the hon. Member imagined he must have obtained from his connection with Sir William Armstrong; and, further, that on no point was the Board of Admiralty more convinced than that the safety of this country depended upon our having armoured vessels of great speed and size. It was a creed in naval warfare that unarmoured vessels could not stand against armoured vessels in battle.

Mr. GOSCHEN said, he should not wish this discussion to close without some remarks from that side of the House endorsing the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith) as to the admirable way in which these Estimates had been submitted. He scarcely knew which to admire most, the broad statesmanlike views underlying the hon. Gentleman's Statement, or the conspicuous lucidity with which the technical details of the subject had been explained. It appeared to him that the hon. Gentleman's speech was worthy at once of his great literary fame and his constantly increasing administrative experience.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: With regard to the suggestions which have been made, they seem to me to have been conceived in a reasonable spirit; and, after such consultation as I have been able to take with my Colleagues, I may say that I think it will be possible, and most desirable, though I do not know precisely what the Business may be after the Easter Recess, that we should have an opportunity for discussing these Estimates before the end of April, or in the first week of May.

Sir JOHN HAY observed, that what had happened now was that the Committee were about to vote away £2,500,000 for the Navy, or one-fourth of the whole Estimate. They were going to vote £2,500,000 without any promise whatever. That amount would carry the Admiralty on for three months; and the exigencies of the House might interfere with the exigencies of Public Business, unless a more distinct promise was made than that given by the noble Marquess. It was a perfectly reasonable proposal that if one day in April was to be given to the discussion of the Army Estimates, one of the three remaining Government days in April should be given for discussing the Navy Estimates. There would then be a day for the Budget, and one left; and he could not see why the Navy, to which £11,000,000 were to be given, should not have a day for discussion. The Admiralty could carry on for three months with the £2,500,000, and, judging from the experience of last year, they might do so. The same sort of promise was given last year—that at an early convenient season the discussion should take place; but it did not take place until the latter part of August, and then on a Saturday afternoon when nobody cared much about it. Members would not do right to allow this, and the Government were bound to give them a more definite pledge than that given by the noble Marquess for a particular day. Why should a pledge be given for a day for the Army Estimates, and not for the Navy Estimates? He thought that perhaps it was because a Cabinet Minister represented the Army in this House, while the Secretary to the Admiralty was not a Cabinet Minister, and therefore was not able to compel the Government to do that which the House ought to compel them to do. If the Government did not give a more complete pledge, he should mark his sense of the matter by taking the opinion of the Committee upon it.

Mr. CHILDERS said, he thought the suggestion of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman was hardly a reasonable one, for he knew, as a good many hon. Members on that side knew, that during the first few days after Easter there might be many necessities connected with the finances which would render it unadvisable for Government to say that one of those days should be given for this discussion. He was as anxious as possible that one good day should be devoted to the Navy Estimates as well as one to the Army Estimates. He knew how important it was that the proposals the Government were now making with respect to the Navy, and in particular with regard to naval guns, should be discussed on the earliest possible day. So far as he was personally concerned, he did not in the least care whether the Navy or the Army Estimates were taken first. He could assure the Committee that the fact of his being a Member of the Cabinet, and his hon. Friend who had charge of the Navy Estimates not having a seat in the Cabinet, had nothing whatever to do with the decision the Government had arrived at. It was the wish of the Government, and they not only hoped, but expected, that they would be able to give a day for the discussion of the Navy Estimates, either in the last week of April or in the first week in May. Of course, that calculation might be upset by the occurrence of some unexpected event, which would render it inconvenient to take the discussion at that time. He stated this as the wish and intention of the Government unreservedly, only qualifying his promise by the reserver which Ministers were always bound to make in such matters.

Mr. W. H. SMITH said, he understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that in the same manner as a day was promised for the Army Estimates—namely, the first day after the Easter Recess—so a day would be given for the Navy Estimates, either in the last week in April or the first week in May. If it was an agreement that a day was to be given, he would advise his Friends on that (the Opposition) side to accept the promise of the Government. The giving of a day, however, must not depend on what were the ordinary exigencies of Government Business. They knew that matters inevitable and urgent sometimes arose. If anything of that kind should occur to interfere with the undertaking given by the Government, an appeal could be made to the House, and it would, of course, be listened to. But the mere exigencies of Government Business should not be allowed to interfere with the carrying out of that engagement.

Mr. CHILDERS: Quite so; it is an engagement.

Mr. PULESTON said, the Secretary to the Admiralty had gone further than the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, because the former had made a distinct promise, whilst the latter had only given one of a qualified character. The discussion the Committee had had that night was to all intents and purposes the counterpart of a discussion they had last year, and the "exigencies" of the Government Business were such that the Government had to appeal to the House from time to time. At length the Secretary to the Admiralty was obliged to express regret that he was unable to keep the promise he had made for the Estimates to be taken at a certain period.

Sir JOHN HAY said, he should like to hear a distinct statement from the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) as to the day upon which the Navy Estimates would, if possible, be taken.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he wished to hear a distinct statement on this point. He had last year pointed out the inconvenience that arose through the Navy being represented in that House by an Under Secretary, and not by a Member of the Cabinet. The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Trevelyan), who so well deserved the praise which had been accorded him for his able Statement, was unable to say one word as to when he would bring on the Estimates again. Last year they were put off from time to time. It was generally believed that the Government intended in a short time to bring in a new Coercion Bill, and that itself would have the effect of putting back almost every other discussion. There should be a most distinct understanding on this matter.

Sir EDWARD J. REED said, there had been a distinct understanding come to with the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. W. H. Smith).

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he must have an answer from the noble Marquess. He would move to report Progress. Surely Parliament was not to be put off in this manner year after year. Last year the House was treated in a manner that he considered discreditable to the Government. As the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty was unable to fix a day for the discussion, and as the Leader of the House was not present, and the Deputy Leader did not seem to have power to act for him—["Oh, oh!"]—if the Committee would not listen to him, he should be obliged to take a course which he was loth to adopt—namely, move to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Sir H. Drummond Wolff.*)

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I do not exactly know what kind of assurance the hon. Gentleman requires. It is not possible for me to name a day for the resumption of this debate; but, subject to the same reservation as that which applies in the case of the Army Estimates, the discussion will be continued in the last week of April or first week of May. My right hon. Friend (Mr. Childers) says, as regards the Army Estimates, that, so far as he can judge, the first Government day after Easter will be devoted to the discussion of them, and that the Government will not allow any matter of legislation to interfere with this arrangement. I do not anticipate any impediment; but, should any arise, then the discussion will be taken on as early a day after the time fixed as circumstances will permit. The same reservation will apply in the case of the Navy Estimates.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Vote *agreed to.*

(2.) £2,631,498, Wages, &c. to Seamen and Marines.

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow;*

Committee to sit again *To-morrow.*

BILLS OF SALE ACT (1878) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 8.]

(*Mr. Monk, Mr. Serjeant Simon, Mr. Lewis Fry, Mr. R. N. Fowler.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 13th March.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CAPTAIN AYLMER said, he hoped the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) would not go on with the Bill in Committee that night, as there were a great many Amendments on the Paper which would take a long time to discuss. It was now very late, and he was sure the questions which would have to be considered could not be disposed of in less than two hours. He would move to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Captain Aylmer.*)

MR. MONK said, that, with the exception of one, or at the most two, Amendments, there were no questions of disagreement to be considered in Committee. For his own part, he did not think it would take half an hour to go through the Bill. He was afraid they would never be able to discuss it at an earlier hour, therefore he could not agree to the proposal to report Progress. He hoped hon. Members would allow the Bill to pass through Committee, or, at any rate, to be discussed that night, inasmuch as there was no other Business coming on.

MR. WARTON said, it was very early in the Session, and the hon. Member had not given them sufficient time to consider the matter. The Bill was not so simple an affair as the hon. Member seemed to think; and people, although they had not had the measure very long before them, were beginning to understand what its effect would be. The people of the country were making complaint of the rapid manner in which Bills were being introduced. Hon. Gentlemen opposite seemed anxious to bring forward Bills and get them disposed of with great rapidity against the wishes of the people; and he would do his utmost to support hon. Members in their demands for reasonable delay. The hon. Member (Mr. Monk) was not correct in saying that there were only two Amendments on which the Committee were not agreed. He (Mr. Warton) did not suppose the hon. Member could be aware that there was an Amendment to the 6th section, which affected agricultural communities very considerably.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the measure had been discussed by a Select Committee, and was printed in its present form last year. It had, therefore, been before the country six or eight months. Seeing what few opportunities private Members had of making substantial progress with their measures, he trusted the Committee would endeavour to make what progress they could with the present one.

Question put.

The Committee *divided* :—Ayes 19; Noes 94: Majority 75.—(Div. List, No. 50.)

Clauses 1 to 5, inclusive, *agreed to.*

Clause 6 (Exception as to certain things).

MR. WARTON said, he had an Amendment to propose at the end of sub-section 2. At the end of Clause 6 he wished to add these words—

> "Or any hay, straw, corn produce, live or dead stock, in or upon, or brought in or upon any land or farm in substitution for any hay, straw, corn produce, live or dead stock enumerated in the schedule to such bill of sale."

The reason he wished to move this Amendment was this—that in many parts of the country those engaged in agricultural pursuits might be desirous of raising money, and would find it impossible to do so unless there were a provision in the Bill which would enable him to substitute cattle or produce for other cattle or produce he was anxious to dispose of. It was necessary, in order to enable him to carry on the business of his farm, that the farmer should have power to take away certain things from time to time, and substitute others; and the only object of this Amendment was to make the list of exceptions more full. The word "plant," in the 12th line of the section, would hardly include everything upon a farm; and when the Employers' Liability Bill was before the House the Government made a concession upon that point. He did not think the word "plant," in connection with the word "land," in the 14th line, would be sufficient to cover everything, and he therefore proposed to move this addition. The farmer had a perfect right to raise money on mortgage by a bill of sale; but unless some provision of this nature were made he would find himself unable to enter into the arrangements which at present he had full liberty to do. This was a new-fangled Bill to upset all the existing relations between a borrower and lender, and in order that it might pass rapidly through the House it was being pressed forward at an unusual hour of the morning, without sufficient consideration being devoted to its details.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 17, to add "or any hay, straw, corn produce, live or dead stock in or upon, or brought in or upon any land or farm in substitution of any hay, straw, corn produce, live or dead stock, enumerated in the schedule to such bill of sale."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there added."

Mr. MONK said, that, as far as he gathered the intentions of the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), and as far as he had heard the words of the Amendment, he was disposed, on the whole, to accept them; because there was, no doubt, a great deal of force in the argument used by the hon. and learned Gentleman in regard to the substitution of certain stock and produce for others of a like nature; therefore, subject to further consideration on the Report, in the event of finding anything objectionable in the Amendment, he was not unwilling to accept the proposal.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he thought that his hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Monk) must be very careful how he accepted the wording of the Amendment. He did not think the words proposed by his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Warton) would quite carry out what his hon. Friend desired. He (Sir Walter B. Barttelot) thought the words ought to come in in another place. It was, however, quite necessary that the stock of a farmer should be exempted in the way mentioned by his hon. and learned Friend; but, instead of adopting the Amendment now, he hoped his hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) would consider the matter, and bring up additional words on the Report.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) would suggest to his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) that he should not press the Amendment now. The terms of the Amendment were not upon the Paper, and it was advisable that the matter should receive fuller consideration than it could possibly receive now. It would therefore be advisable to bring up the Amendment on the Report, when no one would oppose it unless it was found in reality to be objectionable. He certainly thought that would be the best course to take, and, in the meantime, the matter might be fully considered.

Mr. MONK asked if the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) would withdraw the Amendment?

Mr. WARTON declined to withdraw the Amendment at present, and reminded the Committee that if the words were objectionable they could be altered upon the Report.

Mr. BARRAN said, he hoped that his hon. Friend the Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) would not accept the vague Amendment which had been moved by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton). If it was accepted, he was satisfied that it would nullify the real benefit of the clause.

Mr. WHITLEY supported the Amendment, which he thought dealt with a substantial grievance. There were cases in which considerable sums of money were advanced to persons engaged in agriculture, perhaps, not upon bills of sale, such as those against which this Bill was directed, but money advanced to the farmer to enable him to carry on his farming operations. But the effect in future would be this. The farmer would be unable to sell any of his cows or live stock in the ordinary course of business, or any of his hay or straw, although they were perishable articles, and the effect of being unable to sell them might ruin the man. In the ordinary course of business he was compelled to sell both his cattle and his hay and straw, and to replace them by other cattle and other hay and straw. If he were deprived of that advantage the *bonâ fide* borrower would be ruined. He (Mr. Whitley) did not see why machinery should be allowed to be substituted and not live stock and produce. He did not see that any great distinction could be drawn between them, and he understood that it was proposed to allow machinery to be replaced in manufactures. He failed to see why farm produce should not be allowed to be substituted for other farm produce upon a farm. Under the circumstances he supported the principle of the Amendment; but he hoped that his hon. and learned Friend would allow the exact wording of it to stand over for further consideration. At the same time, he trusted the Committee would accept the principle of the Amendment, because he was satisfied that it would work in a satisfactory manner, and give confidence to many people who were at present very much alarmed at the Bill as it stood.

Amendment *negatived.*

Mr. WARTON said, it was quite clear, from the readiness with which the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) accepted the Amendment, that he saw at once the importance of the matter. Having accepted it, and a kind of pledge having been given that the matter would be considered upon the Report, he (Mr. Warton) certainly thought that the Amendment, would be inserted in the Bill now, and it would then have been quite possible to bring up another Amendment, either on the part of the promoter of the Bill, or of the Attorney General. He considered that the Bill as it stood trifled with the property and the interest of farmers all over the country; and in order to give time for further consideration of the whole question he would move that the Chairman report Progress and ask leave to sit again.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he thought that the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) had mistaken the spirit in which his Amendment was accepted. It was not positively accepted in principle; but it was thought that it involved a principle which required consideration. It was felt that if they did this in agriculture they should do it also in the case of manufactures. All these matters were discussed at great length in Committee, and the Committee agreed not to make the exceptions either in the case of agriculture or manufactures. If they did it in agriculture they would have then to consider to what extent the same principle ought to be applied to manufactures. Under these circumstances, he thought it would be better to consider the whole subject on the Report. There was no intention to stop the discussion of the subject, or to defeat the object which his hon. and learned Friend had in view if, on future consideration, it was thought a right one. He hoped his hon. and learned Friend would allow the Bill to proceed, and when a point was arrived at upon which there was a real conflict of opinion, there would probably be no objection to report Progress. He hoped his hon. and learned Friend would not insist upon pressing his Motion.

Mr. WARTON said, he wished to point out that it was very early in the Session, and that a delay of 10 or 12 days would not be a matter of much consequence. Surely, if they were to have the matter considered on the Report, he did not see what strong objection there ought to be against the insertion of his Amendment now, with a view of having it considered upon the Report. He could assure the Committee that the question he had raised involved matters of very great importance to all persons engaged in agricultural operations. The three days which had elapsed since the Bill was last before the House was too short a time to admit of its being understood by those who were interested in the question. The country, as a matter of fact, knew very little about its provisions. The Session was not very far advanced, and plenty of time remained during which the Bill could be properly considered. As the matter stood then, he was afraid, if the Bill was hurried through Committee, that farmers and others concerned in the measure would find that their interests had been interfered with without their knowledge.

Mr. MONK said, the hon. and learned Member for Bridport seemed to forget that the Bill was printed in July last. It had been submitted to a Committee, among whom were the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley), the hon. Member for Bristol (Mr. Lewis Fry), and other Gentlemen, and which was presided over by the hon. and learned Attorney General. The subject was carefully considered, evidence was taken upon all the points which had been raised by the hon. and learned Gentleman, and, after consideration, the Bill was amended in its present form. The hon. and learned Member for Bridport had asked him to undertake not to hurry the measure through the House. He had no intention whatever to hurry the Bill through any of its stages; but the hon. and learned Member must be aware that private Members had very few opportunities for bringing on their Bills at 1 o'clock in the morning. He would, therefore, appeal to the hon. and learned Member not to delay the Bill; and if he would agree to allow it to go through, he (Mr. Monk) would not take the Report before that day fortnight.

Captain AYLMER said, he thought that the Bill should not be pressed forward any further on that occasion. It seriously affected the interests of a large number of persons, who had not been able, in the short time which had elapsed since the Bill was first before the House, to understand its provisions. As a rule, people in the country did not pay much attention to Bills of private Members until they saw that they were making some progress through the House; and it was only since the present Bill was committed that it began to attract the notice of persons interested. Seeing that it came on last Monday, they began to write letters to Members representing their districts, who had certainly not had time to look thoroughly into the matter. Under the circumstances he strongly advocated that a little longer time should be given for considering the Bill.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT said, he understood that his hon. Friend opposite (Mr. Monk) would consider the question raised by the hon. and learned Member for Bridport and supported by other Gentlemen sitting on that side of the House, and that if he saw no objection he would introduce new words into the clause on Report, which would carry out the object of the Amendment. If that was the undertaking of his hon. Friend, he should offer no further objection to the Bill being proceeded with on the present occasion.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY asked the Attorney General whether the unregistered bill of sale would be void as against all persons and for all purposes whatsoever?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, that was the intention.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 7 (Bill of sale to be void unless attested and registered) *agreed to.*

Clause 8 (Execution of bills of sale).

Mr. H. G. ALLEN said, he had to propose two alterations in this clause. First, he wished to add words making it imperative that the solicitor who attested the bill of sale should also explain to the grantor the nature of the transaction; and, secondly, his Amendment provided that the attesting solicitor who so explained the matter should not be, or have been, the solicitor of the grantee, nor an agent or partner of such last-mentioned solicitor. The Bill, as hon. Members were aware, had been submitted to a Committee for consideration; and in looking through the evidence given before them with regard to this matter, he found witness after witness of the class of persons who had the greatest experience in the adjustment of points arising under bills of sale saying that the explanation should be made by an independent person—that the bill of sale should be attested and the explanation of it made by a person who was not the attorney of the grantee. Then there was the great body of the evidence of the Judges of the County Courts, to the effect that they attributed a great deal of the fraud which undoubtedly took place in connection with these bills to the circumstance that the explanation was never properly made, because it was only attempted, or professed to be made, by the attorney acting for the grantee, who slurred over the transaction, and never made the grantor see the effect of it. It might be considered that a part of the second portion of his Amendment went rather far—namely, where the following words were introduced—"Nor has been the solicitor of the grantee." Even if the Committee should decide to strike out those words, he believed the Amendment would be very useful; and, as he had said before, he grounded his belief on the statements, which he held in his hand, of a large number of County Court Judges, who, without exception, laid great stress upon the point that the attorney attesting and explaining the bill of sale to the grantor should not be the solicitor of the grantee, inasmuch as a great many frauds had resulted from the contrary practice. Although the Bill required attestation by the solicitor, there was nothing in the body of the Bill as it stood which required that an explanation of the nature and effect of the transaction should be made to the grantor before the bill of sale was executed; and, therefore, it seemed to him that it was necessary, in the interest of the public, to amend this most important part of the measure. The statement of one of the County Court Judges that, in all probability, the proportion of fraudulent to genuine bills of sale was 10 to 1 was, perhaps, an exaggeration; but as these deeds were now prepared, there could be no doubt that they constituted abominable engines of fraud in many cases, and, in his opinion, the precautions taken to insure their proper execution and the perfect understanding by the unfortunate victims of the nature of the transaction into which they were being drawn could not be too strongly enforced.

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 29, after "solicitor," leave out to the end of Clause, and insert, "and the solicitor of the grantor, and is not nor has been the solicitor of the grantee, nor an agent or partner of such last-mentioned solicitor, and unless such attesting solicitor shall, before the execution by the grantor of such bill of sale, carefully explain to the grantor the nature and effect thereof, and shall also state, in his attestation of such execution, that he is the solicitor of the grantor, and is not and has not been the solicitor of the grantee, nor the agent or partner of such last-mentioned solicitor, and that he has carefully made such explanation to the grantor as is hereinbefore required."—(*Mr. Henry Allen.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. BULWER agreed with the hon. and learned Member for Pembroke in the suggestion that the wording "nor has been the solicitor of the grantee" was too wide; yet he thought the mischief would not be met by simply leaving out the words, "nor has been." He suggested for the drafting of the Amendment that the attesting solicitor should not have been the solicitor to the grantee in the particular transaction. He had himself had practical experience of a case that resulted in the greatest injustice being done, in which the person employed was not the regular solicitor of the grantee. He was solicitor to the grantor; but acted as solicitor to the grantee in that particular transaction, a circumstance which brought about the very evil which the hon. and learned Member for Pembroke wished to avoid. It ought not to be left open to a solicitor to act for both parties in the transaction.

MR. MONK pointed out that the Select Committee, after considering the point which had been so well urged by the hon. and learned Member for Pembroke, had gone very far in the direction that he desired. In the first place, it was thought that if this wording were adopted, it would be necessary that two solicitors should be employed in the preparation of every bill of sale. The Committee had inserted in this clause that the bill of sale should be executed in the presence of a person who had authority to administer oaths for the Supreme Court of Judicature in England, which, of course, would insure that a solicitor of the higher class should be employed in the transaction. There was, however, one part of the hon. and learned Member's Amendment which he considered very desirable—namely, that portion of it which required it to be stated in the attestation that the solicitor had carefully explained to the grantor the nature and effect of the bill of sale. But the hon. and learned Member for Grantham (Mr. Mellor) had an Amendment on the Paper to that effect, which he (Mr. Monk) would very much prefer to the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Pembroke. He thought it was going rather too far to say that the attesting solicitor should not be "the agent or partner of such last-mentioned solicitor;" and he believed that the object of the hon. and learned Member would be covered by the provision of the Bill which required the bill of sale to be attested by a solicitor who was a Commissioner authorized to administer oaths in the Supreme Court of Judicature. They knew from the evidence taken before the Committee that solicitors receiving only the small sum of £1 a-week were sometimes kept in the office of money lenders for the purpose of attesting bills of sale. The case henceforward would be very different, because the solicitor would belong to a high class of the Profession; and as a Commissioner authorized to take oaths must be employed whenever a bill of sale was executed, the chances of fraud in future would be very much reduced. Under the circumstances, he trusted the hon. and learned Member for Pembroke would withdraw the Amendment before the Committee, and allow that of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Grantham to be moved.

Mr. BULWER said, he thought it was a great pity that a Bill of this importance should be discussed at that late hour (1.55). He certainly hoped the Committee would not be led away by the opinion expressed by the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk). The fact of a solicitor being commissioned to take oaths in the Supreme Court of Judicature was, of course, some guarantee for his respectability; but, according to his experience, the hon. Member was under a little misapprehension in supposing that solicitors so commissioned were more respectable than those who were not.

Mr. H. G. ALLEN said, the proposal of the hon. Member for Gloucester did not meet the case he had in view, because with respect to the explanation, the point he wished to urge most strongly was that the attesting solicitor should not be the solicitor of the grantee. The Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Grantham did not touch this, although his point was, undoubtedly, a very important one. Under the circumstances he was not disposed to withdraw his own Amendment.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY pointed out that the evidence given before the Committee which considered the Bill was to the effect that the attestations took place in a most perfunctory way. It seemed a somewhat unlikely thing to expect that the attesting solicitor, although he might be a Commissioner to administer oaths, would take much trouble to explain the nature and effect of the bill of sale to the grantor. On the other hand, it was hardly to be supposed that a man about to give a bill of sale would be ready to spend money on an attesting solicitor. He would be glad to know whether there was to be any penalty for making an untrue attestation?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, he was under some difficulty with regard to accepting the whole of the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Pembroke (Mr. Allen). He would suggest that the early portion of the Amendment should not be pressed, and that the words "carefully explain to the grantor the nature and effect of the bill of sale, and shall," as proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Grantham (Mr. Mellor) should be moved. That would dispose of the first question; and then with regard to the solicitor, who, he agreed, should be the solicitor of the grantor, and not of the grantee, he would suggest that the second portion of the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Pembroke should be moved separately. There was nothing in the Bill which imposed any penalty upon a solicitor for making a false attestation; but, from his position of solicitor, it would follow that he would be answerable for his misconduct if it were known that he had made any misstatement in reference to the bill of sale. His own opinion was that the law, as it stood at present, was sufficient to meet that contingency.

Mr. MONK said, after the remarks of the Attorney General, he should be prepared to accept the latter portion of the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Pembroke.

Amendment, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Amendment proposed,

In page 2, line 29, after "shall," insert "carefully explain to the grantor the nature and effect of the bill of sale, and shall."—(*Mr. Attorney General.*)

Amendment *agreed to.*

Amendment proposed, in page 2, line 34, to add "and is not the solicitor to the grantee."—(*Mr. Henry Allen.*)

Mr. WARTON said, these words did not state that the solicitor was not the solicitor to the grantee in this matter. The solicitor might have been for a long time properly solicitor to the grantee, and yet in this matter he might act for the grantor. He thought words should be inserted providing that the solicitor should not act as solicitor to the grantee in this particular transaction, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, the words meant "is not at the present time," and, therefore, "is not in this particular matter." He did not think there would be any difficulty about it.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon *Monday* next.

House adjourned at a quarter after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 17*th March*, 1882.

EGYPT—FOREIGN AND EUROPEAN RESIDENTS AND EMPLOYES.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

EARL DE LA WARR asked the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether he had any objection to repeat the answer he made to a Question in that House on the previous evening—that answer not having been fully or accurately given in any of the newspapers of that morning—with reference to the subject of the taxation of European residents in Egypt? He understood the noble Earl to say that no opposition would be offered by this country to the taxing of European residents in the same manner and to the same amount as the Egyptians were taxed; and he further understood the noble Earl to say that other European Powers had given a similar assent.

EARL GRANVILLE: The answer which I gave yesterday to the noble Earl's Question—although, I am afraid, in too low a voice—was that Her Majesty's Government had recognized a year ago—in March, 1881—that the Egyptian Government had a right to put an equal tax on the houses of foreigners as on those of Natives; that the other Powers had taken a similar view, but that some of them had since raised a question as to the manner in which the tax should be assessed; and that the Correspondence was not yet complete.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: The misunderstanding which appears to have occurred last night does not occur exclusively in the case of the noble Earl, and is not due alone to his low voice, but it takes place in the case of all Ministers, and is largely due to the acoustic qualities of the House. I would suggest, as a matter worthy of consideration, whether, in view of the fact that answers from the Ministerial Bench are treated as documents of State in every part of the world, the time has not come when some authentic form should be given to them, and whether it might not be possible, in order to avoid doubt as to their exact words or meaning, to make them part of the Proceedings of the House, and to have them printed in the Votes. I do not ask for an answer to this suggestion now; but the inconvenience of such misunderstandings as have taken place pressed itself strongly on my mind when I was in Office, and it must have occasionally occurred to the noble Earl.

PARLIAMENTARY DECLARATION BILL.

OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, he wished to point out that some mistakes in dates had been printed in one or two of the newspapers in reference to his Motion for the second reading of this Bill. He intended to move the second reading on Thursday, the 23rd instant. In one paper it was suggested that the Bill would be withdrawn; but that would not be the case. He proposed the measure upon strong religious grounds; because he felt that Parliament should take care to prevent the introduction of Atheists into either House to take part in the legislation of the country. He should proceed with the Bill; and he trusted it would receive the support of noble Lords on the same grounds which had moved him to bring it in. He especially desired that the question should be kept free from Party feeling.

ENDOWED SCHOOLS ACT, 1869, AND AMENDING ACTS.

MOTION FOR AN ADDRESS.

LORD BRABOURNE moved—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to refuse Her

Assent to the Scheme of the Charity Commissioners for the management of Bedingfield's Charity for the benefit of the parishes of Lyminge, Dymchurch, and Smeeth, all in the county of Kent."

The noble Lord said, that the Trustees of the Charity were unanimously of opinion that the conditions which the Charity Commissioners sought to impose upon them would most injuriously affect the parishes; and they had instructed him, as their Chairman, to make an appeal to the only tribunal from which they could hope to obtain redress. About 200 years ago the testator left a bequest in the hands of Trustees with a direction that it should be applied towards the education and maintenance of the children of poor parents, "not being actually in the receipt of parish relief," who were members of the Church of England and communicants therein in the parishes of Lyminge, Dymchurch, and Smeeth. There was also a direction that the children should be kept to learning and should be sent to either of the Universities of Oxford or Cambridge if they were capable, or might be put out to trades, according to the discretion of the majority of the Trustees. Up to the present time the trust had been administered in strict conformity with the Founder's will. The Trustees were the rectors of the three parishes concerned and six gentlemen, who were either the actual descendants of, or in the same position of life as, the persons originally named in the will. A sum of £4 a-year had been paid for each child benefited by the Charity, partly for its maintenance and partly for its education at a public elementary school; and every Whit Monday the Trustees had personally examined and tested the proficiency of the children. Owing to various circumstances, the Trustees, about six years ago, applied to the Charity Commissioners with regard to the administration of the Charity. A scheme had been drawn up by the Commissioners, to some portions of which the Trustees had assented. They readily agreed to the introduction of the elective element into their future appointment, and to the admission of girls to share with boys the benefits of the Charity. Moreover, considering the difference of the relations existing between Nonconformity and the State from those which had existed at the time of the Founder's will, they had themselves recommended that the benefit of the Charity should be extended to the children of Nonconformists, of whom there were a large number among the labouring population of the three parishes. But to the 21st and 23rd Articles of the scheme the Trustees found themselves utterly unable to assent. The former provision was that only one-third of the income should be devoted to elementary education, so that, instead of 30 or 40 children receiving the benefits of the Charity, it would be available only for 15; and the money being given in scholarships or prizes to children already at school, "payment for results" would be certainly attained, but at the expense of disregarding the Founder's wishes, for there would be no payment for "maintenance," and no inquiry, as now, into the condition and character of the parents, so that children of a higher class of parents, and of persons whom the Trustees would not have held to be proper objects for the Charity, might receive the benefits hitherto confined to the poor, for whom they were intended. The second provision, which was even more objectionable, was that, while permitting the Trustees only to spend £15 a-year in apprenticing one boy, about two-thirds of the income were to be devoted to founding exhibitions at a public school, tenable for not more than three years. The exhibition was to be awarded annually as the result of scholarship, and in the event of there being no candidate from one of the three parishes, then children from such other parishes as might be selected were to be permitted to compete. The effect of this would be that the benefit of the Charity would be entirely taken away from the poor parishes of Lyminge and Dymchurch, and given to the children of the richer farmers and tradesmen in the adjoining parishes. This was utterly at variance with the will of the Founder, which directed that the children should be taken from the very poor not actually receiving parish relief. The parish of Smeeth would not be so much affected, because that parish had a board school, and the custom had been to give nearly three-fourths of the money to the parents for "maintenance," the remainder being given to the schoolmaster, on condition of his giving extra attention to the

Bedingfield boys; but the consequence of the scheme would probably be the closing of the voluntary schools in the other two parishes. The contention of the Charity Commissioners was twofold. First, they said that the will of the Founder pointed to higher education, because he mentioned the Universities, and said that boys should be sent there. But it should be recollected that 200 years ago the Universities were more like large public schools than they were now, and that boys went up there at an earlier age. Moreover, the Founder evidently had before him the probability of no boy of the class he wished to aid being capable of going to the Universities, for he expressly left it to the discretion of the Trustees to decide upon their capability, and he gave the alternative of putting them out to trades, which had been constantly done. The other contention of the Commissioners, which was at the root of the whole thing, was that rates were relieved by this Charity. No doubt its existence aided the parishes of Lyminge and Dymchurch in avoiding board schools supported by the new rate, which would be imposed for their support. But was that so great an evil? The parish of Lyminge was mainly composed of poor agricultural labourers, and that of Dymchurch of a poor fishing population. He maintained that it was the intention of the Founder to benefit the children of that class of the population, and not of the richer class, to whom the greater part of the funds were now to be given. And, considering the large number of small ratepayers—the very class to which the Founder alluded as "not actually in the receipt of parish relief"—in these two parishes, what could be a more accurate fulfilment of his evident wishes than that his money should aid schools in which religious instruction was given, and should relieve this class from an additional pressure of rates? The Trustees had all agreed to resign sooner than be parties to this scheme; but they had suspended their resignation until this appeal could be made. He (Lord Brabourne) did not know what course their Lordships would be pleased to take; but he did know that he would not have troubled them with one word upon the matter if he had not felt that he was pleading the cause of the poor. He was at a loss to know what public advantage could be gained which was commensurate with the evil inflicted upon these parishes if this scheme became law. He (Lord Brabourne) asked their Lordships to avert that evil. He asked them to interpose and prevent the carrying out of a scheme which was entirely contrary to the intentions of the Founder, as they had been interpreted ever since his bequest, which was utterly repugnant to the public feeling of the locality (as evidenced by Petitions which he had received, containing the signatures of nearly 100 heads of poor families, in each of the two parishes), which was unanimously opposed by those to whom the administration of the Charity had hitherto been intrusted, and which would be a cruel blow to those poor who could not plead there with their own voice, but in whose name and on whose behalf he (Lord Brabourne) ventured to appeal to their Lordships. Believing that the scheme was contrary to the Founder's intention, and would have the effect of diverting the funds of the Charity from the class intended to be benefited, he begged to move that a humble Address be presented to Her Majesty praying her to refuse her assent to the scheme.

Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying Her Majesty to refuse Her Assent to the Scheme of the Charity Commissioners for the management of Bedingfield's Charity for the benefit of the parishes of Lyminge, Dymchurch, and Smeeth, all in the county of Kent."—(*The Lord Brabourne.*)

LORD CLINTON apologized to their Lordships for interposing between the House and his noble Friend the Lord President on this subject; but having been at one time officially acquainted with the details of the scheme, he was anxious to say a few words upon it, and upon the speech of his noble Friend (Lord Brabourne). His noble Friend had said that the effect of the scheme of the Charity Commissioners would be to interfere with the present application of the income of the Charity by the Trustees, and to deprive the children of the poor of the parishes interested in the Charity of the benefits to which they were entitled. The Charity Commissioners, however, in dealing with matters of this kind, must be guided not by what might happen to be the existing practice of administration at the time, but by the provisions of the Endowed Schools Acts, and by the express directions of the Founder of the Charity. The intentions of the Founder were very clearly indicated; he left a sum of money for the education and maintenance in learning of poor children, adding that—

> "Such children should be kept to learning and sent to one of the Universities, or put out to trades."

It was evident, therefore, that no mere elementary or desultory education was intended, but education of the highest kind. The Trustees of this Charity, at the beginning of the century, took this view of their obligations; because it was stated in the Charity Commissioners' Report of the year 1819 that the then Trustees—

> "Endeavoured to assist those who, from their condition in life, are properly desirous of giving their sons such instruction as to prepare them for the University, or for some superior trade, but have not the means of accomplishing it."

The present Trustees had, however, entirely neglected this part of the Founder's directions, and had applied the income of the Charity in the education and maintenance of children in elementary schools, occasionally apprenticing them to some ordinary trade. It appeared, also, that they had contributed out of the funds to the maintenance of the schools, which was clearly illegal. The scheme of the Charity Commissioners strictly adhered to the Founder's directions, providing for the education and maintenance at school of poor children, appropriating an annual sum to apprenticing, and applying the remainder, or about five-eighths of the whole income, in the establishment of exhibitions to enable the children to continue their education in superior grammar or technical schools. Such schools, owing to the action of the Endowed Schools Commissioners, and, after them, of the Charity Commissioners, abounded throughout the country. He could mention several in his noble Friend's (Lord Brabourne's) own county—Canterbury, Rochester, Maidstone, Tonbridge, Sevenoaks, Ashford—all of which would be accessible to the children of the parishes entitled to the benefits of this Charity if the scheme were allowed to pass. It had been the policy of the two Commissions to which he had referred, with the approval of successive Governments, to make use of the ancient educational endowments for the purpose of connecting elementary schools with the highest education which the country could supply; and it was with this policy that their Lordships were now asked to interfere. He hoped, therefore, that they would not assent to the Motion of his noble Friend.

EARL SPENCER said, after the able remarks of his noble Friend opposite (Lord Clinton), who had such a strong right to be heard on behalf of the Charity Commissioners, he should not trouble their Lordships at any length; but, being responsible for having sanctioned the scheme on the part of the Education Department, he thought it right to make one or two observations. He was of opinion that the Charity Commissioners, in proposing this scheme, were truly carrying out the duties imposed upon them by the Act of Parliament. The Act of Parliament regulating this matter was the Act of 1869, and the Preamble very clearly pointed out the general objects which the Act was to carry out. It referred to a Report of the Commissioners appointed by Her Majesty in 1864. That Report recommended a re-organization of schools. He maintained that the Charity Commissioners had followed out that recommendation. They had not only proposed a scheme which provided for that higher education to which the Commissioners, in their Report, had distinctly referred, but which would also carry out the intentions of the Founder, who directed that these children, "if capable," were to be sent to one of the Universities. The present Trustees had not interpreted the Founder's will correctly, because they had not provided for a higher education; they had confined the Charity to elementary education, and given £4 to the parents of the children in the category set forth of the three parishes mentioned. That was not a useful way of encouraging education. The scheme provided a system of prizes to be obtained in open competition, and that would be better than the mode of distributing £4 to certain persons at the will and pleasure of the Trustees. He felt sure their Lordships would agree that a system of competition for prizes in a school was a very much better way of promoting and encouraging education than some systems which had been in vogue. In his opinion, the scheme proposed by the Charity Commissioners would be likely to forward elementary education in a marked degree, for the children would be stimulated in their educational efforts by the hope of gaining admission to a higher grade of schools. An Exhibition would be tenable for three years, and every year one such Exhibition of the value of £20 would be granted to one boy and to one girl. The Charity Commissioners had done all that they could to meet the wishes of the Trustees. For the reasons which he had given, he trusted that the Motion of his noble Friend would not be agreed to. Instead of depriving the poor of a valuable Charity, the scheme would confer a very great benefit upon them; for it would enable their children, if deserving, to carry on their education beyond the limits by which they were at present circumscribed. The action which the noble Lord (Lord Brabourne) desired the House to take was opposed to the policy which had been followed, not only by the Charity Commission, but by every successive Government for the last 10 years, and which had been endorsed by Parliament.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY reminded their Lordships that at various times they had looked with considerable jealousy upon operations that had been carried through under the Charity Commission Act, and especially had they done so when the Act was being administered by a body holding more advanced opinions than were held by the existing Commission. He did not, however, think that the precedent established at that period applied to the present case. It was important to carry out the intentions of Founders, and that point had always been strongly insisted upon, consistently with the requirements of the day. In the present case, having carefully listened to the complaint of the noble Lord, and to the statement of the noble Lord behind him (Lord Clinton), it appeared to him that the Commissioners had properly interpreted the intentions of the Founder. There were two ways of dealing with money bequeathed for the benefit of the poor in the manner in which it had been bequeathed in the present case. One of these ways was to relieve the poor in their distress without improving their position; the other was to raise them by steps educationally, so as to bring them within the reach of the highest education in the country, and to enable them to pursue liberal professions. To this second class of cases the present benefaction belonged. It was clear that the intention of the Founder was to assist children to go to the Universities. It had been said that in the 17th century the Universities were, in reality, only public schools; but he dissented from that opinion. He quite admitted that there was in this scheme, to a slight extent, and in many other schemes, a principle which seemed to him a harsh one—that of diverting funds from the very poor to the class above them more likely to come within the reach of culture. He feared that that tendency had infected many educational measures of the present day; but whether that was right or wrong, it was quite evident that, in the present instance, a sound principle had in the main been observed; the Founder's desires had been followed; and, therefore, he thought their Lordships would not do wisely in supporting the Motion of his noble Friend.

LORD BRABOURNE, in reply, said, after the discussion which had taken place, he would not ask their Lordships to divide upon his Motion; but he must point out that the noble Lords who had spoken had omitted to notice that the primary intention of the Founder was to benefit the poor just above those who received parish relief.

Motion (by leave of the House) *withdrawn.*

House adjourned at Six o'clock, to
Monday next, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 17*th March*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—CIVIL SERVICE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1881-2—Class III.—LAW AND JUSTICE—£7,772, County Court Officers, &c.; £135,000, Zulu, &c. Wars; CIVIL SERVICES (EXCESSES)—Classes II., III., IV., V.

Resolutions [March 16] *reported.*

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee*—£424,844 14*s.* 10*d.*, Consolidated Fund, 1881 and 1882; £6,793,498, Consolidated Fund, 1883.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Army (Annual) * [105].

First Reading—Augmentation of Benefices Act Amendment * [106].

QUESTIONS.

AFGHANISTAN—THE SUBSIDY TO THE AMEER.

Mr. E. STANHOPE asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether the Ameer Abdurrahman still persists in claiming, as stated in his letter of December 11th 1880, that the subsidy promised to him by the Government of India was one million sterling; what was the amount actually promised by Sir Lepel Griffin; and, what is the total amount already paid?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: There is no reason to suppose that the Ameer persists in making the claim alluded to in the Question; at least, so far as the Correspondence in the possession of Her Majesty's Government shows. At all events, there is no foundation for the claim. The sum which was promised by Sir Lepel Griffin to the Ameer was between 19 and 20 lacs, including 9½ lacs found in the Cabul Treasury before His Highness's accession; 19½ lacs were paid to him in 1880. The total sum of money already paid to the Ameer is about 41½ lacs, the particulars of which will be found in the Return laid on the Table on the Motion of the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow).

STATE OF IRELAND — SEIZURE OF NEWSPAPERS—NOTICE OF ACTION AGAINST THE GOVERNMENT.

Mr. LEWIS asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether he will give the name of the person who has served notice of action against any agent or representative of the Government for seizing newspapers in the Irish Post Office, and also the date of such notice?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) said, he found that the notice was not conversant with the subject-matter of the Question.

Mr. LEWIS asked whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman would kindly repeat his answer, as he had not quite caught it.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson) repeated the words he had used.

After a pause,

Mr. LEWIS rose, and, apologizing for troubling the right hon. and learned Gentleman, said, he had been really unable to catch the answer.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): I find that the Notice is not conversant with the subject-matter of this Question.

Subsequently,

Mr. LEWIS said, he must trespass for a few minutes on the time of the House, and, if necessary to put himself in Order, he would conclude with a Motion. He and others were placed in some difficulty by the answer which had been given to his Question. To enable the House to understand the matter he might say that two or three days ago he asked the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland, under what Statute it was that the Government had seized certain newspapers at the Irish Post Office? The right hon. and learned Gentleman declined to answer that Question, because, he said, notice of action had been given against the representative of the Government. In consequence of that reply he (Mr. Lewis) put on the Paper the Question which he had asked to-day; and although the right hon. and learned Gentleman had answered it three times, he was in the same difficulty after the third answer as he was originally. The right hon. and learned Gentleman said the notice was not conversant with the subject-matter of the Question. Of course, it must be his own dulness; but he confessed he was no wiser for that answer. Therefore, perhaps he might be allowed to put his Question in such plain terms that a simple "yes" or "no" might answer it. Had any notice of action been given against the representative of the Government in respect of the seizing of newspapers at the Irish Post Office; and, if so, on what date?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): No, Sir.

SOUTH AFRICA—NATAL—SELF-GOVERNMENT.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, If it is true, as stated in the public journals, that, what is called responsible Government, has been offered to the European Colonists of Natal; and, if so, whether it is proposed to make over to them the rule over the Native population in the present limits of Natal, and the relations with the Zulus and other nations beyond the border? He had discovered that the first part of his Question was answered in the affirmative by a Parliamentary Paper which had been issued that morning; but as to the latter, as it appeared from recent occurrences, that——

Mr. SPEAKER called the hon. Member to Order, and said, he was introducing new matter which ought to be made the subject of Notice.

Mr. COURTNEY, in reply, said, he must refer his hon. Friend for an answer to the Paper issued that morning. If he wanted further information it would be discreet to ask him to give Notice.

STATE OF IRELAND—COUNTY LEITRIM.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If his attention has been drawn to the remarks of Mr. Waters, County Court Judge at Manorhamilton, county Leitrim, in January last, in which he congratulated the Grand Jury on the peaceable state of the district; and if, under the circumstances, there is any justification for the further imprisonment of the "suspects" belonging to that district?

Mr. TOTTENHAM: I should like to ask another Question. Supposing the remarks had been made, does the right hon. Gentleman think, from his knowledge of the state of the country, that they were justified by the facts?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I can only say that I have not seen these remarks. I have looked for them, but have not been able to find them. I am sorry to state that the condition of County Leitrim, as regards agrarian outrage and intimidation, is not one which will enable us to do what the hon. Member (Mr. Biggar) suggests.

Mr. BIGGAR: Is it the fact that only one criminal case was tried at the January Sessions?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The hon. Member must give Notice.

LAW AND POLICE—THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC CLUB.

Mr. BELLINGHAM asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If his attention has been drawn to a meeting of Social Democrats and Nihilists, held at the Social Democratic Club in Soho on Monday last, and largely attended by individuals of all nationalities, to commemorate the assassination of the late Emperor of Russia; whether he is aware that one of the speakers (an Englishman) did not allude to the assassination of the Tsar as "justifiable homicide," and propound the theory that "the English democracy should aid the Russian democracy in throwing off the yoke of Russian despotism;" whether London has not been, for some months, the centre of the "International;" and, whether Her Majesty's Government are prepared to tolerate meetings called for the expressed purpose of glorifying murder and encouraging assassination? The hon. Member said he should also like to ask whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman had any reason to suppose that those who took part in the meeting were members of any of the numerous Liberal or Radical Caucuses?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have made inquiry; but I have no information at all to the effect or purport of the facts stated in the hon. Member's Question.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — J. M'MORROW.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, On what grounds John McMorrow is still retained in prison, he having been arrested over 12 months ago?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: A day or two ago, when I was in Ireland, I inquired about this case. I am glad to say I found that we could release him, and his release has been ordered.

NAVY—H.M.S. "DOTEREL."

Mr. GABBETT asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether, seeing that by the Naval regulations in case of shipwreck, an officer is allowed a certain sum, proportionate to his rank, to cover any loss of kit which he may have undergone, the Government will not grant a similar allowance to the representatives of the men whose lives were lost in the explosion of H.M.S. "Doterel?"

Mr. TREVELYAN: The Regulation to which the hon. Member refers states expressly that compensation for loss of kit is given—

> "So far only as to enable officers and men to re-equip themselves for service."

The third paragraph lays it down that—

> "No claim will be admitted for losses incurred by officers or men who are not living at the time that the claim is made."

I am afraid, as the hon. Member will see, the Admiralty have no choice in the matter. The gratuities and special pensions given to the relatives of the officers and men lost in the *Doterel* are quite separate from this question.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—SUB-COMMISSIONER WALPOLE.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he is aware that Mr. Walpole, one of the Sub-Commissioners appointed under the Land Act, has allowed himself to be put in nomination as a candidate for the post of Poor Law Guardian in the Donaghmore Union in the elections about to be held; and, whether a Sub-Commissioner can, consistently with his duty, present himself as a candidate to electors whose rents he may shortly be called upon to decide?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, upon inquiry he found that Mr. Walpole had been nominated, having been a Poor Law Guardian for 20 years. He was quite sure, from what he knew of Mr. Walpole, that he would not allow himself to act in his official capacity in any place in which he was interested. He thought it spoke very well for Mr. Walpole that he had been a Guardian for 20 years. The Commissioners, however, considered rightly that Mr. Walpole should not hold office as a Guardian while acting as a Sub-Commissioner.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE—CHANCERY DIVISION—DORMANT FUNDS.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he will state the total amount of the dormant fund of unclaimed money now in Chancery, the amount of interest received thereon during the year ending 31st December 1881, and the manner in which that interest has been spent?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: It is estimated very roughly that the dormant funds in Chancery amount to about £700,000, of which only a small portion is really unclaimed. If the hon. Member desired it, an accurate Return might be prepared; but it would require some time to do so, and the employment of some six or eight clerks for that time. A large portion of the funds are invested, and the interest on them accumulates for the benefit of the cause to which it belongs. The uninvested portion forms a part of the general balance of the Chancery fund. I cannot, however, state precisely what proportion of the amount is uninvested. To do so would require the detailed examinations of over 3,000 accounts.

IRELAND — THE NEW MUSEUM OF SCIENCE AND ART, DUBLIN.

Mr. DAWSON asked the Vice President of the Council, What is the present position of the proposed Science and Art Museum for Ireland as regards the new buildings; what provision is being made for the National Library; to what body the designs for the new buildings will be submitted for final adjudication; and whether such body will report upon the technical skill, competency, and experience of the person to be intrusted with a public work of such magnitude and importance; and, whether such plans as are selected will be laid before the Municipal Council of Dublin before being finally adopted?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH (for the Vice President of the Council) said: The architect for the Dublin Museum is being selected by a public competition, divided into two stages. In the first sketch designs only were required, and 67 such were sent in. Five of these were selected by a Committee appointed for the purpose, and their authors were invited to furnish detailed designs and estimates for the final competition, for which they will receive £150 each. These detailed designs must be sent in before the 1st of May next. The Committee of Selection will report to the Treasury upon these five designs, and the author of one of them will be selected by the Government as architect. The National Library will be placed in the present Natural History Museum. It is not considered necessary to lay the plans before the Municipal Council of Dublin, as I may remind the hon. Member that the Museum is intended to be a national one, and not solely for the benefit of Dublin; the Corporation of Dublin is, however, represented on the Committee of Selection. I may take this opportunity of expressing the thanks of the Government to that Committee for the manner in which they have discharged the important duty intrusted to them.

CRIMINAL LAW—SUSPECTED POISONING.

MR. ST. AUBYN asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether, in cases of suspected poisoning, when an analysis is directed to be made, he would consider whether it would not be more satisfactory that the suspected person should have an opportunity of being represented professionally at such analysis?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The subject is one well deserving of consideration; but the Question was only put upon the Paper last night, and before giving any definite reply to it I should wish to consult the official analyst on the subject.

COOLIE (INDIAN) LABOUR IN QUEENSLAND.

MR. CROPPER asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is the case that the Government of Queensland have asked for permission to introduce Indian coolies into that colony; and, if so, whether Her Majesty's Government, instead of authorising the introduction of indentured coolie labour from our Indian possessions, will recommend the Queensland authorities to repeal the legislation by which they prevented the Chinese from giving the colony the free labour which it appears to require?

MR. COURTNEY: No such application as that referred to in the hon. Member's Question has been made.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACTS—FOOT-AND-MOUTH DISEASE.

COLONEL WALROND asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether it is true that there is a considerable amount of foot and mouth disease in the county of Cornwall; and, whether it has spread into the county of Devon; and, if so, whether the Privy Council have taken any steps to prevent the disease becoming general?

MR. MUNDELLA: There are still a few cases of foot-and-mouth disease in the Western Division of Cornwall, and the Privy Council have included them all in one infected area. The Eastern Division is entirely free from disease. There have recently been one or two outbreaks in the county of Devon, and the Privy Council at once declared infected areas in each case. The disease is not spreading, but, on the contrary, is steadily declining. The number of outbreaks for the past 10 weeks of the present year, for the whole of England and Wales, is only 289, as against 1,659 in the corresponding period last year.

FRANCE — COMMERCIAL LAW — THE SURTAXE D'ENTREPOT.

MR. MAC IVER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is the fact that the voluminous correspondence with regard to French shipping bounties, published in the Blue Books recently issued, was absolutely without result; and, if it is the case, that Her Majesty's Government failed in obtaining any concessions with regard to "surtaxe d'entrepôt," except such as are likely to operate to the disadvantage of our own agriculturists and manufacturers?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I must once more beg the hon. Member to read his Blue Books instead of asking me to tell him what is in them. He last night called attention to the effect of *surtaxe d'entrepôt* in charging Canadian goods which came by Liverpool with dues from which Canadian goods which came by New York are free. If he had read his Blue Book he would have found that in my fourth or fifth speech upon the subject I succeeded in getting the French Commissioners to share the views which he and I both hold upon this question.

MR. MAC IVER: I am sure the House will pardon me; but the hon. Baronet has not answered my Question. He has simply suggested that I should read the Blue Books. I have read them. I want to ask him to reply distinctly to the Question as it appears on the Paper—

> "Whether the voluminous correspondence with regard to French shipping bounties, published in the Blue Books recently issued, was absolutely without result?"

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: I have told the hon. Member as plainly as I could speak that the exact contrary is the case.

Mr. MAC IVER: I beg to give Notice that as soon as possible I will call attention to the inaccuracies of the hon. Baronet's answers.

AFFAIRS OF GREECE—CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is a fact that the Greek Ministry, having been defeated at the recent general elections owing to the dissatisfaction of the Greek people with the so-called settlement of the Greek question by the cession of Thessaly, the Ministry have resigned office and their successors been appointed?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: We have no information to confirm the reason suggested in the hon. Member's Question for the recent change of Government in Greece.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES) BILL.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether his attention has been called to the evidence given by an agent of the Birmingham Liberal Association on the hearing of a recent Municipal Election Petition, when that agent stated that, when he was aware a Petition would be presented, he had burnt his original canvass books and documents; and had also, whilst under cross-examination, during the adjournment of the Court, burnt his cash-book; and, whether he will consider the advisability of inserting a clause in his Bill "for the better prevention of Corrupt Practices at Parliamentary Elections" requiring candidates and their agents at Municipal Elections to preserve their original books and accounts for a period of, say, six months?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): My attention has not been in any way called to the evidence mentioned in the first part of the hon. Member's Question. Such a matter would not come before me officially. In reply to his second Question, I may repeat what I have already stated more than once—that I am sensible of the desirability of dealing with corrupt practices at municipal as well as at Parliamentary elections. I did at first undertake to deal with both classes of corrupt practices in one measure; but I found that the peculiar circumstances attending them were such as to render it impossible to deal with them simultaneously in a single measure. If the House will lend me its assistance to deal with corrupt practices at Parliamentary elections, I shall do my best to prepare a measure dealing with those at municipal elections.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PERSONS DETAINED UNDER THE ACT.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the Irish Prisons Board, in their statement that the charges made with reference to prison treatment of suspects are generally untrue or exaggerated, intend to apply either of those terms to any part of the two statements on the subject of prison treatment made by the Member for Sligo; and, if so, whether the Government will direct an investigation, on oath or otherwise, into the charges made by the Member for Sligo on the basis of his personal experience?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: The hon. Member has put two Questions to me. In reply to the first, I have to say that the statement I made was with reference to the charges made by the hon. Member two or three days ago to the House. He also made a charge in the course of the debate upon the Address; and in relation to that, I must refer to the letter read by my right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General for Ireland on the 16th of February last, which, to my mind, was a complete answer to that charge, and did show that there had, at least, been exaggeration in the statements made. With regard to the second Question, my reply is that undoubtedly, in that case, the hon. Member made very serious charges, for it is a very serious matter for a man in my position to be charged with intentional cruelty. I have brought the matter very closely before the Board, and I shall request them to write a letter on the subject which may be laid upon the Table of the House. When that letter is laid upon the Table of the House, I shall leave the House to decide whether any further step should be taken. I shall make that request to the Board upon the supposition that the hon. Member abides by the charges as they were reported in *The Freeman's Journal*. If the hon. Member wishes to make any alteration in the character or form of the charges, he had better make them by letter.

Mr. SEXTON said, he should eagerly await the production of the letters and an investigation. In regard to the former letter of Captain Barlow, it dealt with only one charge, and evaded that one charge by equivocation.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I understood the hon. Member to say he abides by the charges he made as reported in *The Freeman's Journal?*

Mr. SEXTON: So far as I can remember, I do. I will re-read the report; and if it is inaccurate I will communicate with the right hon. Gentleman.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE—THE DEBATE.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Mr. Speaker, I wish, with your permission, to put a Question to you which I believe it would be for the convenience of many Members to have answered. It is with reference to the debate which will take place on the Rules of Procedure. At the present time the House is occupied in considering the Amendment of the hon. Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott). If that Amendment should be negatived—that is to say, if the words proposed to be struck out are ordered to stand part of the Question—there are many other Amendments upon the Paper, especially those of the hon. Baronet the Member for Caithness-shire (Sir Tollemache Sinclair), and of the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock). The Question I wish to put is whether it will be competent to those hon. Members after the rejection—if it should be rejected—of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Brighton still to move the Amendments which stand upon the Paper in their name?

Mr. SPEAKER: The Question proposed to the House, and upon which the vote of the House must be taken, is that the words "when it shall appear to the Speaker" stand part of the Question. The Question was put by me in that form for the purpose of not excluding the other Amendments. The Amendments of the hon. Baronet the Member for Caithness-shire and of the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London are, therefore, both open to be moved in the case of the rejection of the Amendment of the hon. Member for Brighton.

AFGHANISTAN—APPOINTMENT OF A NATIVE AGENT AT CABUL.

Mr. ONSLOW wished to ask a Question of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India with regard to which he had written him a private letter. It was if, considering the importance of the recent appointment to the Court of the Ameer, he would inform the House whether the instructions given at the time of the appointment were considered and sanctioned by Her Majesty's Government, or whether they were left to the decision of the Viceroy in Council?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: The private letter to which the hon. Member refers was only received by me after I came down to the House. My answer is that the instructions were given by the Government of India.

Mr. ONSLOW: Without the sanction of the Home Government?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: They were left to the Government of India.

RELIGIOUS DISSENSIONS (GIBRALTAR)—DR. CANILLA.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any Papers have been received with reference to the recent affair at Gibraltar?

Mr. COURTNEY: The Papers on the subject are already on the Table of the House.

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE VOTES IN SUPPLY.

Mr. RAIKES asked the noble Lord the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether it was not a fact that the Votes which it was proposed to take that night would be moved without having previously been submitted to the Committee on Public Accounts; whether the Committee on Public Accounts had not yet been appointed; and whether he would be able to defer those Votes until they could come before the House, accompanied by the Report of that Committee?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH regretted to say that the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General had not yet been submitted to the Committee on Public Accounts for the reason that he had been so far unable to get that Committee appointed. It was absolutely necessary that those Votes should be taken to-night, unless the accountants were to be made responsible personally for the amounts. He had proposed to take an amount passed and approved by the Comptroller and Auditor General, and he did not think there could be any doubt whatever that that amount would be approved by the Committee on Public Accounts. This step had been taken on repeated occasions, when it had been impossible to obtain the sanction of the Public Accounts Committee. The Report would be considered as soon as the Committee was appointed, and any questions raised there would be brought before the House.

Mr. RAIKES asked the noble Lord what steps he would take as to the appointment?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH replied, that that seemed to be a matter for the House. He had put the Motion down for the appointment; but he might be stopped by the half-past 12 o'clock Rule.

Earl PERCY asked the noble Lord if it was not the fact that a Motion for the appointment of the Public Accounts Committee was down on the Paper for Tuesday, and why it was not moved, seeing the House was counted out?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he was unavoidably detained on business on Tuesday evening, and was on his way to the House when he was informed there had been a count out.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT—ATTEMPTED MURDER OF MR. CARTER.

Sir WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the report in the morning papers is true—namely, that Mr. George Tilson Shaen Carter has been murderously fired upon, and been wounded in both legs?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I am sorry to say that the report is true.

Mr. SCHREIBER asked whether there was any truth in the report which appeared in the evening papers that an Irish tenant had had his teeth drawn for having paid his rent?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: No, Sir. I have not heard anything of that.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY.—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

BRITISH NORTH BORNEO COMPANY (CHARTER).—RESOLUTION.

Mr. GORST, in rising to call attention to the Charter recently granted by Her Majesty to the British North Borneo Company; and to move—

> "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that Her Majesty will be graciously pleased to revoke or alter so much of the Charter as gives an implied sanction to the maintenance of slavery under the protection of the British flag,"

said: Mr. Speaker, before the House goes into Committee of Supply I am anxious to move that an Address be presented to Her Majesty in reference to the Charter recently granted by the Crown to the British North Borneo Company. When the present Government came into Office one of the principles they laid down was that there should be no extension of British dominion, and that no fresh responsibility shall be voluntarily incurred by the people of this country—certainly not without previous application to and full discussion of the matter in Parliament. It therefore appears to me that the supporters of Her Majesty's Government must have been not a little surprised when, in the month of November last, they became aware that without any application to Parliament, or any previous discussion of the matter, Her Majesty's Government had founded a new Sovereign Company on the model of the old East India Company, which was to govern and administer a great extent of country in the Island of Borneo. I think the supporters of Her Majesty's Government will expect to have some better explanation of the policy which was so carried out than the one which was given by the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Granville) "elsewhere" the other day. The noble Earl stated that the Government of which he is a Member had a very high character; but that—

> "If a case should present itself which promises great advantages to our political and commercial interests, with an absence of reasonable ground for apprehending military or financial burdens, it would be the act of doctrinaires, and not of statesmen, to refuse to go into an examination of such a case."

In other words, that while Her Majesty's Government assume in the country a high character for neutrality and for preserving the country from foreign complications, yet if they could see their way to doing a little bit of filibustering by the hands of other people, cheaply, and without any great amount of danger, they would be more than men if they resisted the temptation. Now, about three years ago, the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) was very curious on the subject of this North Borneo Treaty, which was then being talked about; and he addressed a Question to the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in this House, which I think that he and some of his Colleagues may answer in the House of Commons to-night. The Question was asked on the 12th of June, 1879, and it was—

> "Whether any responsibility has been incurred by the British Government; and, also, whether, before any step is taken, full information will be given to the House?"—[3 *Hansard*, ccxlvi. 1699.]

The right hon. Gentleman was then in Opposition, and was very anxious that the matter should be brought before the House of Commons; but the right hon. Gentleman seems to have no particular anxiety to bring it before the House now that he and his Friends are in Office. On the 16th of June, 1879, when the right hon. Gentleman was told by the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that no decision had been arrived at, he asked this pertinent Question—

> "Why the approval of Her Majesty's Government is asked, if there is no responsibility incurred?"—[*Ibid.* 1911.]

The right hon. Gentleman is unfortunately not present at this moment; but I would suggest that, in his absence, his Colleagues should answer in the House of Commons to-night these three plain and pertinent questions—first, whether any responsibility has been incurred by the British Government? secondly, whether such a step has been taken before full information has been given to the House? and, thirdly, why if no responsibility has been incurred the approval of Her Majesty's Government to the Charter was ever asked for? And now, let me call the attention of the House for a moment to the Charter itself. It begins with a statement of the cession of Sovereign rights by two Sovereign Sultans—the Sultan of Brunei and the Sultan of Sulu—to Mr. Alfred Dent, and an anonymous individual who is never mentioned in the Charter at all, but who, I believe, turned out to be an Austrian subject, Baron Overbeck. Let me call the attention of the House to the nature of the powers ceded by these two Sultans to Mr. Dent. They include the power of life and death over the inhabitants, with all the absolute rights of property vested in the Sultan over the soil of the country and the right to dispose of the same, as well as the rights over the productions of the country, whether mineral, vegetable, or animal, with the rights of making laws, coining money, creating an Army and Navy, levying Customs rates on home and foreign trade and shipping, and other dues and taxes on the inhabitants as to him (Baron Overbeck) might seem good or expedient, together with all other powers and rights usually exercised by, and belonging to, Sovereign Rulers. It appears, therefore, that as far as the grant could be made, Messrs. Dent and Overbeck had an absolute Sovereignty over the territory. Then the Charter goes on to state that the Sovereign power had been vested in Mr. Alfred Dent alone, and then in a provisional Company founded under the Limited Liability Acts, and called the British North Borneo Provisional Association, Limited. This Limited Company has been formed for three purposes—first, to buy up and become possessed of the Sovereignty of Borneo—a strange possession for a Limited Liability Company, registered under the Limited Liability Act of 1862; secondly, to obtain a Charter from Her Majesty's Government; and, thirdly, to transfer the Sovereign powers over North Borneo which had originally been conferred upon Mr. Alfred Dent from a Limited Liability Company to the Chartered Company.

The Charter then goes on to create the British North Borneo Company; and I beg especially to draw the attention of the House to the operative words of the Charter. The Company is "authorized and empowered by Her Majesty the Queen to acquire the Sovereign powers;" and it is further, by Her Majesty the Queen, "authorized and empowered to hold, use, enjoy, and exercise the same." Now, this has been denied in public despatches, and perhaps it may be denied in the House of Commons to-night; but I assert, without fear of contradiction, that those words are an authority from the Crown of Great Britain to this Chartered Company to acquire Sovereign powers, and that they are also an authority from the Crown of Great Britain to this Chartered Company to exercise and enjoy the Sovereign rights it is so empowered to obtain. But that is not the only circumstance which gives a political character to this Company. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs told the Netherlands Government that it was only a mere Commercial Company. I dare say the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs will make the same statement to the House to-night; but I do not think the arguments by which the Netherlands Government were convinced will convince the Members of this House. I wish to point out to the House from this Charter several circumstances which seem to me to establish beyond all doubt in the world that it is a Company of a political and not of a commercial character. In the first place, the Company is to be British, and is always to remain British; every member of the Court of Directors is to be a British subject; and every representative of the Company in Borneo, by whom these Sovereign powers are to be carried into effect, are all to be British subjects. There is to be no transfer of these Sovereign powers without the authority of the Secretary of State; and, if any difference arises between the Sultans of Brunei and Sulu, it is to be submitted to the decision of the Secretary of State, whose decision is to be final; and, finally, it is declared that—

> "If at any time our Secretary of State thinks fit to dissent from or to object to any of the dealings of the Company with any Foreign Power, and to make to the Company any suggestion founded on that dissent or objection, the Company shall act in accordance therewith."

So that the Company is to enter into independent relations with Foreign Powers, with the right of Her Majesty's Government to interfere at any moment, and to direct the Company how they are to be carried on. Section 11 provides that Her Majesty shall appoint the officers of this Company her Representatives in North Borneo to exercise her extra territorial jurisdiction and authority in Borneo over the British subjects who may happen to be there. The Secretary of State is to approve of the appointment of the principal representative of the Company in Borneo, who would be practically the Governor of the Island. Then the Company is to hoist and use on its buildings and elsewhere in Borneo and on its vessels a distinctive flag indicating the British character of the Company, and such flag is to be subject to the approval of the Secretary of State and the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty. Finally, if the Secretary of State thinks that there are any powers in the territory of Borneo claiming adversely to the Company, the Secretary of State may in that case put a veto on the exercise of Sovereign powers by the Company. I am not objecting to those powers being vested in the Secretary of State—they are, no doubt, admirable provisions—but if I show to the House that the Company is not a commercial but a British political Company, and that it is invested under its Charter with the exercise in the Eastern Seas of political powers, I appeal to the Members of the Government themselves whether a Company which is authorized and empowered to take Sovereign rights from two Sultans of the Island, who are authorized and empowered by the Government to use and exercise those rights under the supreme authority and under the control of the Government of Great Britain—I appeal to the Government whether that is not the means by which Great Britain is endeavouring to avoid direct responsibility, and to prevent foreign nations from directly challenging the acts of this Company as the acts of the British Crown? While Great Britain is all the time sheltering herself behind the Company, she is in reality pulling all its strings and using it as a mere puppet, to whom she gives her orders, and through whom she acts in the Eastern Seas. In point of fact, it is a sort of filibustering by proxy which the noble Lord the Secretary of

State for Foreign Affairs thinks is so extremely cheap and so very safe. Will the House forgive me if I tell them the story of how these Sovereign rights came to be acquired? In the year 1877 a Mr. Alfred Dent, whom I have already mentioned, sent out Baron Overbeck, an Austrian subject and an Austrian ex-official, to Borneo for the purpose of acquiring these territories, and the first thing he did was to meet Mr. Torrey, an American. Mr. Torrey was the sole survivor and representative of an American Trading Company, which was established in 1865, and which received from the Sultan of Borneo in that year a grant of this very identical territory, accompanied by a cession of these very identical Sovereign rights. But the American Company had not been fortunate. They made an attempt at settlement, but it did not succeed; and at the time Baron Overbeck went out the American Company was practically defunct, and the possession of Sovereign rights had been vested in Mr. Torrey. Mr. Torrey and Baron Overbeck went to the Sultan of Brunei, and the Sultan of Brunei accepted £1,000, or $5,000, for placing Baron Overbeck in the shoes of the American Company. I do not know how much Mr. Torrey got out of Baron Overbeck; but what the Sultan of Brunei got was this sum of £1,000, and then on the 29th of December, 1877, the Sultan of Brunei and his Prime Minister, who goes by the extraordinary name of Pangarang Tunangong, made a grant of absolute Sovereignty over these territories—which, by the way, I may mention incidentally, cover 500 miles in extent of coast, and are described as being extraordinarily rich in every kind of mineral productions—to Baron Overbeck for the sum of £5,000 per annum in round numbers. Now that was a very magnificent grant, and it was obtained on terms which I have no doubt the House will consider to be extremely cheap; but it was only a grant on paper, because when the title of the Sultan of Brunei came to be examined, it was found that he had no title to make any such grant at all. He was under two difficulties. In the first place, he had entered into a Treaty with Great Britain in 1847, and in this Treaty with Great Britain, which was entered into at the time we ceded the Island of Labuan, he entered into an agreement to make no cession of any part of his territory to anybody else without previously obtaining the leave and consent of the British Government, so that the grant made in 1865 to the American Company, and the grant made in 1877 to Baron Overbeck, an Austrian subject, were both inconsistent with that Treaty, and therefore as against the Government of Her Majesty were distinctly void. But that is not all. Not only had he no right to grant these territories, but he was not even in the occupation and possession of them. The whole of the territories he professed to cede to Baron Overbeck had already been ceded by him to the Sultan of Sulu, and not only so, but the Sultan of Sulu was in the actual possession of it, with the exception of a very small portion. The district which really was in the occupation of the Sultan of Brunei at the time he made this grant was a very small portion of the coast extending from the River Kimanis on the East Coast of Brunei to a river called Pandassan, a few miles up the coast. There is one remarkable thing that deserves the attention of the House, and I think that probably the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs will give some explanation of it—namely, that it is quite impossible upon the map furnished by Her Majesty's Government to Parliament to make out where the territory which the Sultan of Brunei was in possession of ends, and the territory of the Sultan of Sulu begins; because the River Pandassan is not marked upon the Government map at all. But for the information of those who have got the map in their hands, I may say that the River Pandassan is a very short distance, indeed only a few miles, to the north of the river marked Tampasuk. The territory of which the Sultan of Brunei was in occupation—the piece belonging to the Sultan of Brunei—is only a very small part of the Eastern—not Western, as I said just now—portion of Borneo upon the map which I have the advantage of possessing, and which was issued by the Company itself. The territories are here very distinctly marked. The River Pandassan is carefully shown on the map, and the part of which the Sultan of Brunei was in possession is coloured blue, while the part of which the Sultan of Sulu was in possession is coloured red (exhibiting a map). The

House even at this distance will see how large is the proportion of the territories in the occupation of the Sultan of Sulu to those in the occupation of the Sultan of Brunei. Well, Sir, Baron Overbeck seems to have been a clever and discreet Agent. Finding after he had got this grant that the Sultan of Brunei had very little power to bestow it upon him, Baron Overbeck went off to the Sultan of Sulu, and he found that the Sultan of Sulu was in very unpleasant circumstances, because he was in revolt at the time against the Government of Spain who claimed him as its Vassal, and asserted its rights of Sovereignity over the whole of his territory and possessions. Not only was the Sultan of Sulu at war with the Government of Spain, but he was getting very much the worst of it. He was nearly at his last extremity, and, in fact, about six months after the visit of Baron Overbeck he had to surrender at discretion and to give up the whole of his territory to Spain. He claimed to be entitled to the whole of the territory, not only to the part of which he was actually in occupation, but even the small portion still in the occupation of the Sultan of Brunei, by reason of a grant made to him some years before by the Sultan of Brunei, and he was in actual occupation of the whole of the territory from the River Pandassan down to a point south of the grant made to Baron Overbeck—in point of fact, the whole of the coast opposite the Archipelago of Sulu. There was a small portion of territory in the hands of independent Chieftians who recognized the Sovereignty of neither one Sultan nor the other. The position of the Sultan of Sulu was an extraordinary one, because, in the first instance, he was at war with Spain, who claimed the right of Sovereignty over his territory. I hope the House will not be led astray by the immense amount of Papers which appear in the Blue Book which have relation to the rights of Sovereignty of Spain over the Sultan of Sulu. I dare say that more than half the Blue Books contain Papers bearing upon that question—a question clearly introduced in order to complicate the matter a little; but it really has very little to do with the subject. As, however, the question of the Sovereignty of Spain is likely to be made the subject of discussion in this House, I hope the House will pardon me if I very shortly and concisely state how the claims of Spain to Sovereignty over Sulu stood at that time. Within the last century—between 1761 and 1769—there have been Treaties concluded with the East India Company, and those Treaties have lapsed. They have lapsed according to the admission of Lord Derby himself in the despatch he wrote to the German Government in 1876; but, strange to say, these Treaties have been reinstated by the present Government on behalf of the North Borneo Company, and they were quoted in the despatches last year as if they really existed, notwithstanding the fact that many years before a Minister of the Crown had declared in a public document that these Treaties had lapsed. In 1836, the Sultan of Sulu entered into a Treaty with Spain—and here, again, Her Majesty's Government in their recent despatches have made a statement which is absolutely incorrect. They said that from the dominions of the Sultan of Sulu, as defined in the Treaty of 1836, the mainland of Borneo was expressly excepted. Now, that is not true. If you look at the Treaty of 1836, there is an exception of the dominions of the Sultan in North Borneo; but it is that part of his dominions so excepted from the guarantee of protection which the Spanish Government gave to him for the whole of the rest of his dominions. The Protectorate is not to extend to the mainland of Borneo; but there is not one word in the Treaty of 1836 which would bear the construction that either of the contracting parties said the dominions of the Sultan of Sulu would not extend to North Borneo. The Government in their despatches wisely omit all reference to the stipulations entered into in 1850, which were expressly declared to be explanatory of the Treaty of 1836, and in which it is so distinctly laid down in the 2nd Article of the Treaty, that of the territories tributary to the Sultan he shall not cede any part without the previous consent of Her Catholic Majesty. With this should be understood the Convention of 1836. Whatever opinion there may be upon that subject, no doubt, in 1851, the Sultan of Sulu entered into a Treaty of re-submission to the Sovereignty of the Spanish Crown. In that Treaty he acknowledged the whole of his territories and possessions to be an integral part of the Dominions of the Spanish Crown. The best proof of that contention on the part of the Spaniards at that time is, that in 1849 an attempt was made by Sir James Brooke to conclude a Treaty between the Sultan of Sulu and the British Government; but, although that Treaty was signed, it was never ratified, and it was never ratified because the Spanish Government protested that the Sultan of Sulu was incompetent, at that time, to conclude a Treaty with the Government of Great Britain because of his obligations to the Government of Spain. This protest on the part of the Spanish Government produced such an effect on the Government of Great Britain that they never attempted to ratify the Treaty; and yet, although it will hardly be believed, the present Government have raked up this Treaty of 1849, which was never ratified, and have spoken of it in the recent despatches in the interests of the North Borneo Company as if it was an existing Treaty, and a Treaty the validity of which was admitted by all parties. Now, I do not know a stronger example of the inaccuracy into which their zeal in defence of the North Borneo Company has dragged the Foreign Office of this country. That being the Treaty of 1851, and the act of re-submission being most distinctly declared, I think the whole of the dominions of the Sultan of Sulu were incorporated with the Crown of Spain. Afterwards, the Sultan of Sulu thought fit to rebel, and between the years 1870 and 1877 there was an active rebellion going on on the part of the Sultan of Sulu against the Crown of Spain. A sort of desultory war was carried on, and Spain, among other proceedings, thought fit to declare that the Archipelago of Sulu was in a state of blockade, and to prohibit the vessels of any country from trading with Sulu without obtaining permission to trade with them. In carrying out this so-called blockade, the Spanish Government went so far as to seize a certain number of German vessels, and to detain one or two English vessels. Against this act of the Government of Spain a most resolute protest was made in 1876, both by the Government of Great Britain and by that of Germany, and, after a considerable amount of negotiation, a Protocol was agreed to, in 1877, in which the question of Sovereignty was purposely left unmentioned, and in which none of the contracting parties committed themselves to any opinion. The Protocol was drawn up as a *modus vivendi* in order to put a stop to the illegal and arbitrary acts of the Spanish Government with regard to foreign vessels. It was urged by the Governments of Great Britain and Germany that, even assuming that Spain had the rights of a Sovereign, such a thing as the blockade of a whole archipelago, where no effective Naval Force was maintained to make the blockade real, was unheard of among foreign nations, and that Spain had no right to exclude shipping except from those parts of the archipelago in which they were in real and effective occupation. It was to put a stop to the existing state of things that the Protocol was agreed to. The substance of the Protocol of 1877 was an agreement that the pretensions of Spain should be confined to those parts of the archipelago of which she was in naval possession, and that there should be no attempt to blockade other parts where she had no Naval Force. The question of Sovereignty was never raised at all, but was very properly left out. It is quite true that at that time Great Britain refused to recognize the Sovereignty of Spain over Sulu; and it was quite right, because Spain had *de facto* no possessions in the archipelago. The Sultan of Sulu was in active rebellion and revolt against the Spanish Crown. He denied that he was a Vassal of Spain, and *de facto* the Sovereignty was not established. Therefore, Her Majesty's Government were acting with perfect propriety, and within the recognized Law of Nations. But will the House believe that the Protocol of 1877, concluded under these circumstances, has been raked up in the interest of the North Borneo Company by Her Majesty's present Government, as if it were a declaration that at that time Her Majesty's Government disputed the validity of the Treaty of 1851, and the validity of the Spanish Crown over the territories of Sulu? I am very much obliged to the House for the kindness with which it has listened to this rather dull statement about the position of affairs in Sulu. When Baron Overbeck arrived there, he found the Island in a state of great trouble, and he made use of the embarrassed position of the

Sultan to the utmost extent. He invited him to make a cession of all his territory, and offered him the sum of $3,000, or rather less than £600 or £700 a-year, for the whole of his 500 or 600 miles of coast. I do not know whether he knew that the Sultan of Brunei had about 10 times that amount, with a much smaller coast line. The Sultan of Sulu did not like to part with his possessions at the price offered to him. Baron Overbeck then said—

> "It does not matter much whether you make the concession or not, because, in the first place, the Sultan of Brunei is going to resume possession of all these territories which he claims as his own; and, in the second place, I am told that the Captain General of the Phillipines is assembling a great force in order to attack you in Sulu, and in a short time you will be wiped out altogether."

This statement was verified by the subsequent conduct of the Captain General of the Phillipine Islands. Baron Overbeck increased his offer from $3,000 to $5,000 a-year, and the Sultan of Sulu, being in this tribulation, thought it was better to take what he could get, and, therefore, he made the cession on the 22nd of January, 1878, by which he granted to Messrs. Dent and Overbeck the whole of the territory from the Pandassan River down to the most Southern point of the Western Coast, opposite the great harbour of Sandakan, in as absolute Sovereignty as the Sultan of Brunei subsequently granted the rest of the coast. Within exactly six months after the grant of Soverignty to Messrs. Dent and Overbeck, the Sultan signed a Treaty of Capitulation, and surrendered the whole of his dominions to the Spanish Government. The Government of Spain informed Baron Overbeck on the very same day what had been done, and the Sultan, no doubt at the instigation of his conquerors, revoked his grant, and recalled all the Sovereign powers he had conferred upon Messrs. Dent and Overbeck, informing Baron Overbeck that if he wished to make a further negotiation, he must negotiate with the Captain General of the Phillipines, although that was before the Foreign Office had any application made to them for a Charter. Yet, at this moment, Her Majesty's Government are asserting that Baron Overbeck or Mr. Dent—for Baron Overbeck is now lost sight of—that Mr. Dent was now exercising Sovereign authority in Sulu, notwithstanding the fact that in 1878 the Sultan of Sulu withdrew all authority from him. It was in the early part of 1878 that Mr. Dent first wrote to the Foreign Office; but though a letter—and a very cautious letter—was written, first by Mr. E. Dent, and then by Mr. Alfred Dent, to the Foreign Office, the House will observe that they carefully abstained from asking for a Charter. They only say that some application is going to be made, asking the Foreign Office to reserve its decision until they had an opportunity of giving further information; and although Baron Overbeck appears to have returned from the East in August or September, 1878, it was not until the 2nd of December, 1878, that any application was made to Her Majesty's Government for a Charter I do not know if the Foreign Office is in possession of any information as to why this delay took place. It is, however, a remarkable fact. Here are people wanting a Charter, knowing that the Crown of Spain has asserted its Sovereignty over a great portion of the territory over which they want a Charter, and yet they delay until the 2nd of December making any formal application to Her Majesty's Government for a Charter. Can the Under Secretary of State, or any Member of Her Majesty's Government, explain why this delay took place? And is a rumour which I have heard true, that the reason for the delay was that Baron Overbeck, who was an Austrian subject, took his concession in the first instance to the Government of Austria, and when the Government of Austria refused the responsibility which the Government of Great Britain has now undertaken, he carried his concession to the Emperor of Germany, and had a correspondence with Prince Bismarck; and it was not until this cession of the Northern part of the Island of Borneo had been hawked about, first to the Government of Austria, and then to the Government of Germany, neither of whom would look at the proposal for a moment, that it found its way in the form of an application for a Charter to the British Government? And the statement which has been made to me by many different persons is, that the responsibility for the grant of this Charter really rests with the late Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (the Marquess of Salisbury). I suppose that people thought I might be induced not to bring this matter before the House of Commons if I were made to think that in so doing I should oppose the policy of the Marquess of Salisbury. I am glad to have an opportunity of showing my independence on this occasion; but I may say that the Papers on this subject furnish the most direct proof that the Marquess of Salisbury and the late Government had not committed themselves in any way whatever to the granting of this Charter. I find that it is quite true that in 1879, while the late Government was still in Office, a formal protest was made to the Government of Spain, and on the spot, in the Sulu Archipelago, against the assumption of Spanish authority and Spanish Sovereignty in North Borneo; but, at the same time, it was publicly stated both to the Government of Spain and in the villages upon the coast of North Borneo itself, that there was no reference to the cession made by the Sultan of Sulu to Messrs. Dent and Overbeck in the protest, and the proceedings of Messrs. Dent and Overbeck had not then received the Queen's sanction. Consequently, when the protest against the assumption of Spanish Sovereignty was made publicly in North Borneo, notice was given in every place that it had no connection with any Sovereign right which had been conferred upon Messrs. Dent and Overbeck, and which had not received the Queen's sanction. Yet a most ingenious attempt had been made by a careful juxtaposition of sentences to make it appear to the ordinary reader that the Marquess of Salisbury had made this protest against the assumption by Spain of Sovereign powers in the interests of Messrs. Dent and Overbeck, and that he had thereby signified his approval of their assumption of authority. But that is not all. On January 8th, 1880, a very few weeks after the late Government left Office, Her Majesty's Government addressed to the Government of Spain a despatch, in which they intimated their refusal to admit the Spanish Sovereignty as to the North Coast of Borneo. The despatch said—

> "Her Majesty's Government do not wish it to be understood that, in making this protest, they have in view the establishment of any British dominion or rights of Sovereignty over any portion of the Island."

Therefore, as late as January the 8th, 1880, we have an official record that the late Government were not contemplating any establishment of British dominion of any kind in the Northern part of Borneo. Now, Mr. Speaker, in 1879 the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Bradford (Mr. W. E. Forster) began to be curious as to the responsibilities which Her Majesty's Government might incur by the grant of this Charter. I dare say his own Colleagues could give him a good deal of information as to the responsibilities they have incurred, and perhaps even the curiosity of the right hon. Gentleman has now entirely disappeared. But I should like to tell the House a few of the responsibilities which Her Majesty's Government have incurred; and I will restrict myself to three responsibilities of a foreign character and three of an internal character. As to the responsibilities of a foreign character, they have run the risk of serious complications with three Foreign Governments—the Government of Spain, the Government of the Netherlands, and the Government of the United States of America. I will point out shortly what these responsibilities are in each of these three cases. They have set the Government of Spain positively at defiance, for they have established a British Chartered Company possessing the Sovereign rights I have already indicated to the House in a territory of which Spain claims at this moment to be *de jure* and *de facto* the Sovereign. I am told that recently, within the last day or two, statements have been made in the Cortes of Madrid, in which the conduct of the Spanish Government in not more actively resisting the usurpation of Her Majesty's Government—for so it is called —has been seriously called in question. The protest of Spain is as definite and as distinct as any protest could be. Although Her Majesty's Government may pay no attention to a protest made by so small a Military and Naval Power as Spain, they may be assured that, had they ventured on a similar course in regard to Germany or Russia, their action would probably have resulted in a war. As to the Government of the Netherlands, Her Majesty's Government have not, I believe, infringed any of their positive rights; but they have cheated and they have affronted them. When this North Borneo Question was first talked about, the Representative of the Netherlands in this country had an interview with the Marquess of Salisbury on the 24th of November, 1879, and Count Bylandt was then assured that—

> "Her Majesty's Government has no present intention of assuming any attitude with respect to these territories at all corresponding to such phrases as 'British Dominion' or 'British Protectorate.'"

Those phrases, "British Dominion" or "British Protectorate," had been used by Count Bylandt in conversation; and he was assured by Lord Granville, soon after the noble Lord came into Office, on the 21st of July, 1880, that if the Charter was granted to the North Borneo Company at all, it would have no political character. The Dutch Government appear to have claimed as a right that they should be consulted before any British Settlement was formed in the Island of which they were in actual occupation; and although, I believe, there is no right on the part of the Netherlands Government to have their leave asked before a Settlement is formed, it is quite obvious that when the greater part of the Island of Borneo is more or less in their possession, and that their territory is actually contiguous to the territories which the Sultan of Sulu professed to grant to Messrs. Dent and Overbeck, it was only common courtesy to inform the Government of the Netherlands what was going on. Therefore, Lord Granville, on the 10th of August, told the Representative of the Netherlands, as a matter of courtesy, but not of strict right, that he should be very happy to inform him of the tenour of the Charter before it was finally arranged. The assurances from successive Secretaries of State seem to have contented and satisfied the Government of the Netherlands; but when, shortly after, on the 22nd of January, 1881, they received certain Papers which were circulated by the North Borneo Company, containing the form of their application for a Charter, and an intimation that a Charter of some kind was going to be given, the Government of the Netherlands again took alarm, and at once addressed a very strong and earnest despatch to the Government of Great Britain. They, apparently, thought they had been taken in, for they had understood that the Charter was to be strictly of a commercial character. For that they were rather called to task by the Foreign Secretary. Instead of waiting for the official documents which he had promised them, they had been so foolish as to be alarmed at a mere draft and unofficial Papers. Finally, on the 8th of August, 1881, the Government of Great Britain sent to the Government of the Netherlands a draft of the Charter which is substantially identical with the Charter finally granted, and asked them within three days to be good enough to state any objection they might have. That was rather hurrying the Netherlands Government, considering that the Charter had been under the consideration of the Government for so many years. But they seem in the Netherlands to be able to do things with more dispatch than we can in this country, because, on the 11th of August, only three days after the despatch from Great Britain, they sent a most admirable despatch, which pointed out, beyond all controversy, the political character of the undertaking. They complained of the way by which they had been hoodwinked by the assurances of the British Government; and they earnestly protested against such a Charter being granted, and prayed Her Majesty's Government would not think of doing so without giving full weight to the objection they had made. Her Majesty's Government had not the courtesy to answer that despatch. The Charter was not granted until the month of November; this despatch was written on the 11th of August; and yet, although the Government had the whole of the time from the 11th of August until the 9th or 10th of November, they never had the courtesy to answer the despatch. The first answer the Dutch Government received was the publication of the Charter in *The London Gazette*. That was a very courteous mode of treating a Foreign Government. They protested; and they had a letter, or despatch, from the Secretary of State, written after the Charter had been granted, in which the whole story was reiterated—namely,

> "The British Government assumes no Sovereign rights in Borneo; and, indeed, the Charter contemplates the appointment of British Consuls in the territories of the Company."

A proof that the British Government assumes no Sovereign rights in Borneo is stated to be that "the Charter contemplates the appointment of British Consuls in the territory of the Company." Will the House believe that the Charter contemplates nothing of the kind, and that the statement made to the Netherlands Government was the grossest—I might almost say the most impudent—inaccuracy? What the Charter does contemplate is, that the officers of the North Borneo Company shall be appointed by Her Majesty's Government to be her officers, to exercise her extra-territorial rights; not that British Consuls shall be appointed to act in North Borneo as they would act in the dominions of a Foreign Power. The paid servants of the very Company are to be made the Ministers of the Queen of England for the purpose of exercising her extra-territorial jurisdiction; and that being the fact in the case of the British Government, they have the cool audacity to tell the Netherlands Government there is no intention to assume Sovereign rights in Borneo. Well, it suits, of course, the Government of the Netherlands to accept a statement of this kind, though I have no doubt they see well enough that it is not true, because the statement being made in despatches by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, it will be convenient to refer to it hereafter. The third Power with which you have got into complication is more formidable than those I have mentioned—namely, the United States of America. I think I have a right to complain of the insufficiency of the Papers which have been laid before Parliament by the Under Secretary of State, because I hold in my hand what I believe to be an authentic document, which purports to be a despatch from Mr. Treacher, Her Majesty's Consul General at Labuan, to Mr. Read, of Singapore, who is Agent General of Messrs. Dent and Overbeck, and their representative in that country. In this despatch I find a copy of a correspondence which had passed between Commodore Shufeldt, of the United States Navy, and Mr. Read, wherein the Commodore informed Mr. Read that—

> "The United States Government do not reckon the Sultan of Borneo is competent to make cessions of territory to private individuals or Companies in disparagement of the stipulations in his Treaty with the United States."

I find another piece of information—namely, that the Sultan had addressed a letter to the President of the United States, in which His Highness, while asserting his right, as an independent Prince, to cede portions of his territory, assured the President that Messrs. Dent and Overbeck were aware of the Treaty obligations when they obtained the cession; and I find from the postcript that Mr. Treacher, as was his duty, reported to Her Majesty's Government what had taken place in the matter. [Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: What was the date of that?] The 8th of March, 1880. I have also in my hand a copy of what alleges to be a copy of the letter of the Sultan of Brunei to the President of the United States of America, and I have a copy of a letter of the President of the United States of America, dated the 8th of June, 1880, in which occurs the passage—

> "The letter addressed to your Highness by Commodore Shufeldt, a copy of which has been sent to the proper department of the country, does not appear to differ from my views upon the subject. The objection to which that officer advances relates to those grants of land which are coupled with such exclusive privileges as seem to conflict with Articles of the Treaty between the country and Borneo."

Some see by this that there has been some controversy, not brought to the knowledge of the House, in the official Papers between the United States of America and the Agent General of Messrs. Dent and Overbeck, a controversy in which the United States appear to have got the best of it. I have also a copy of the Treaty of Friendship, Navigation, and Commerce between the United States of America and the Sultan of Brunei, and, looking at the Treaty, which secures for the citizens of the United States of America perfect liberty to reside and trade in the dominions of the Sultan of Brunei, which says that no article is to be prohibited from importation by the Sultan of Brunei, which forbids the Sultan of Brunei to levy any duty on the exportation of any article of Borneo growth, and which restricts the amount of duty to be levied on American shipments, I think there is a great deal in what the President of the United States says as to the power of the Company, for revenue purposes, to create a monopoly of spirits, opium, tobacco, or salt, in the face of the rights secured to the American citizens by Treaty. I do not think your Charter is worth the paper on which it is written. How can the Company, under the powers of the Charter they have received from the Queen, place a monopoly on the cultivation of opium, when, by the Treaty with the Sultan of Brunei, the citizens of America have the most perfect liberty to grow anything they like, or carry on any private trade? So much for the complications, or possible complications, with the United States of America. Now I will refer to three internal responsibilities. In the first place, what are you going to do with the British subjects resident in Borneo? By Treaty with the Sultan of Brunei, Her Majesty the Queen enjoys extra-territorial jurisdiction. Are you going to appoint Consuls, as you told the Netherlands Government, or are you going, in accordance with the clause in the Treaty, to make the paid officers of the British North Borneo Company the Queen's Representatives? If you appoint the officers of the Company to discharge the duties of the Queen, will not the deception of your scheme become so gross, that neither the Dutch in Holland, nor your Liberal supporters here, will be able to shut their eyes to the fact that you have established British superiority in Borneo? What are you going to do with the subjects of Foreign States? That is the second responsibility. The citizens of America also, by Treaty, enjoy extra-territorial jurisdiction. I should think it very probable that the citizens of the Netherlands, of Germany, and, indeed, of most other European Powers, will enjoy, or claim, extra-territorial jurisdiction; and, certainly, the subjects of the King of Spain will not consent to submit to the jurisdiction of the Queen. Who is going to exercise jurisdiction over the subjects of Foreign Powers who may be domiciled in North Borneo? By your Charter, for example, all foreigners are forbidden to hold slaves. Suppose a Spaniard, or a Dutch subject, or a citizen of the United States, asserts a right to possess domestic slaves within the territory of North Borneo, how would you interfere in the matter? Will it be by negotiations through your Company, or will it be by direct negotiations with the Powers themselves? And this brings me to the most serious of the difficulties in which your Charter has landed you, and that is the question of Slavery. I observe that in the Charter it is called "Domestic slavery." "Domestic" is an adjective which is always applied to the word "slavery" by people who wish to excuse the wickedness of the institution. I do not find that the Government have taken any pains to inform themselves as to the nature of the slavery which exists in the Island of Borneo. I do not find that they have either asked or received any information from their own officers upon the subject. I should like the House to allow me to read to it the only information which I have been able to obtain amongst all this mass of Papers, as to the character of the slavery which exists in the territories in question. The information was derived from one of the Agents of the North Borneo Company, who, in page 225 of the first Blue Book, describes the state of things which existed in 1878 when the Company first took possession of these territories, at a place called Elopura, which is in Sandakan Harbour, the head-quarters of the authorities of the Sultan of Sulu; and therefore what is described took place in the most civilized part of the Island. Mr. Pryce says—

> "Slavery was rampant. Slave boats containing cargoes of unfortunate starved wretches, in such a state that it turns one's stomach to look at them, covered with sores and ulcers, and many of whom died, were frequently to be seen here (Elopura) or in the Kina Batangan. Robbery was as rife. Creeses were drawn upon the slightest occasion. Slaves were used in the most atrocious way, being occasionally cut down or thrashed, and afterwards having mashed green chillies rubbed into the wounds."

That is all the information to be derived from these Blue Books as to the character of the domestic slavery existing in the Harbour of Sandakan; and if that is the nature of the slavery in the Harbour of Sandakan, what may you expect in the more remote parts of the territory where the Sultan of Sulu or the Sultan of Brunei exert no effective authority? That being the character of the slavery which exists, the Agents of the Company who will probably be made the officers of the Queen, will have to regulate, to govern, and to protect the institution of slavery. ["Why?"] Why! Because by the Charter they are bound to observe the existing customs. Slavery being an institution they will have to protect it and legislate for it, and the only restriction in the Charter is one which the Company themselves proposed. The Government seem to have thought little of the question of Slavery.

The only restriction in the Charter is that—

> "The Company shall to the best of its power discourage, and as far as may be practicable abolish by degrees, any system of domestic servitude existing among the tribes."

And so in the interval, at all events, the system of domestic slavery is to be maintained and legislated for by officers of a Company who will probably be the officers of the Queen; and this has to be done under a flag which is to be distinctly British in its character and approved by the Secretary of State and the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Admiralty. I will just call the attention of the House to what were the opinions of the Prime Minister in reference to this question of domestic slavery in the case of the Colony of Fiji. In 1874 the right hon. Gentleman opposed a Motion made in this House by the hon. Member for Lambeth (Mr. W. M'Arthur), praying the Crown of England to take over Fiji upon the expressed ground that the institution of slavery was existing in Fiji, and that the Crown of England could not countenance the continuance of such an institution. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Could not assume dominion]. I will quote the right hon. Gentleman's exact words—

> "We are to go in upon the recommendation of the Commissioners, who, instead of saying that slavery is to be put down, tell us distinctly that it is to be maintained and allowed, and left to take its own course. We are to wink at it; we are to know and allow it to exist, and allow those interested in it to use every means in their power to maintain it, and allow it to exist upon this basis—that this slavery which we are to go in and recognize is in these Islands the foundation of social order. If you accept the Motion of my hon. Friend the Member for Lambeth, it will bind you to place the Crown of England in relation of sovereignty over a savage race, among whom slavery exists, and with respect to whom our own Commissioners inform us that that slavery is the basis of social order."—[3 *Hansard*, ccxxi. 1285.]

Now, may I show the right hon. Gentleman and the House what Her Majesty's officers holding Her Majesty's commission in North Borneo will have to do, because the Charter contemplates that the officers of the Company are to be made the officers of the Crown for the purpose of exercising her extra-territorial jurisdiction? This is what they are to do, and this is the refutation respecting slavery made by the Sovereign Company on the 27th of October, 1881—

> "In the case of the Natives of Sabah, all Natives absconding will, for the present, be returned, unless they can (a) purchase their freedom for a sum to be fixed from time to time by a Resident of the district, subject to the approval of the Governor, or (b) can prove that they are cruelly treated by their masters, in which case they will become free men."

So that these officers of the Company whom you are going to make officers of the British Crown will adjudicate upon the case of these wretched slaves, sometimes as representatives of Her Majesty and sometimes as officers of the North British Borneo Company. Do you think that is the way to instil into the minds of these Natives respect for the authority of the British Crown? You will have to settle what will be the price of blood, because the price of these wretched, absconding Natives is to be fixed from time to time by the Resident of the district, subject to the approval of the Governor. That very officer is appointed under the approval of Her Majesty's Secretary of State, so that the Secretary of State will have to inquire, when approving an appointment of this Native, whether the man is a proper person to fix the price of blood. I will not go further. I think it is really distressing that one should read of regulations of this kind made under the authority of the British Crown. I deeply regret that in the course of this debate I have not observed the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in his place, because, had he been there, I would have made a personal appeal to him. I know how he has distinguished himself during his long political career for love of liberty and for an unswerving hatred of the institution of Slavery. I remember very well, when the right hon. Gentleman was in Opposition, how he led the attack upon Her Majesty's late Government for the issue of the Slave Circular, an attack which only became abortive because it was proved that the Circular was a modification of an earlier and more severe one. Had the right hon. Gentleman been present, I should have asked him whether the possession, for one single year, of despotic power in Ireland had so corrupted his love of liberty, had so familiarized him with the exercise of coercion, that he had become untrue to his earlier convictions and false to the sacred principles which he has so long advocated in this House?

As he is not here I will venture to make the same appeal to the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government. I will ask him whether it is honourable that a Government which professes a love of liberty, and professes to be founded upon the most sacred principles, should allow officers of a Company, acting under the sanction and authority of the British Crown, to have anything at all to do with the institution of Slavery; and whether he will allow the British flag to float over slaves? The hon. and learned Gentleman concluded by moving his Resolution.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that Her Majesty will be graciously pleased to revoke or alter so much of the Charter as gives an implied sanction to the maintenance of slavery under the protection of the British flag,"—(*Mr. Gorst,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. DILLWYN said, the words of the Resolution proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham commended themselves so much to his approval that, were it necessary, he should not hesitate to second it. On the first night of the Session he had given Notice of his intention to call attention to this transaction, but he was unable to get an opportunity of bringing forward the Motion he had intended to make. After the full and clear statement of the hon. and learned Member, it was unnecessary to go at length into the facts, as he should otherwise have desired to do; for the speech of the hon. and learned Member plainly showed that, whether the Government chose to call it so or not, the action of the Government amounted virtually to annexation. He knew that the Government would deny it; but he thought those who had heard the hon. and learned Gentleman, and his analysis of the Charter, could not but think that, if it were not annexation at once, it was leading the way to it, and could lead to nothing else; it assumed Sovereign rights, and he was unable to distinguish it from annexation. Nothing could be done without the consent of the Government; and if that did not constitute Sovereign rights, he was at a loss to know the meaning of the term. If any doubt remained on the subject it was removed by the Ministerial statement made in "another place." He found it stated by a Member of the Government in the House of Lords that it was right and proper to grant this Charter, because, if the British Government did not step in, some other Government would. What did that mean? It meant that this country would step in, and take Sovereign rights, because some other country would have done it if we had not. They seemed to admit, on the part of the Government, that if it was not annexation, it was, at all events, meant to hand over this territory to the British Government sooner or later. They had said distinctly that no other country would be allowed to keep it. There was a provision in the Charter for winding-up the Company if it came to grief. How would the Government act in that case? Would they step in and assert their Sovereign rights over the shareholders, whoever they might be? He did not wish to go into the legal question; but he appealed to the common sense of the House to say whether they should not have to assert Sovereign rights in disposing of the Company's affairs under those circumstances? Military difficulties might also arise. The House would remember that when Sarawak, a comparatively small district, was handed over to Sir James Brooke, the Natives showed a good deal of opposition. If this were so with Sarawak, the Government would not find it so easy to put down any wars that might occur in the far larger territory comprised in the Charter. Besides, he did not approve of these grants by the Sultans of Borneo and Sulu. There were other persons to be considered besides those two Potentates; there were the Natives themselves, who had rights of their own, and who might object to a transfer from one Government to another. They might object, and they might resist, and then the Government would very likely be called upon to support their fellow-subjects, and would be committed to another of those wars with semi-barbarous nations of which they had lately some experience. They all knew how the Spaniards had dealt with the Natives, and they would be obliged to enter upon still more cruelties in order to conquer them—for conquer them they would be compelled to do. This Treaty had also attached to it some very aggressive conditions. Clause 15, paragraph 5, gave the Company power to acquire, by purchase or other lawful means, certain territory in addition to that ceded. In other words, the Company were to have a Roving Commission to seize other lands, a power which would be resented by the Natives, They would be told, perhaps, that the people of these countries were only savages, and that our dealings with them were a very light matter. Did the House think they were a light matter? [Mr. GLADSTONE: No, no.] Let them remember the experience they had had in Afghanistan, Zululand, and the Transvaal. They had gone into them with a very light heart, and he was afraid they had not a very light heart about them now. He therefore hoped they would pause and consider very seriously before they annexed territory, or gave powers to a Corporation which would enable them to embark in aggressive wars, as he thought they distinctly did by this Charter. With all that his hon. and learned Friend had said on slavery he heartily concurred, and he agreed also with his remarks on the opium monopoly that would be enjoyed by the Company; because he felt sure that, opium being a source of revenue, the annual growth would be encouraged rather than checked or controlled. He wished to know whether the country was willing to pay in character as well as in men and money for the enterprize it was called upon to undertake, and, indeed, whether it was ready to embark in the undertaking at all? His own belief was that the country, if it were consulted, would refuse to venture upon the scheme. That the result would be simple annexation there could be no doubt, and he, for one, earnestly demanded that the country should be consulted before further steps were taken. A Liberal Government might reasonably be expected to accord the public a voice in such a matter; but whether they were allowed a voice or not the concession of a Charter was equally to be condemned. He could not help contrasting the present attitude of the Members of the Government with their declarations when they were in Opposition. It was in the recollection of everyone that hon. Gentlemen who were now in the Cabinet denounced the position assumed by the late Government in similar cases with regard to Native populations. And that fact made their present error all the more regretable. Only two years ago the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, speaking on the Motion of the hon. Member for Merthyr (Mr. Richard), said—

> "Nothing can be so ruinous to a country . . . . as to be in the position which we have too often witnessed in the case of the inhabitants of our own Colonies in later times, of having the privilege of provoking wars for which they were not called upon to pay."—[3 *Hansard*, ccliii. 103.]

That was one grave objection to the Charter; and he hoped that even now some modification might be introduced into it which might prevent the evils he anticipated. He trusted that the transaction might be explained away, and that it might be shown to be either an error in judgment or an act of loyalty to the intentions of the late Government. It seemed, from the letters of Lord Salisbury, that the late Government had committed themselves to the scheme. In 1879 Mr. Dent was informed, by direction of Lord Salisbury, that "the matter was under consideration"—a dilatory phrase—and that "he should be informed as soon as possible of the decision." Just before the late Government went out of Office, Mr. Dent, who not unnaturally thought he had a better chance of getting concessions from the Conservatives than from the Liberals, was particularly anxious to get the Charter sanctioned by the Government. Had he been in Mr. Dent's place, after the declarations made in Opposition by right hon. Gentlemen now on the Treasury Bench, he should have altogether despaired of getting them to grant the Charter. As he had said, he hoped it was no more than an error or an act of loyalty to the policy of their Predecessors. However, the matter remained unsettled up to the very last moments of the existence of the late Government, and on April 22, 1880, Lord Tenterden informed Mr. Dent from Lord Salisbury that the question should be left to be dealt with by his Successor. The course taken by the present Government ought, if possible, to be excused and explained, but certainly not to be justified. Such a step taken without the sanction of Parliament was not susceptible of justification; and some assurances which would be most welcome to many of the most earnest Supporters of the Government would, he hoped, be given that in future no territory would be annexed without the previous knowledge and consent of Parliament.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) complained that it was not until 15 minutes before the close of his hon. and learned Friend's speech that he had touched upon the subject of his Amendment. Up to that moment he had attacked the foreign policy of the Government, and had found fault with it in every possible way. If his hon. and learned Friend had intended to take that course, it would have been more convenient if he had embodied his views in the Amendment; because, as it stood, it simply appeared that objection was taken to the clause in the Charter connected with the question of domestic slavery. That was his indictment; but he had introduced many different counts, and objected, apparently, to the whole Charter itself and to the principle. He wished to recall to the House the precise point at issue; but first to notice one or two of the general remarks of his hon. and learned Friend. Some fear, apparently, existed in his mind that he would not be credited with perfect independence in regard to the matter; but he could assure his hon. and learned Friend that he had been independent enough. He did not wish to refer to what had occurred in "another place" as to the extraordinary unanimity displayed on the subject of this Charter. Not one of those with whom his hon. and learned Friend acted found it opportune on that occasion to express the slightest dissent from any portion of the Charter. His hon. and learned Friend must know that in that "other place" there was no objection expressed to the granting of the Charter. Throughout his speech there had run an error in assuming that the occupation of Borneo by this Company was in virtue of the Charter. It was no such thing. On the 2nd of December, 1878, Mr. Dent communicated to Lord Salisbury a statement of the real position of this trading Company. Mr. Dent stated that in 1877 concessions had been made, three in number, by virtue of which the Company obtained those rights which his hon. and learned Friend had termed "Sovereign rights." These were granted to, and legally became the property of, the Company. The Foreign Office, he presumed, would have had no power to object to a trading Company obtaining those rights. But if there were objections to such rights, was it not the duty of Lord Salisbury so to have dissented either by action, or, if not by action, by moral representation, as to have prevented the Company getting such powers as they had obtained? But he (the Attorney General) would ask whether it would have been consistent with the frankness which should exist between a Minister and the subjects of the Crown to allow this Company to continue investing large sums of money if there had been anything illegal in their obtaining the large powers which they had obtained; also whether the present Government could have abstained from affording them that protection which every subject of the Crown was entitled to? Instead of making any objection or protest, Lord Salisbury listened with a willing ear to every representation made by Mr. Dent. As early as the 12th of February, 1879, Messrs. Dent and Overbeck, in a letter addressed to Lord Salisbury, said—

> "Without entering here into the merits of the Treaty above alluded to concluded between Spain and Sulu on the 24th of July, 1878, which gives Spain the Sovereignty over all the Sulu Possessions, we think it is evident that, even assuming that Treaty to be valid and in force, a part of the Sulu Dominions ceded by the Sultan and Chiefs in the most formal and binding manner six months previous to that Treaty, cannot possibly be held to be included in and form part of the Sulu Possessions at the time the Treaty in question was made, and therefore cannot be affected by the provisions of the same or give it any retrospective effect."

Founding his remonstrance to Spain on that representation of Mr. Dent, Lord Salisbury, writing to Baron von den Brincken on the 24th of April, 1879, said—

> "I have the honour to communicate to you a draft copy of a despatch which, with the concurrence of the German Government, Her Majesty's Government propose to address to Her Majesty's Minister at Madrid, in which they reserve to themselves the right of declining to recognize the new Treaty between Spain and Sulu, so far as its provisions purport to confer on Spain any rights over the Sulu Archipelago not expressly conceded to her by the Protocol of the 11th of March, 1877, and which may conflict with British interests."

And when asked for an answer to the question whether a Charter would be granted, Lord Salisbury said, on the

7th of April, that the reason he could not give one was because he was making a representation to Spain which rendered it advisable to postpone making a reply. Was there not moral responsibility, when from 1877 until May, 1880, this question was before the consideration of the Foreign Office, and Lord Salisbury's immediate consideration; when there was not one word of dissent and complaint to the trading Company in relation to the position they had thus occupied, and the rights they had acquired; and when the explanation given as to why a determination was not arrived at was that the absorbing position of affairs in Continental Europe prevented Lord Salisbury from determining the question? Under such a condition of things he must cast upon Lord Salisbury the burden of allowing the Company to be in the position it occupied. He might remind the House that long before this application was made to the late Government, or before it came under the consideration of the present Government, the Company had proceeded to exercise its powers. They had proceeded to act under their grants; and, therefore, when the present Government became seized of this question, and had cast upon them the responsibility of saying what course they would take, they found an irresponsible Company, unchecked and unrestrained, with no power in this country able to control them—exercising all those powers which his hon. and learned Friend said were so injurious that the Company ought never to have been permitted to obtain them. What power had Her Majesty's Government to prevent the Company from being placed in that position? If that power existed, it rested in Lord Salisbury's hands, and yet it was never exercised. Her Majesty's Government had no power to enter into the general question of the expediency of a trading Company occupying Borneo. It would have been confiscation of their property, if, after what had occurred, the Government had attempted to take from them the rights they had acquired, and they could not, if they had sought so to do, have done more than use a a most ineffectual remonstrance. The question the Government had to determine was, not the broad question of the expediency of the Company acquiring or exercising the powers granted to them, but the narrow issue whether it was better that the Company should exist, exercising those irresponsible powers, or whether they should have placed upon them certain obligations which would be found to be in every instance in restraint of that power. The simple matter which the Government had to decide was, he repeated, whether they should leave the Company to act unfettered and entirely without control or not. His hon. and learned Friend quoted from documents to show in the district under the Company's control the existence, at one time, of slavery iniquitous and degrading. But the Government knew from those very documents that three years after the acquisition of Borneo by this trading Company everything had changed. The condition of the people had been altered without the interference of a soldier or policeman under the influence of the British example and of British humanity. Well, were the people to pass again under the control of those who had imposed such degradation upon them? The hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) feared that the power of the Company had been exercised with tyrannical effect, and he regretted that the people had not been allowed any voice in a transfer which affected them so much. His hon. Friend, however, would find that something like what was done in a civilized country was done there. If he turned to page 131 of the Blue Book he would find this passage—

> "In order to convey to the Natives information of the grants, each of the two Sultans deputed a high officer to accompany a representative of the Association in a voyage round the coast. At each of the places touched at, those officers assembled the Chiefs and people and read to them a solemn proclamation of their Sultan announcing the grants and exhorting and commanding them to obey the new authorities. This was done at six different places, and everywhere the news was received in a friendly spirit."

He was anxious to make perfectly clear what would have been the position of this trading Company as regarded ourselves and foreign nations had it continued to exist without a Charter. Supposing the Company had been interfered with by Spain, and its settlements attacked, could this country have stood by and have seen British subjects molested without our taking any action in the matter? The granting of this Charter, therefore, had carried our obligations very little further than they extended before. What were the objections which his hon. and learned Friend raised to the provisions of the Charter itself? He presumed that his hon. and learned Friend said, in the first place, that the Government had not introduced into the Charter sufficiently strong provisions with regard to slavery. But in this instance we were confronted, not with the Slave Trade, with which we could cope and doubtless suppress, but with a system of domestic servitude, which existed as part of the law of the country, with which we had no right to interfere by force. What was the course that a Government like ours could take in dealing with an institution of this kind? Were we, with a strong hand, suddenly to set aside the law of the land as regarded the rights of property, in order to put down this system of domestic slavery? There was one view of this subject which was presented by Lord John Russell, in dealing with the domestic slavery that existed at the Cape Coast. He said—

> "If the law and usages of the country in which such slavery exists tolerate slavery, we have no right to set aside those laws and usages except by persuasion, negotiation, and other peaceful means."

That was written in 1841, and it was quoted with approbation on the 21st of August, 1874, by Lord Carnarvon, then the Secretary of State for the Colonies under a Conservative Government, when referring to the case of the Cape Coast Protectorate. It would be in the recollection of the House that, when the Protectorate was extended to certain portions of the Gold Coast, the Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Evelyn Ashley) brought forward a Motion in that House to the effect that slavery in no form should either directly or indirectly be recognized by this country. The then Prime Minister, the right hon. Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther), and many others pressed upon the House the view that it was impossible that we could by force cast the institution of domestic slavery on one side, and eventually the Resolution of the hon. Member was withdrawn. Everyone must have read with great satisfaction the eloquent address which was made by Captain Strachan, as the representative of the English nation, to the Natives of the Gold Coast, over which we then had the full power of a Protectorate. He reminded them of all the Queen had done for them; how she had sent her officers and her soldiers to fight their battles; how she had spent ten times more gold in protecting them than their country possessed; and that all she desired in return was to express the wish that they should obey the law and would abolish slavery within their territories. But no order was issued or force employed to enforce such wishes. If now the House condemned this Borneo Charter, it would be passing censure on the course that had been pursued with regard to the Gold Coast. What did this Charter propose? In the first place, if it had never been granted, slavery would have continued in Borneo, with all the horrors which his hon. and learned Friend had depicted. The Charter contained a provision to the effect that the Company should "discourage and, as far as possible, abolish by degrees, any system of servitude which existed amongst the tribes." What more could have been done unless the Government had said there should be no such thing as slavery? Unless that had been done, the Government could have followed no other course than that which it had adopted. It must be remembered that, even when we were abolishing slavery in our own possessions, we were obliged to prepare the way for the change by instituting a system of so-called apprenticeship. The obligation was distinct so far as the Company was concerned, that no foreigner should be allowed to own slaves. That obligation sprang from that Charter alone; and yet his hon. and learned Friend asked the House to condemn the Government for having allowed the 7th clause to be inserted in the Charter at all. It was a question whether the Government could possibly do more than they had done in the matter? There was one other matter to which he must refer. The officers that had been alluded to were not officers of the Government, but of the Company. The House was asked to say that the judicial officers of the Company should be recognized without the aid of the Government, and without the moral influence which could be brought to bear by the Government. It was impossible that that could be the case. His hon. and learned Friend had, moreover, spoken of the evils of annexation. He thought that it was time enough to deal with that, and to censure the Government when annexation did, in fact, take place. That would be a question for the House to decide according to its merits. The granting of this Charter would, he believed, be attended with advantageous results. Prior to it the inhabitants of the country had been subjected to slavery, and reduced to a state of degradation, without any proper government or guidance. Now the country had passed into the hands of men who held a Charter from our government, which Charter would be revoked if the slavery that had existed before was not put an end to.

SIR JOHN HAY, as one who had served in Borneo, and as one of the few Members who knew the country, expressed the opinion that the Motion of his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gorst) was one which ought not to be supported. Had the Forms of the House permitted, he had intended to ask them to alter the Motion to these words—

> "The House views with satisfaction the extension of power to the British North Borneo Company as being likely to promote commerce and exterminate piracy and slavery."

His hon. and learned Friend was mistaken in the views he entertained in regard to the Charter which had been granted. He (Sir John Hay) believed that civilization would be advanced by it, just as it was advanced in the case of Sarawak, which was a portion of the Kingdom of the Sultan of Brunei. He had the honour of serving in Borneo when the foundations of civilization were laid in that part of the Island by Sir James Brooke, Sir Thomas Cochrane, Sir Rodney Mundy, and Sir Harry Keppel. The territory of Sarawak was then conceded by the Sultan to Rajah Brooke, just in the same way as he and the Sultan of Sulu had now conveyed their rights over North Borneo to the present Company. It seemed to him that in the arrangements which had been made every difficulty had been fenced round, while the advantages which it secured must be manifest to all. The Treaty gave them two of the best harbours in those seas—Sandakan and Gaya—besides numerous other natural advantages for trade. With regard to the claims of Holland, it was merely with reference to the south-eastern portion of the territory which was granted; and they knew very well that the Government of the Netherlands was a Government which did not always yield to Treaty rights when they were demanded. As Canning said—"A very peculiar people the Dutch, both giving too little and asking too much." As to the gain to this country, he would only say that the acquisition of a rich territory, with a population of something less than 150,000 on 18,000 square miles, showed that there was a very large field for enterprize; and they had the assurance that the Natives desired that they should be placed under the control of British gentlemen and officers, such as those who were to be the guaranteed servants of the Company. The harbours which would be obtained were of the greatest possible service and advantage to this country; and although the whole of the Islands in the neighbouring seas were in the possession of the Dutch, they were not occupied by them, and many of them were still in a state of savagery. The Dutch had long been in possession of the Southern portion of Borneo; yet no one could say that the territory there was at all to be compared in civilization with the territory of Sarawak. He anticipated, by the action of the Company, that Northern Borneo would become as fertile and as prosperous and well-conducted a territory as that of Sarawak was now. Thirty years ago there was not one of the rivers or harbours there that was not swarming with pirates, who preyed on the trade of the Eastern seas; but the result of the English settlement had been that there was not now a pirate known on the whole of the North-West or the North-East Coast of Borneo. He confessed that, looking at this matter from a naval point of view, and as one who had actually served in those seas, and in that portion of the world, he deprecated entirely the suggestion of the hon. and learned Member, and cordially approved of the action of this and the late Government with reference to the granting of the Charter, and the co-operation of the Government with the Company on the Northern Coast of Borneo.

MR. CROPPER said, he thought they must all feel glad that the discussion that evening had gone far ahead of the Motion before the House, and that it had touched a number of subjects which the Motion did not cover. They must also feel much obliged to the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), and other hon. Members, who had directed such pointed attention to the institution of Slavery. He (Mr. Cropper) sincerely hoped that the effect of the discussion would be to induce the Government, rather than to slacken their vigilance in regard to the Slave Trade, to look closely after the Company to which the Charter had been granted. If he might be allowed for a few moments to take up the time of the House, he would like to allude to another matter which would require great care from the Government of this country in superintending the action of the Company. There had been introduced into the Charter power to grow and to deal in opium. He presumed the Company expected to derive as large an income as possible from the growth of opium. It was in their power to compete with us for the China trade, and to extend the consumption of the drug in Borneo itself. He happened to hold in his hand a letter from a Dutch gentleman, referring to the effect of the introduction of opium into Java, where a similar population to that of Borneo existed. He said—

> "Opium eating seems to be in correlation with gambling. A high functionary reports, 'Their wives have to work the rice fields while they are eating opium and gaming.' No wonder that some Native Chiefs and legislators have imposed the self-same punishment—that of penal servitude for life—on betting defalcations and opium eating. A Dutch Colonial Minister quoted a well-known Japanese proverb, 'The Schinver (opium eater) is not to be trusted.'"

When he saw that the power to grow and to deal in opium was to be brought within the provisions of the Charter of the new Company, he felt that there would be a great need of control in order to prevent the drug from becoming as great a curse and evil in Borneo as it had proved to be in Java. The Report of the High Commissioner of British Burmah said—

> "There can be no conception on the part of the Government of the fearful strides with which the demoralization of the Arakanese portion of this district is progressing, mainly owing to the indulgence of the inhabitants in opium smoking."

This country came into their hands from a simple, unsophisticated Indian race, and it would be a terrible blot upon their character, and upon the country which had introduced this Company into Borneo, if they rewarded the touching simplicity with which the Natives were confiding in our rule by exercising an influence over them which must do them harm instead of good. He was bound to say that some of the names which he had heard in connection with this Company were not altogether free from suspicion on that point. He was sorry to say that the head of the Company came from a great house which had long been connected with the opium trade in China, and Sir Rutherford Alcock himself, although once strongly opposed to the opium trade in China, had lately taken to apologize for it. The gentlemen whose names were attached to the Charter were persons who were not likely to take a philanthropic view of the trade; and they might possibly find, in the course of time, that the country was engaged, not only in a profitable opium trade with China, but in Borneo as well. He trusted that this question of the opium traffic would receive the careful consideration of Her Majesty's Government. He did not wish to enter into the question of the annexation of that territory. There had been times when the exercise of the power of annexation of this Empire had given to the people they had taken under their rule a prosperity which they never before enjoyed. But it was certainly the case that of late years the annexation of great territories, whether in the Mediterranean or in South Africa, had detracted rather from their honour than added to it; but, at the same time, they could not read the Blue Book, and see what possible commerce might be derived from the granting of this Charter, without feeling some sympathy with the new foundation, and some hope that the magnificent resources of the country would now be opened up, and that the results of their rule would prove a great blessing, and not a curse, both to this country and to the people of Borneo.

Mr. RICHARD: I agree with my hon. Friend who has just sat down, that we are greatly indebted to the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) for bringing this question before the House. I wish, indeed, he had submitted to us a Resolution of a broader character; for, undoubtedly, the course he has taken is open to the objection raised by the Attorney General, that his speech covered far wider ground than his Amendment. I sympathize thoroughly with this Amendment about slavery; and I do not think the Attorney General has disposed of the objection, for here we have slavery again placed under the protection of the British flag, and the price of slaves will be fixed by a British Court, or, at least, by an officer who, in one capacity, will exercise jurisdiction as the Representative of Her Majesty the Queen. But I very much prefer the form of Resolution put on the Paper by my hon. Friend the Member for Swansea; for I believe with him that—

> "It is inexpedient that any annexation, direct or indirect, should take place without the full previous knowledge and consent of Parliament."

I hold this opinion on the simple principle that all such annexations involve national responsibilities, and generally responsibilities of a very grave character; and that, therefore, the Representatives of the people ought to have a voice in deciding whether the nation should incur those responsibilities. At present it seems to be in the power of any petty officer representing the Government—or, indeed, of any private adventurer—to take over large territories and saddle the duty of maintaining and defending them upon the British people. There are many who believe that our Empire is already big enough—that we have as many territories in all parts of the world as we can administer wisely or defend effectually. The Duke of Wellington said, many years ago, in regard to India, what seems applicable to our whole Empire—"In my opinion," he said, "the extension of our territory and influence has been greater than our means." But, at any rate, whether it is expedient or not to enlarge our boundaries, surely it is right that such extensions should be the deliberate act of the nation, and that we should not be inveigled into them by personal interests or ambitions. It may be said—and, indeed, has been said—in regard to this particular Company, that we are not bound to defend them or give them military assistance, except that which we give to all Englishmen engaged in trade in uncivilized countries. But that exception covers everything. Instructed by past experience, we may very confidently predict that what will happen will be this—These new rulers will fall out with some of their neighbours, or with their own subjects. We know that Holland and Spain have large pretensions in that part of the world, as the hon. and learned Member for Chatham has already shown, to say nothing of the revelations made as to the United States. If anybody is satistisfied with the vague general understanding we have come to with Spain, and thinks that it affords adequate security against the danger of future conflicts with that Power in those regions, he must be of a far more sanguine disposition than I am. Indeed, these two Blue Books placed in our hands are not to me very pleasant or edifying reading; for they exhibit three so-called civilized and Christian nations—England, Holland, and Spain—scrambling against each other for the possession of a country which belongs to none of them. They appear like birds of prey hovering over a weak or wounded animal, screaming viciously at each other, but all ready with beak and claw to fall upon their unfortunate victim. But if this Chartered Company do not fall out with Spain or Holland, they are sure to quarrel with their barbarian subjects or other Native Tribes. Englishmen always do so. For amid the many admirable qualities of the Anglo-Saxon character, it has this cardinal defect—that it has not the ruling faculty, if by ruling you mean attaching to you in willing allegiance those over whom you exercise sway. As a conquering race, as a colonizing race, as a commercial race, Englishmen are without their equals in the world. But as a ruling race they fail, as is proved by the fact that there is scarcely an instance in our history in which we have come into contact with any other nation, or tribe, or race, in any part of the world without quarrelling and fighting with them. That we may be pretty sure will be the case in North Borneo. Indeed, it is clear that the advocates of the scheme before us themselves anticipate this. A significant hint is given by Consul General Treacher, who calls himself the friend of Baron Overbeck. Writing from Labuan in a despatch dated January 2, 1878, that gentleman says—

> "If supported by the occasional presence of a gunboat, I think the proposed Company would not have much difficulty with Natives."

Now, I do not believe in government by gunboats.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear; and yet the missionaries are constantly applying for them.

Mr. RICHARD: Well, I am very sorry that missionaries so far forget their own character as servants of the Prince of Peace as to apply for gunboats. We must remember that the people of these ceded Provinces have not been consulted in regard to this transference; and nothing is more likely than that they will rebel against the authority of the foreign adventurers to whom they have been handed over without their consent and possibly without their knowledge. Indeed, we are not without a warning example even in Borneo. We know what took place before under Rajah Brooke. It has now become the fashion to eulogize and almost to canonize this gentleman, and to represent the course taken in regard to him by Mr. Hume and Mr. Cobden as the persecution of a great and good man. I believe, on the contrary, that no men ever rendered a greater service to humanity than Mr. Hume and Mr. Cobden did in the check they imposed on the proceedings of that unscrupulous adventurer. He also got possession of a certain Province in Borneo, very much as I suspect this Company has done, partly by cajolery and partly by violence or menace. And almost as soon as he was installed in authority, he quarrelled with neighbouring tribes. And what happened then? Why this happened—that there were certain ships of our Navy wandering about in those seas, having nothing to do, and looking out for a job, and Rajah Brooke called them in, and they promptly obeyed the call to fight his battles, a proceeding which the Prime Minister has characterized

> "As the least justifiable of all the proceedings carried on in the British name within the last half century."

Mr. GLADSTONE: I meant the least justifiable that had then taken place.

Mr. RICHARD: These ships attacked a Native fleet, and there followed one of the most frightful and wholesale massacres of Natives that is recorded in history. And as Rajah Brooke thought fit to brand these Natives as pirates, the people of this country had the pleasure of paying £20,000 as head money to our officers and men, so much a head for each man they had killed. Well, when this new Company gets into difficulties with their subjects or other Native Tribes, what will then happen? Why, a loud outcry is sure to be raised in the country, and we shall be told—"There are our dear, helpless countrymen attacked or besieged by barbarous savages, and we must go to their rescue." And so we shall be obliged to espouse their quarrels and to fight their battles, just or unjust. Now, I protest against being dragged into these responsibilities. I say again, what I said last year, when I brought forward a Motion on a similar subject—this nation of 35,000,000 of people ought to be master of its own destinies, instead of its blood and treasure and reputation being placed at the mercy of others without the knowledge or consent of people or Parliament.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I cannot help supposing that the very clear and candid statement of my hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General may have sufficed to very much narrow the field of this debate. Indeed, I draw that inference from the tone of the speech which followed his statement compared with a portion of debate which went before it. But I am anxious to do what I can in furtherance of the same task, for I think nothing but a clear view of one or two fundamental facts in this case is necessary in order to satisfy the House, and in order, I almost think, to satisfy the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite (Mr. Gorst), that he will not do wisely in endeavouring to persuade the House to adopt his Amendment. I have no intention of quarrelling with any of the principles laid down by the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, any more than I did when he moved a Resolution on a kindred subject nearly two years ago. Nor have I any intention to enter into the question as to how far the Marquess of Salisbury is, or is not, responsible in this matter. My own impression is that if the Marquess of Salisbury had had views in the slightest degree like those declared by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham, it is clear that he could not have entertained the question of this Charter as he did; he must have felt that, instead of keeping it on hand, it was his duty at once to enter his protest against the continuance, even under the Charter, of a Company such as has been described. But I believe it is probable that the Marquess of Salisbury, looking at this case, saw that, though it might have a limited scope in itself, yet it involved principles of delicacy and importance, and that in the dying days of his Government it would not be well for him to deal with it. Therefore, I do not wish, in the slightest degree, to throw responsibility on the Marquess of Salisbury beyond the moderate extent to which I have stated it; and I am willing on the part of my noble Friend the Foreign Secretary, and on my own part, to take the responsibility of this transaction, and to state to the House why we are willing to take it. My hon. Friend did not do justice to the attitudes of the different countries. He said it was painful to see Holland, Spain, and England rushing into competition and quarrelling in order to obtain possession of a country like Borneo, to which none of them had any right. But my hon. Friend should recollect that England has never claimed any right to the possession of any part of Borneo, nor has she done any act which she could avoid leading to that possession. [Mr. RICHARD: What about the Charter?] I will come to that directly, and I shall contend that it had a directly contrary effect. What would be the advantage of adopting this Amendment? We are asked to adopt an Address praying the Crown to revoke or alter so much of the Charter as gives and implies sanction to slavery. If we only alter provisions of the Charter relating to slavery, it is perfectly clear that if we modify their form, any question of the sanction of slavery still remains in principle in the Charter. Suppose we struck slavery out of the Charter, what follows? That slavery is abolished? Not in the least. Slavery continues without restraint and without the slightest obligation from without upon the Company; whereas, as the matter now stands, in case, in the judgment of the Crown, the Company fail to execute the engagement into which they have entered to temper slavery, to qualify slavery, to put an end to slavery so soon as it shall be practicable—if they fail in the execution of these engagements, the Crown is empowered legally to revoke the Charter. I say that is in the nature of a security against slavery, and not of implied countenance to it. I am not entering upon the question with regard to opium, except that I believe, should the Company misuse its powers in respect of opium, the power of negative interference on the part of the Crown will enable the Minister to check any misconduct in that respect also. My hon. Friend the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) asked me to give a pledge that no annexation of territory should take place without the consent of the House of Commons. As far as consent is concerned, I am rather disposed to think it is an affair not only for the House of Commons, but for the whole of the Legislature of the country, and if I gave an abstract pledge it would be in that form. I do not, however, propose to give any such pledge, and my hon. Friend will find that it is time enough to make demands upon us with respect to annexation when there is on our part any tendency towards favouring or affecting it. Throughout the whole of my political life, whether under Sir Robert Peel or as a Member of the Liberal Party, I cannot recollect an occasion on which I gave a vote or took a step in a controverted matter except on the side which was opposed to annexation. I trust, therefore, I am not likely to be suspected in the matter. In truth, for the first 20 years of my political life, opposition to annexation—I do not mean simply on abstract grounds, but extreme indisposition to annexation—was characteristic of the two political Parties in the State alike, and they heartily cooperated in that sense. There has been some amount of change since, on which I need not dwell; but we undoubtedly adhere, and I, for one, adhere in full, and, if possible, with growing strength of conviction, to the views upon that subject that I have always entertained. I believe that the expression of these views, not only on my own part, but on the part of others who sit near me, and with whom I am associated, is better security than my hon. Friend could have in any abstract declaration on the subject. We believe that the responsibilities of this great Empire, which we have inherited with all their burden and with all their glory, and with all their duty as well as with all their glory — we believe those responsibilities are sufficient to exhaust the ambition or the strength of any Minister or of any Parliament, and we do not wish to overload them and to break them down, apart from other questions, by gratuitous, not to say by guilty additions. The question is—"Have we in this instance, by any act of the Government, augmented its responsibility in respect to the British Settlement, if so I may call it, on the Northern Coast of Borneo, or aggravated a danger connected with that Settlement?" I think that is not an unfair statement of the case. How does this arise? Do not let the hon. and learned Member who brought forward this Resolution, or my hon. Friend who seconded it, suppose for one moment that I deny the existence of responsibilities and dangers. The responsibilities and dangers which were largely stated by the Mover of the Amendment unquestionably exist. The relations with Foreign States, the relations with foreign residents, the relations with the Natives of the Island are all of them matters full of responsibility, and not apart from danger. But these things have not arisen by the act of Her Majesty's Government, and our contention is that the act of Her Majesty's Government does not extend, but qualifies and reduces, those dangers. Sir, the case is one of great interest. I am not about to use language of mistrust and condemnation as regards the Company which has settled itself in Borneo, and which has obtained these remarkable powers—powers involving the essence of Sovereignty, though covered by the Suzerainty of the Native Chief. I must, however, lodge a protest against the statements of the hon. and learned Gentleman, for these powers are totally different from the case of the East India Company, which was under a different system, and assumed different rights in its relation to the Native Sovereigns and the Queen, whose Dominions likewise extended into India where the East India Company went. The fact is this. Let the Government adopt, with mathematical rigour if you like, an opposition to annexation, and what does it effect? It does nothing to check that tendency —that, perhaps, irrepressible tendency —of British enterprize to carry our commerce and the range and area of our Settlements beyond the limits of our Sovereignty in those countries where civilization does not exist. I am not prepared to say that that is altogether an illegitimate object. I am inclined to hope that, duly regulated, it may be made an almost unmixed good; and that even where not so happily regulated, yet in some cases, as in the case of the New Zealand Company, on the whole, a balance of good has been obtained for the happiness of mankind. At any rate, there the thing is, and you cannot repress it. If the views of the hon. and learned Gentleman are to be fully carried out, he must bring in a new penal law. He must make it penal for British subjects to go and settle themselves beyond the limits of the Empire, and he must devise the means of executing that law. ["No, no!"] The hon. and learned Gentleman must have his choice. He must have his preventive law, which I call a penal law, with the means of its execution, or else be prepared to see these things happen. They have happened during all my life. The oldest controversy I remember took place more than 40 years ago about taking possession of an island—I forget its name—in order to prosecute the South Sea Fisheries; but it is needless to enter into details. It cannot be denied that there is this continual tendency on the part of the enterprizing people of this country to overpass the limits of the Empire, and not only to carry their trade, but to form their settlement in other countries beyond the sphere of regular organized government, and there to constitute establishments, and even to constitute a certain civil government of their own. Now, Sir, the question is whether, if abuses spring up, it is wise for the Government to establish for itself a rule of sitting by with folded arms, and allowing these things to go on without the slightest attempt to regulate them? It so happens that we have in Borneo a good example of the old system, and a good example of what I may, perhaps, call the new system. Sir James Brooke went into Borneo without asking or obtaining aid or sanction from anyone. By his own remarkable energy he established himself in that country; and I am not sure my hon. and learned Friend was right if he meant to say that Mr. Hume and Mr. Cobden ever objected to Sir James Brooke's enterprize *ab initio*. They took an honourable part in the discussion that then arose upon the subject, and I myself gave them my humble aid at the time to prevent any sanction being given to certain unhappy proceedings that then took place; but I do not recollect that they ever attempted to take objection, which would have been futile, to that tendency of British enterprize to pass into those remote and uncivilized countries. But what happened in the case of Sir James Brooke was that we let it alone. And did that prevent us from mixing in its affairs? No; on the contrary, a very questionable undertaking—in my opinion, a very guilty undertaking, but, to state it moderately, a most questionable undertaking, was the consequence. Not only was he permitted to pursue his course, but he was assisted by the Fleet of Her Majesty; and not only so, but when his course was challenged in this country, and when the intervention of the Fleet was challenged, a large majority of this House voted in his support. So you did not escape any responsibility by endeavouring to have no relations with those people who found themselves in those remote regions. Now, what has been done in the present case? We have thought it better to make an experiment of some wise and moderate method of preserving control over a Company of the nature of this North Borneo Company. What have we given and what have we got? It was asked by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), if no good would be done by this Company, why was the Charter given at all? The benefits actually conferred upon the Company were extremely small. It was established simply as a body corporate, with perpetual succession; but I believe that in the view of the law it obtained nothing else whatever. I doubt very much whether obtaining that legal privilege would of itself have been sufficient to induce the Company to enter into relations with Her Majesty's Government. What else did it get? Sir, it may seem strange and paradoxical to say it got nothing else. What it got was restraint, not privilege. There is not a single privilege given to it by the Charter over and above what it had already acquired upon a title sufficient to enable it to enter into the exercise of all its powers. I am sorry that the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman never brought into view that paramount and fundamental fact that we were dealing, in granting this Charter, with a pre-existent Company. We were not calling a Company into existence. We were not inciting people to go and do a certain thing. They were in possession of every power that the Charter gives them, and the question is, did we worsen or did we better the state of things? You say—Why did the Company submit to this restraint? I venture to give my own reason. The restraint exercised on the conduct of the Company by the power of the Crown to interfere was a guarantee of considerable power against misconduct on the part of the Company. That there should be such a guarantee against misconduct on the part of the Company's agent would tend to raise the character of the Company, and to improve the credit of the Company; and it was that indirect, but still, as I hope, very considerable advantage obtained by the Company in the most legitimate manner, by submitting itself to restraint, which formed, as far as I can see—but I have no title from the Company; I have had no communication with them—their principal inducement. But, Sir, we have undertaken no new responsibility whatever. We shall have—and this was a matter which was carefully considered by the Foreign Office and by the Government—we shall have no more responsibility, as it is perceived by my hon. Friend who spoke last, not one grain more responsibility with regard to the North Coast of Borneo than we have with regard to the territory of Sarawak. Wherever your subjects go, if they are in pursuit of objects not unlawful, you are under moral obligations towards them that you cannot possibly forget or ignore; and their objects being lawful, you afford them all the protection which your powers enable you to give. Well, Sir, that is precisely the case in regard to British North Borneo, and there is not the slightest addition to our responsibility beyond what we incurred with regard to Sarawak. The hon. and learned Gentleman says we have incurred serious responsibilities with Spain, the Netherlands, and the United States of America. I think he considerably exaggerated those dangers; but I do not deny that difficulty, and even danger, may exist; but I say two things. First of all, that we are under no obligation whatever to settle the existing controversies with those Governments for the Company; and, secondly, that we are in a condition to render difficulties far less likely to occur in future, by using our negative and restrictive powers to shield the Company from the temptation to be led into unwise and aggressive action; so that our contention is, there is not a point from which you can look at this question at which you do not find that, whatever our responsibilities are in regard to these uncivilized foreign countries, they are likely to be limited rather than extended by the grant of Charters such as this. My hon. Friend who spoke in so excellent a spirit in seconding this Resolution, and my hon. Friend also who spoke last, say this is virtually an annexation. Now, Sir, I am very sorry to hear hon. Members in this House say it is virtually annexation, because the day may possibly arise when their speeches will be quoted in support of its being considered to have been annexation. But, first of all, I do not admit in the slightest degree that it is an annexation in effect or an annexation in right. In right, I will not allow that there is the slightest tendency to annexation; in fact, I will make to you this admission—that wherever your subjects have settled themselves, and have become virtually masters of the territory, there may be a seed of possible future annexation. That I cannot deny. But I say the danger of that, the danger attending it, you cannot escape, unless you are prepared to support—what even the hon. and learned Member opposite does not seem inclined to bring in—a penal law to prevent British subjects from going beyond the limits of the Queen's Dominion. I do not think the hon. and learned Gentleman can realize the effect of his own Motion. You can only prevent British subjects from settling in foreign countries by prohibiting them from going beyond the limits of the Empire, and you can only do that by penal legislation. These, then, are the grounds for our course of action in this matter, which we have not entered upon without scruple and consideration. It is a matter which we do not attempt to place too high. The motives which I have supposed may have deterred Lord Salisbury and the late Government from settling it with rapidity was a sense that the whole subject was beset with difficulty, and that, go which way you will, it is a choice of difficulties. We have seen what has happened from the neutral, or, as it is sometimes called, *laissez faire* policy, and we are not satisfied with the results. I venture to believe that, if we had had a greater control over the proceedings of the New Zealand Company, we might have postponed annexation. We cannot tell whether we might have avoided it or not; but it might have been in our power to prevent precipitate and unwise proceedings. We do not say this is a system of which the success has been demonstrated. It may break down. What we say is, that it is an experiment we are trying, the whole matter being full of responsibility, and that responsibility not being apart from peril. After the many great imperfections and defects of our previous methods of proceeding, it is worth our while to make a modest and well-considered trial of this new method of proceeding. For that purpose we ask the indulgence of the House. We protest against the immediate condemnation of our plan. We say, let it stand the test of experience, which will soon prove whether it is wise or unwise; and, in order that it may do so, I hope the House will not assent to the Resolution of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL said, it was exceedingly difficult to resist the charm of the eloquence of the Prime Minister, and especially so for a Member who counted himself one of the right hon. Gentleman's humble followers. But he grieved to confess that he very much wished that the eloquence of the right hon. Gentleman had not been exerted on an occasion which seemed like sailing very near the wind in regard to the matter of annexation, of which the right hon. Gentleman had been so strong an opponent. It seemed to him that in this case, whatever lawyers might call it, whatever technical arguments might be used, it was very difficult to believe that the recognition of the North Borneo Company was not an annexation—it was the same recognition of territory passing to the British Crown as took place when a trading Company, acting under a Royal Charter, possessed themselves of India. There was a parallel and an analogy between the two cases which was very striking. It might be said that he, who had spent his life in administering and, in some cases, pushing forward British annexations in India, might not be unfavourable to the granting of this Charter; but, on the contrary, his argument was that we had so much already that we ought to pause and hesitate before we took more. Whatever arguments might be used, he should continue to believe that, having once taken in hand the North Borneo Company, the *ægis* of British protection was thrown over the country. His alarm had not been quieted, but further alarm had been occasioned him, by the eloquent speech of the Prime Minister. From that speech he gathered that the right hon. Gentleman rather disliked what had been done, but that, there being only a choice of evils, the grant of the Charter was inevitable. It really seemed to him a matter of deep moment that in the eyes of the present Prime Minister, an advocate of peace and an opponent of annexation and extension, our political position was such that the British Government, whether Conservative and aggressive, or Liberal and opposed to annexation and Jingoism, was bound by an insatiable necessity to follow and protect, he would not say every British filibuster, but every British adventurer, and take possession of the territory bought by him from some foreign Prince or savage King, and that this country must submit to the extensions of territory, whether it desired it or not. He doubted very much the soundness of the arguments both of the Prime Minister and of the Attorney General. They had told the House that the Company was an accomplished fact, and that the Charter only secured it in the possession of the territory which it had acquired. This was a territory half as large as France; but, so far as he could gather from the Papers, the Company was really in possession of nothing but a few petty points upon the coast. The Charter not only confirmed the whole of the immense grants of territory which had been given to the Company by Rulers who did not possess it, but it authorized the Company, under British protection and under the British flag, to take possession of those territories in the best way they could—that was, either by fair means or foul, for Companies were not necessarily over-scrupulous. They were further authorized to take possession of any more territories they could in that quarter of the globe. That was a most startling authorization, and was simply a roving commission. Nothing like so wide an authority was given to the East India Company. Parliament was always restraining that Company. Although he had personally taken part in some annexations of territory, he thought that those in which he was concerned ought to be about the last, and that we ought to go no further. We were a comparatively small Island, and, speaking with reference to the great Asiatic populations, a comparatively small population, and possessed but a small standing Army. For his part, he believed that the Constitution, the unwillingness to serve, and the occupations of the people rendered it unlikely that Great Britain would ever have a powerful Army or become a great military Power. One of his greatest objections to bluster and Jingoism was that they had not an Army powerful enough to bear them out. Why should we assert a right and a claim to occupy every part of the globe, to the exclusion of other people? It would be much better if we should take an example from the view expressed in a very statesmanlike manner by the Dutch on this question—that our policy should be rather concentration than further progress. There was already plenty of opening for our surplus population in the various Colonies. In this Eastern quarter, between Assam and Singapore, was a vast district, sufficient to afford ample scope for the energetic young men of the upper classes who could not pass for the Army. He confessed to a feeling of sadness and regret at hearing the Prime Minister enunciate views which came so very near the "Rule Britannia" kind of policy which bound us to follow every British subject who chose to follow an aggressive course in any part of the world. He had hoped that this country had abandoned the Palmerstonian policy of looking upon every person calling himself a British subject as entitled to their protection, wherever he might go and whatever he might do. It had been said that this was a peculiar case, in which the advantages counter-balanced the disadvantages. What was there in this case which made it peculiar? It seemed to him that Lord Granville and the Attorney General, representing the Government, had been very easily satisfied as to the extraordinarily beneficent character of this Company. They had the statement of a gentleman named Lees, who was the agent of this very Company, and of two or three naval officers, who had visited several small points on the coast. That was the whole evidence on which this case was taken out of the category of objectionable annexations. That being so, he greatly doubted the wisdom or expediency of entering on a new region of annexation which, heretofore, had been closed against us. Why should we, alone among all countries in the world, undertake to protect the human race—sometimes to protect them off the face of the earth? He had looked over the Blue Books, and had not found anything in them that rightly exempted this country from the policy of non-annexation. We had the great territory of India; we had not rid ourselves of responsibility in South Africa—he did not know whether we ever should—and Egypt was still on our hands. Why should we enter on this great region of the earth? It was a very dangerous policy to enter upon a course of something which, if not annexation, was affiliation, because it was impossible to say where it was to stop. He could not help thinking that Her Majesty's Government had found that they had very considerable difficulty in justifying themselves. He was disappointed that the Prime Minister did not get up at once, instead of leaving the case in the hands of a great forensic Advocate—the Attorney General. If it was desirable to add to our territories, it was better that that should be done directly by Her Majesty's Government, and not by giving a Charter to a Joint Stock Company to do so. He had great doubt whether India was better administered now by Her Majesty's Government directly than it was by the East India Company. But things went on; you could not go backwards. Parliament thought it right to put an end to that Company; and now were they going to create another Company of this kind in its place, when financiers in the City were much less scrupulous than they were in the time of the East India Company? They were going to give power to this Company to raise an Army, to borrow money, to make laws, and to annex territories wherever it could? It seemed to him that that was a very dangerous policy. They had been told that the effect of this Charter was only to give to this Company a moral support. It seemed to him that the giving of the Charter implied a great deal more—namely, the support of Her Majesty's ships in the first place, and financial support in the second place. The Company could go into the City with Her Majesty's Charter, and obtain money which it could not get if left to stand by itself. The East India Company, he would point out, had followed the course of passing a law desiring their Courts and servants not to recognize or enforce any right founded on the practice of slavery; and he could not see why that precedent should not be followed in the present case. Though he differed from much that had fallen from the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst), he should, nevertheless, give him his support if a division were taken, for he was of opinion that the Charter ought not to have been granted.

Mr. ONSLOW said, he was surprised at the opposition of the hon. Member who had just spoken. He should have expected from a Gentleman who had filled many high offices in India an appreciation of the great benefits conferred by English rule on Native races. He could not, therefore, help thinking that his hon. Friend had a Radical constituency in view, instead of the House of Commons, when he delivered his speech, and that he might have to regret ever having made that speech. It was said by those who objected to this Charter that the East India Company's Charter was at first similarly limited in scope. Well, no doubt that was so; but who could deny that the Charters granted to the East India Company were the origin of great benefits enjoyed at the present time by the Native races? The policy which he had in view when he approved the Government's consent to the North Borneo Charter had been characterized as a "Rule Britannia" policy. He was not, however, ashamed to affirm his adherence to a policy of that kind; and having seen the great social and moral effect of what was called "Jingoism," he hoped he should, as long as he lived, always be a "Jingo." How, he asked, would our commercial interests have been extended so largely, if an element of "Jingoism" had not always been prevalent among the English people? It was noteworthy that the "peace-at-any-price" politicians were always ready to reap the fruits of a successful "Jingo" policy. To his mind there was a close analogy between the extension of our commerce and what had been called "Jingoism." He hoped that any barbarous customs that might exist in North Borneo would be abolished in the course of the next few years. They must remember that it was not so very long ago that sutteeism and infanticide were abolished in India; and however abhorrent these practices had always been to us—the dominant Power in India—yet it had taken years thoroughly to eradicate such barbarities. The process of abolition ought, however, to be gradual, for by showing an impatient hostility to the traditions of the Native population an unfavourable impression would probably be created. The First Lord of the Treasury had said that the Charter did not throw any new responsibility on the country. He could not accept that view of the case. If he could believe that the Charter was a sham, and that we were never to defend it, if necessary, by force of arms, he certainly should not support the Government on that occasion. He intended, however, to do so, because he believed that the Charter was not to be a sham. In his opinion, it was impossible to have a Charter with the Queen's Sign Manual without responsibility. He agreed, however, with much the Prime Minister had said, for the right hon. Gentleman had swallowed a good deal of what he had said at Mid Lothian; and the speech of the right hon. Gentleman delivered to-night was the first tinge of a national policy which this great Government had yet shown. If the Charter carried with it no new responsibility, what was the use of this storm in a teacup? The East India Company, when in existence, was supported by the forces of this country over and over again; and he trusted that similar support would be accorded to the North Borneo Company in case of need. The Attorney General, seeing that the step taken by the Government did not meet with universal approval on the Ministerial side of the House, had endeavoured to make the Marquess of Salisbury responsible for the Charter. He did not say that the Marquess of Salisbury would have sanctioned the Charter exactly as it stood; but he had no doubt the late Foreign Secretary would have sanctioned it in principle, and he thought he was justified in this assertion from the perusal of the Blue Books. Still, he (Mr. Onslow) objected to any Member of the Government, when they found they were in difficulties and were likely to offend some of their stanchest supporters, try to throw the blame upon their political opponents. They had heard the strange words "British interests" from the Attorney General. He had thought the Liberal Party was never going to use those words again; but he was glad they had cropped up. But the remarks of the Attorney General and the Prime Minister were at total variance with everything said in Mid Lothian two years ago. The remarks made from the Treasury Bench were totally at variance with not only the speeches in Mid Lothian, but at variance with the remarks of every Member of the Government, whose sole object two years ago was to turn out that great statesman the Earl of Beaconsfield and place themselves in Office. The speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister recalled that little word "prestige." Two years ago the right hon. Gentleman said "prestige" was a hateful word. [Mr. GLADSTONE: Hear, hear!] He differed from the right hon. Gentleman now, as then; and he was glad the word had been recognized now in the granting of this Charter. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) said that it was done out of loyalty to the late Government. He had never seen the slightest loyalty from the Prime Minister to the late Government; and he thought the hon. Member for Swansea must have been poking fun at the House when he spoke of the granting of the Charter being an act of loyalty to the Earl of Beaconsfield and the Marquess of Salisbury. He did not believe the Prime Minister was capable of loyalty towards his political opponents. He (Mr. Onslow), however, believed that the Charter would work well for the country, and that the Natives who were friendly disposed to us would greatly benefit by the change. It had been said that steps might be taken in future years to annex this territory to the Crown. The only doubt he had in his mind was whether, rather than grant this Charter, the Government ought not at once to have annexed the territory. There would be difficulties, no doubt, but they had had difficulties in India; and he, for one, did not quail because of "difficulties." To his mind, the overcoming—and that, too, so successfully—so-called difficulties, insuperable as they had often been considered, in India, was one of the grandest deeds in the annals of

British history. Do not, then, let us yield to this bugbear of difficulties. He believed the Natives in India and elsewhere preferred English rule to the rule of their own Rajahs. He believed there was a great future in the country to which this Charter had been granted for the trader, the engineer, and the missionary. He could only account for the policy of the Government on this question by supposing that the right hon. Gentleman was coming back to a sense of true national responsibility; and if he went on in that policy many Members on that side of the House would give the Government their cordial support. He did not know how the Under Secretaries of State for the Colonies and for Foreign Affairs could reconcile to their views support of the policy of the Government in this matter. It was a great concession that had been made to the Company, and he believed the policy pursued with regard to it was a national policy. There might, no doubt, be difficulties in dealing with the country; but it must be remembered that they had not acquired it by coercion or fighting, but wholly by peaceful means—a great guarantee that the Natives would be peaceable and abide by the laws laid down. He was sorry that on this occasion he could not vote with his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst). Considering the policy of the Tory Party in bygone years, it did seem to him strange that an hon. Member sitting on that side of the House should bring forward a Resolution of that kind. No doubt he was induced to do so by the interest he took in the Slave Question; but, for his own part, he believed that slavery would be in no way encouraged in Borneo by the granting of the Charter. If he had the slightest idea that the Company would, by any means, encourage slavery, of course he would not vote with Her Majesty's Government; but so great was the aversion to slavery, by politicians in this country of every hue, that he felt confident that in a few years slavery in Borneo would be a thing of the past. This Charter would much more probably lead to the granting to North Borneo those glorious institutions which we had been the means of introducing into our Indian Empire; and it was because he believed there was in the future of that country great commercial prosperity, and a wide field for all kinds of civilization under British rule, that he now supported Her Majesty's Government.

Mr. R. BIDDULPH MARTIN said, that, as one of the filibusters to whom so much reference had been made, and one of those to whom the Charter was granted, he thoroughly appreciated the position which had been laid down by the Prime Minister with reference to this grant. In taking the limitations imposed upon them, the Company accepted the responsibility of those limitations, which they would endeavour to carry out to the best of their ability. With regard to the question of slavery, they would not, in dealing with the subject, have possibly adopted stronger measures. It was their firm intention and wish to extirpate this curse as soon as they possibly could. It was only a question of practicability that limited their so doing. They would like to wipe it out with one sweep of the pen; but it was absolutely impossible, in a country of which they knew practically nothing, to do that. Slaves were generally made by the dhows, which swooped down and carried off as many as they could. The only effectual method of preventing them was to send a gunboat or an armed steamer to protect the defenceless Native villages on the coast. The Company's settlements could protect themselves, but the Native villages could not. Slavery was a recognized institution. and it was impossible to put it down at once. They were compelled to suffer it, but to suffer it only for a limited time. In reference to what had been said of opium growing in the Island, he believed that the soil was not favourable to its cultivation. So far as their own territory was concerned, the Company would try and keep it out by imposing the highest tax upon it they could. One of their first acts was to take off the tax upon rice, a tax which weighed very heavily on the people, and place it upon opium. On the other hand, the Island would be benefited by the introduction of English credit. European manufactures would be brought in, and the people of North Borneo, who had a great inclination towards commerce, would gladly take the opportunity of extending their trade. They had no difficulty at all with the Natives. A circumstance illustrative of their feeling came to the knowledge of the Company a fortnight ago. Two tribes living beyond the limits of their boundary had sent a message to the Resident saying that they wished their territory to be annexed also. The answer was that they were beyond the boundary line, and it was therefore impossible. Notwithstanding this, however, they sent a reply saying they would send their wives, their children, and their movable goods into the district, and when they could not bear the tyranny of their Native Rulers they themselves would follow. They had already carried out the first part of their undertaking, and all that remained to be seen was, whether they would carry out the rest. Of course, he admitted that the object of the Company was a commercial one; but he thought all these circumstances should be considered in connection with the undertaking.

DR. CAMERON said, he did not wish to criticize anything that had been said as to the action of the Company by the hon. Member who had just spoken; but he maintained that in not one single remark did the hon. Gentleman lay before the House the smallest reason why this Charter should be granted. They were told that orders had been sent out for a gradual and speedy suppression of slavery; but the date of those orders was not mentioned. If he understood the matter aright, they were sent out before the granting of the Charter; therefore, of whatever effect they might be, that effect was in no way dependent on the Charter. Then, as to the cultivation of opium, that appeared to him also to be a matter which in no way concerned the grant of the Charter at all. Slavery, unfortunately, existed already in some of our Dependencies in its domestic form, and in other Dependencies they had what approached it very nearly—forced apprenticeships. The opium trade they had in India; but he did not think it was necessary to enter into those questions. They appeared to him to be totally irrelevant to the Charter. The real question that would make him vote against the Government, if the matter went to a division, was the point of annexation. When the Liberals were in Opposition, and when they appealed to the country at the last General Election, they all protested against annexation. He protested against annexation then, and he protested against it now. The sole question was, how far this action of the Government was a step in the direction of annexation? Let them examine into it for a moment. They were told, in the first place, that the inducements which led Her Majesty's Government to grant this Charter were that it was restrictive, and would give the Government an opportunity of controlling the operations of this Company. He did not exactly see to what extent it would do this; but he knew that the British law gave Her Majesty's Government very wide powers indeed to prevent wrongdoing on the part of her subjects abroad. They were told of the attachment of the people of Borneo to Her Majesty the Queen; but that was hardly a reason for annexation. He had no doubt they would get up as good a show of attachment to Her Majesty in any barbarous part of the globe. As to the inducement held out to the House that the Charter would foster missionary enterprize, he thought that only required to be looked at for one moment to be seen through. The fact of the matter was that if they had not exactly annexed this territory, they had given a Charter which confirmed Sovereign rights; a Charter under which the policy of this trading Company was controlled by the Government. They had given a jurisdiction over British subjects, the power of peace and war, of raising an Army and a Navy; and Her Majesty's Government reserved the power of negativing the appointment of a Governor. He could not see that any Company could be instituted under any document which would more clearly render the Government responsible for its operations than was the case with this Company. The Prime Minister admitted that he did not much like the Charter, but that the Government had simply before it the choice of two evils. He agreed with that, but did not think they had made the right choice. They were told by the Attorney General that the Marquess of Salisbury, in a despatch to the Spanish Government, had referred to British interests in those parts that required to be protected; and the hon. and learned Gentleman spoke as if they were bound to regard every British interest which the Marquess of Salisbury considered as such in precisely the same light. Now, he could quite understand how Members on the other side of the House should consider themselves bound by any views expressed by the Marquess of Salisbury; but they on that side of the House had repeatedly ridiculed and disavowed the views of the noble Marquess as to British interests, and he thought they would only be acting consistently if they repudiated that belief in those British interests in Borneo to which he had referred, and allowed this Company to protect its own interests. On the one hand, they had the choice of giving the Charter, which rendered them as completely responsible for the Company in good and evil fortune as any document could make them; and, on the other hand, they could have said to the Company—"You are a trading Company, trading under the Limited Liability Statute; you say you have done very good work under that Statute; continue to do it. You know your rights; you must look after them in your own way. You have purchased certain rights of Sovereignty from the Brummagem Sultans of Borneo, who sold you their rights over 33,000 square miles. You must have known they could not be of much worth. You bought them at your own risk, and you must look after them and protect them; and if in doing that you violate those laws of Great Britain which regulate the conduct of British subjects in savage countries we shall hold you responsible." The idea of British interests in such a matter appeared to him to be preposterous. Those British subjects went to Borneo and acquired certain rights as traders, and this country might have been bound to protect them; but those were not the rights from which our dangers would arise. The rights from which our danger as a nation would arise were the Sovereign rights, and these Sovereign rights in a trading Company we should never have recognized or listened to. They had been told that in the course of negotiations which had taken place between the Sultan of Borneo and this Company, the Sultan of Sulu granted a concession which, when the Spanish Forces had subdued him, he was compelled to recall. Without any Charter the Company had gone on with its work and had any question arisen as to Sovereignty the Government of Spain and the Sultan of Sulu would have been obliged to settle it between themselves. What would be the consequence now if that Company, incorporated by Royal Charter, having the power of raising an Army and a Navy, floating the British flag over it, were to have a dispute with Spain? It would be impossible for this country to remain neutral. He would not enter into the question of State policy of annexation. It might be that the attitude of Spain had been such that we could not allow it to pass without some action on our part, and that such action rendered annexation almost a matter of necessity; but what he protested against was this form of annexation, which appeared to him to be by far the most insidious and dangerous form of annexation they could adopt, and on that ground he should be constrained to vote against Her Majesty's Government on this Resolution if the matter went to a division.

Sir HENRY HOLLAND desired to state in a few words why he should support the action of Her Majesty's Government in granting this Charter. He entirely dissented from the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) in calling this action "filibustering." Surely the granting a Charter with certain carefully considered conditions to a trading Company which had been established for two or three years was not a "filibustering" act. Nor could he admit that the Company was a political, and not a commercial, Company. The very rights which were transferred to this Company had been granted, in the first instance, by the Sultan to a Company which was admitted by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham to be a "trading" Company. And the conditions imposed by this Charter were, as he (Sir Henry Holland) would show, intended to keep it a commercial, and to prevent it becoming a political Company. Her Majesty's Government expressly reserved a right to interfere and decide in any questions which might arise between the Company and the Sultans or any Foreign Power. Two points must be admitted in this discussion—first, that this part of Borneo was very rich in resources and very capable of development; and, secondly, that it was desirable that it should be so developed by British subjects, looking to the proximity of the district to our Colony of Labuan. No Government could properly object to this district being worked by a trading Company.

Indeed, when he (Sir Henry Holland) was in the Colonial Office, in 1873, when a German Company proposed to open a trade in Borneo — he believed in this very North-Eastern district—the Earl of Kimberley said in a despatch that he saw no ground for offering opposition to the attempt of the German merchants; and all he could do was to suggest that the Sultan should be requested not to grant to them any monopoly of trade. If, then, no objection could be made to a trading Company, surely it was not unreasonable to show some favour to a British trading Company, considering, as he had before said, the nearness of this district to Labuan, a Colony which was increasing in importance, and which in war would be still more important owing to the coal found there. What, then, were the disadvantages which were to be set off against the above advantages? Difficulties with Foreign Powers had been put forward. These might be considered under two heads—time of peace and time of war. Now, as to difficulties in time of peace, what had we to fear? He (Sir Henry Holland) would not follow the hon. and learned Member for Chatham in discussing the Spanish claim; but, although he would not ask the House to accept his opinion against that of the hon. and learned Member, he might fairly set against him the different opinions of Law Officers and the decisions of eminent statesmen—including Lord Aberdeen—who had presided over the Foreign Office. At all events, Spain had contented herself with a protest. As regarded the Netherlands Government, it was clear that no difficulty need be anticipated from them, as the Correspondence in the Blue Book ends with an expression of hope on the part of the Minister—

> "That the new undertaking may contribute to the happiness of the Native population, and be fruitful in useful results."

The hon. and learned Member for Chatham referred to the United States; but there was no information before the House to lead it to suppose that any claim had been made; and the House might be satisfied that such information would have been given, if there had any serious claim been advanced. So far for difficulties in time of peace. As regards difficulties in time of war, any danger was greatly lessened, if not altogether done away with, by the fact that Her Majesty did not claim Sovereignty, or even a Protectorate, over this district; indeed, it would be found that any such Sovereignty was, over and over again, disclaimed in the Correspondence with the Netherlands. An attack, then, on the British settlers would not be an attack on her Sovereignty, and would not in itself necessitate reprisals. In truth, these settlers had taken all risks upon themselves, just as British traders did who went up the rivers in West Africa and settled there. They had no claim to be protected, although special circumstances might render it desirable to grant such protection. It must be observed, moreover, that any difficulties, either in peace or war, would be greatly obviated by the stringent provisions in the 6th Article of the Charter, which imposed a useful check upon the dealings of the Company with Foreign Powers. He (Sir Henry Holland) might, therefore, fairly assume that the disadvantages did not equal the advantages of having a British trading Company in this part of Borneo; and he would, therefore, pass to a consideration of the Charter. Now, in the first place, he thought the hon. and learned Attorney General pointed out with great force the true position of the case presented to the Government. Here were British subjects who might have continued to trade as partners without any resort to the Government; who might also have placed themselves under the Companies' Acts without any conditions imposed upon them, except such as were provided by those Acts. But they applied for a Charter; and surely it was a wise thing for the Government to take that opportunity of securing the peace of the country and the happiness of the Natives, and of placing some general check upon British subjects settling down in a foreign country. What, then, were the checks which a Government would desire to see imposed? Just such checks as we find secured by the following Articles—namely, by Article 3, that the British character of the Company should be maintained; by Article 4, that a transfer of powers should not be made without consent of a Secretary of State; by Article 5, that the decision of a Secretary of State should be taken in any case of difference with a Sultan; by Article 6, that the Company should be bound to adopt any suggestion of the Secretary of State with reference to the dealings of the Company with any Foreign Power; and, lastly, by Article 7, that the Company should gradually put an end to domestic slavery. Upon this last Article he (Sir Henry Holland) heartily concurred in what had fallen from the hon. and learned Attorney General; and he only desired to add a few words upon the question, as almost the last work he did in the Colonial Office was to render his humble assistance to Lord Carnarvon when that noble Lord took the first steps to putting an end to domestic slavery on the Gold Coast. No one had done more than the Earl of Carnarvon in this respect; but he would not have succeeded, had he not proceeded with judgment and patience. He knew that to abolish domestic slavery at once would have led to violence, and, perhaps, bloodshed, in a country where domestic slavery was a deeply-rooted institution, and where the relations between master and slave were naturally looked on with favour by the inhabitants. In a despatch of August, 1874, the Earl of Carnarvon required—

> "The immediate abolition of slave-dealing and the importation of slaves, to be followed by such regulations of the relations between masters and slaves as shall ultimately, and in no long course of time, effect the extinction of slavery itself."

Now, this careful mode of proceeding had been wisely followed in the Charter. The House would observe that, if this Article of the Charter were to be revoked as desired by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham, the settlers and Native Chiefs might continue domestic slavery for ever. He would not detain the House any longer, but conclude by stating his concurrence in the hope expressed by the Netherlands Minister that the new undertaking might contribute to the happiness of the Native population, and his belief that it would do so; and that it would open up a trade alike profitable to the Natives as to this country.

Mr. RYLANDS said, he had come to the conclusion, after reading the Papers presented on that subject, that the claims of Spain were of the most shadowy description, and that it was hardly possible for her to put forward any reasonable ground upon which she had a right to interfere with the Sultan of Sulu giving the concession to the British North Borneo Company. At the same time, our Government appeared to have regarded the claims of Spain as of some weight, and to have thought there was some reason why they should seek to conciliate that country. Our Government had intimated to Spain that they would be disposed, in return for the recognition by the Spanish Government of the action of the British Government, to recognize the claims of Spain to influence and authority in the Sulu Archipelago. As to the Netherlands, they were a weak country and did not like to be treated with indifference and almost with contempt; yet they had no right to complain of the course of our Government, in regard to the Charter of that Company; he was, however, surprised that these Papers contained no reference to the United States of America in connection with the arrangements with the Sultan of Borneo; and he hoped that the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs would explain why the despatch mentioned by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) was not alluded to in the Blue Book. It might be the fashion to sneer at American diplomacy; but where the United States had trade interests, those interests, if touched, would be looked after in a manner that would admit of no neglect. He was not surprised at the line taken by the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow) in that matter. It was natural for hon. Gentlemen opposite to talk of promoting British interests, of the great highways of British trade, of national prestige, and of securing strategical advantages over other Powers. It was quite clear from the Papers that the late Government were prepared to confirm the Charter of that Company. He did not blame them for that; but it was not consistent with the policy of that (the Ministerial) side of the House. If the late Government had done that before they went out of Office he should have denounced it in Lancashire, had he been speaking at a public meeting, as a part of their dangerous policy of adventure, and possibly a much greater man than he might have denounced it also. The speeches made in Mid Lothian by the Prime Minister had been read by millions of his countrymen with the greatest satisfaction; and he himself looked upon them as a sort of *vade mecum* and pocket companion.

He had read those Mid Lothian speeches again and again with the highest admiration; he thoroughly agreed with them, and he believed they had struck deep into the mind and touched the conscience of the country. ["Question!"] That was the question. He was not using any taunt, or insinuating the smallest doubt of the right hon. Gentleman's perfect sincerity; but he said that his own intellect was not sufficient to enable him to see that all the views expressed in those speeches had been carried out in Office. He could understand the position taken up by the right hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite (Sir John Hay) and the hon. Gentleman the Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow), because they believed that by stretching out our hands and seizing points of vantage we were strengthening the Empire. They were consistent in supporting any annexation which would have that end. But the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, in Mid Lothian, said that those annexations, instead of strengthening, overloaded the Empire; and he compared the case to that of Gulliver, whom a number of Liliputians with a multiplicity of threads was able to tie down, though each of the threads was so minute that he could break it in a moment. This Borneo affair was another thread tying down the British Gulliver. The Attorney General's argument came to this—that if a private Company had got a concession from a barbarian Potentate we, as a country, were bound to back them up. That was the old Palmerstonian doctrine of *Civis Romanus sum.* But the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster opposed Lord Palmerston in the height of his power, because he endangered this country by a system of intermeddling all over the world. If we were bound to protect all adventurous Englishmen who in any part of the world obtained grants from barbarian Potentates, where were we to draw the line? Let them take the consequences of their conduct. Those gentlemen with their guns—and the Government had sold them several—might get into a war. Nobody knew that there were not Sovereigns in Borneo who did not submit to the Sultan of Borneo or Sulu, and then, what of the Natives who were said to be delighted with this annexation? What did we know about the Natives, touching, as we did, only the fringe of that enormous country? In this annexed territory there were 150,000 inhabitants spread over 18,000 square miles—something like eight people to the square mile. Of course, the population of the sea coast, who thought they might get some advantage by it, were delighted at the annexation; but would the people inland receive equally well a Government which might introduce customs objectionable to them? Mr. Dent asked the Marquess of Salisbury to grant the Charter as soon as possible, because certain Spaniards were treating with the Rulers of the country to obtain territory for themselves. And there was a passage in a despatch from Mr. Dent to the Marquess of Salisbury, which would be found at page 164 of the Blue Book, in which he spoke of "lawless characters" as likely to be collected to fight against the Natives and the representatives of the Company. Therefore, it appeared that we might have a war not only with the people within the districts, but with people adjacent. But, whether that was so or not, it was impossible for the House not to see that this was an additional responsibility taken by this country. Earl Granville, in a despatch which would be found at page 203 of the Blue Book, told them why the Government had resolved to support this Charter. He said—

> "North Borneo lies in the fairway of an immense British maritime trade between China, Australia, India, and the United Kingdom. Its occupation by a Foreign Power would be a source of disquietude to this country, and for that reason clauses were inserted in the British Treaties of 1847 and 1879 with the Sultans of Sulu and Brunei under which they respectively engaged not to make any cession of territory to any other nation than Great Britain without the consent of Her Majesty's Government."

We wanted to get a foothold, because we thought it necessary for the protection of our trade. But that was the old tale—the tale which had been so often told by hon. Members now sitting on the opposite side of the House, and which had been so often denounced as based upon a doctrine of selfishness. But, in his opinion, we ought to seek in the legitimate channels of trade to secure those interests, which could be promoted without involving us in the dangers of a spirited foreign policy.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, that this debate was one of the most singular that he had ever listened to. There were a great many able speeches delivered in defence of Her Majesty's Government; but those speeches had all come from the Opposition side of the House. There had been several Jingo speeches; but the most remarkable of them came from the Treasury Bench. The only hon. Gentleman on the other side of the House, in an independent position, who had supported the policy of Her Majesty's Government, was one whom they were all very glad to hear to-night for the first time, but who, he believed, had some direct pecuniary interest in the concerns of the Company which the Government had taken under their especial protection. If the Resolution which his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) brought forward with so much ability at the beginning of the evening had served no other purpose, it had proved, at all events, that the independence of the Liberal Party, which some supposed to be a thing of the past, was still a practical reality. In the earlier speeches that evening one or two Gentlemen on the other side of the House showed a most unusual and surprising reverence for the Marquess of Salisbury's policy. Great reverence for the Marquess of Salisbury's policy was also attributed to Her Majesty's Government by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway. The hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn) attributed the whole of the action of the Government to the principle of continuity, and to the fact that they were following out the policy which the Marquess of Salisbury advocated. Hon. Members opposite appeared to go far beyond himself in their admiration for the Marquess of Salisbury, because they admired not merely what he had done or what he had said he would do, but what they, without the slightest shadow of evidence, chose to imagine he would have done. It was alleged that when the Marquess of Salisbury resigned Office he had formally left this matter to be dealt with by his successor, but had previously held out such hopes to the Company that practically the incoming Government were pledged to grant this Charter. That, however, was not the view of the then situation which was taken by the Company itself; because Mr. Alfred Dent, writing on the 12th of April, 1880, stated that, owing to the insecurity of their position, it was impossible for the Company to organize any regular trade. The hon. and learned Gentleman who opened the debate had dealt not only with the question of slavery, but with the diplomatic antecedents of the present action of the Government. The Papers which were in the hands of hon. Members represented the diplomatic conduct of Her Majesty's Government in a very unfavourable light. Their action had evidently given deep umbrage to the Dutch Government; and, whether just or unjust, the Charter was of such a character that Her Majesty's Government must have known that it would give the deepest umbrage to that Government. The Prime Minister had tried to give the transaction a commercial, and not a political character. But Earl Granville, in the House of Lords, speaking on this subject, laid strength on the fact that it would exclude foreigners from North Borneo, and that that country was one of our great trade routes. Was there nothing of a political character in these considerations? By the Charter Her Majesty's Government recognized the right of this Company to levy taxes, to enforce the law, especially the law of slavery, and to establish a monopoly over an area nearly as large as France. Could this be represented as a purely commercial arrangement? It appeared that we had practically annexed this large territory. And how had we obtained it? It was obtained through an Austrian subject acting as the agent of an English firm, who appeared to have bought precisely the same article from three different persons—namely, from an American gentleman, the Sultan of Sulu, and the Sultan of Brunei—who could not possibly have all owned it at the same time; and none of whom, as a matter of fact, had completely owned it at any time, since a large part of the territory in question was held by Native Chiefs, who cared nothing for the American citizen and very little for the two Sultans. He wished to draw the attention of the House to the relation which the present action of the Government bore to their professions when out of Office. When out of Office the present Ministry ridiculed and denounced the policy of securing our communications with India, yet they now defended this Charter on the ground that Borneo was on one of our great trade routes. In 1879 the present Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs denounced, most unjustly, it is true, the late Government for countenancing slavery in Cyprus. But where now was the zeal of the hon. Gentleman for the abolition of slavery? Perhaps he would explain how, in the interval of 1879 and 1881, that zeal had gone through so effectual a process of cooling. Then, again, the Prime Minister, when in Mid Lothian, had declared that the most fatal course we could pursue would be to increase our responsibilities. How did the right hon. Gentleman attempt to reconcile his preaching with his practice? He said that the responsibilities in this case arose from the fact that British subjects had gone to Borneo, and that the only effect of the Charter had been to limit the extent of those responsibilities. If that were so, the Government ought to hurry after any body of British subjects who made a settlement anywhere, and should pray of them to accept a Charter in order our responsibilities might be limited. Did not this difference between the professions of Gentlemen when out of Office and their action when in Office strike a heavy blow at political morality?

MR. GLADSTONE: There were peculiar circumstances in this case.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, if that were the case hon. Members opposite had carefully refrained from touching upon them. Nothing could be plainer than that our responsibilities were greatly increased by the Charter. When the electors throughout the country became acquainted with the course the Government had adopted, how could they avoid coming to the conclusion that the present Ministers were carried away at the late General Election by Party passions, and that they had now thrown over a policy which was convenient when they wanted to get into Office, but very inconvenient when they got there? Certainly, they would have great difficulty, like the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), in reconciling the action of the Prime Minister in this case with the words which he used when a candidate for Mid Lothian. He supposed that this was another "hateful incident" of their policy. He feared, however, that these incidents were becoming so frequent as to make it difficult to distinguish them from a settled policy. With regard to the actual Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) he intended to support it, because he was unable to discover from the Papers that the Government had shown the least zeal about diminishing slavery. There was no evidence that they had even gone so far as to make inquiries into the condition of the slaves, neither were any Reports on that subject laid upon the Table. He could not understand why the Government had not inserted in the Charter provisions which would have led in time to the total abolition of that great curse.

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that the hon. Member who last addressed the House had referred to the debate as being a singular one. He agreed with the hon. Member as to that; but it appeared to him that the greatest singularity consisted in this—that the speeches had but little to do with the Amendment. The speeches were very wide; the Amendment was a very narrow and simple one. He congratulated the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) on having imported one singularity in particular into the discussion. He had made the hon. Member for Guildford (Mr. Onslow) support Her Majesty's Administrators in a speech which had the effect of destroying the nerve of the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands). The hon. Member for Burnley had made a few observations on foreign affairs which it was his duty to notice. He said also that he believed that some of the people in Borneo did not submit either to the Sultan of Sulu or to the Sultan of Brunei. He could not help thinking that the hon. Member for Burnley must be one of those independent individuals. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham dealt at some considerable length with the Spanish portion of the case. He said that the Government had denied a perfectly good "*de jure*" title on the part of Spain. But that title had been denied by the Earl of Carnarvon and other British Ministers at the head of the Foreign and Colonial Departments through an immense number of years in succession. It had also been denied specially, in the Papers now before the House, by the Earl of Derby, the Marquess of Salisbury, and the Earl of Carnarvon, in the strongest terms. He thought it was hardly necessary to go through those different denials; but he felt bound to give the references to them, as the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Chatham had built a considerable portion of his case on that matter. On page 63 of the Spanish Papers the Earl of Carnarvon's words would be found, in which he alluded not only to the mainland, but also to the islands. On page 70 Earl Derby stated at great length the views of the Government in 1876 on the subject of the Spanish case. Those views were fully stated with regard to the Treaties between Spain and the Sultan of Sulu in pages 70, 71, and 72. Earl Derby pointed out that it was not the case that Spain had the oldest rights. There were older rights of this country which, like those of Spain, had lapsed. We had rights by Treaties made in 1761, 1764, and 1769. Those were the oldest rights regulating the conditions of the country in question. Earl Derby pointed out that in 1851, and after 1851, the Sultan of Sulu had denied that he had surrendered any portion of his Dominions. Then Earl Derby stated that the Government had refused to recognize those Treaties, or that the Spaniards had maintained the slightest footing in the country. All those older Treaties he considered to have lapsed by the complete failure of the Spaniards to obtain a *de facto* control over the country. This statement was borne out by a further statement on page 77. Then it appeared that we had the entire support of Germany for our views, as regarded our denial of the Spanish rights. We had gone hand in hand with Germany, who had expressed her absolute concurrence in our denial of the slightest shadow of claim on the part of Spain. Communications on much the same terms had been exchanged between the two Governments at Madrid, and the terms of those communications had been steadily adhered to by successive Governments in this country. The Spaniards had disavowed claims to any portion of the mainland. He declared that there was not, and never had been, any intention of the Spanish or Philippine Governments to lay claim to any forts in the islands or on the coasts. There might be some shadow in the claims of Spain in the Archipelago. They had prosecuted war, and had obtained *de facto* possession of some of the islands in the Archipelago. With regard to the oldest Treaty, it would be found recorded on page 126, where mention was made of a Treaty with Spain which the Sultan of Sulu had been made to enter into. The Marquess of Salisbury wrote to Madrid that this matter ought to be pressed upon the Spanish Government with the utmost force, and their claims strenuously denied. He wished, however, to point out that the action of the Spanish Government was subsequent to the formation of the Company which was the subject of the debate. Therefore, the Spanish rights amounted to nothing at all. The Charter of the Company was in January, 1878. It could not, therefore, be contended that we had for many years denied rights which only accrued subsequently to the formation of the Company. The last reference he should make to that part of the subject regarded the Papers which would be found on pages 147, 148, 149, 150. The Marquess of Salisbury expressed his regret at receiving the announcement of the renewed attempt on the part of Spain to assert rights of Sovereignty. The Marquess of Salisbury said that his Government had received from the Sultan himself a distinct statement that at no time had he or his ancestors ceded any portion of Borneo to Spain. The Marquess of Salisbury's expressions on that occasion were strong and absolute. He would next deal with the statements of the hon. Member with respect to the Netherlands. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham had answered his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley, because he passed over the Netherlands portion of the case by merely telling us that we had cheated the Government of the Netherlands, though he admitted that they had no right nor title in the matter. It was quite true that we were told on page 18—which was quoted either by his hon. Friend the Member for Burnley, or his hon. Friend the Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour)—that the Dutch were aggrieved at not having been consulted by us on this subject. That was in October, 1880. The grant of the Charter was much later, and the feeling of the Dutch on this subject was entirely removed at a later moment. On page 43 would be seen the latest despatch of the Dutch Government on the subject, in which they expressed their complete satisfaction with our explanations. They found that Great Britain had not attempted to assert rights of Sovereignty, and they expressed their appreciation of the spirit manifested by Earl Granville in his despatches, which they recognized to be animated by a desire to maintain cordial relations with Spain. Earl Granville, in his reply, expressed his pleasure at receiving the friendly assurances of the Government of the Netherlands. Hon. Members would thus see that all cause of offence on the part of the Netherlands to this country had been completely removed. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham had made references to the United States. On that part of the subject some Reports appeared to have been made by a gentleman who was acting for the Government, though he was not in the Queen's Service, at a time previous to the accession of the present Government. That gentleman stated that he had made certain Reports with regard to American views. Those American views had never been reported to the Government of this country by the Government of the United States. No representation of any kind had been made to the present Government as regards the views of the United States; and since they came into Office there had been nothing to show that the Government of the United States looked with hostility on the proposed arrangements. Any protest which might have been made by the captain of an American man-of-war when the late Government were in Office would, of course, have been founded on the existence of the American Company. But it ought to be borne in mind that that Company was afterwards bought up by the English Company. He had now done with the foreign aspect of this case, except so far as the Foreign Office had been consulted on the purchase of arms. The hon. Member for Burnley had alluded to the purchase of great guns by this trading Company. They were, in point of fact, 15 guns of an obsolete pattern, for signalling and saluting purposes only. Indeed, they were not equivalent in force to the armament of the Castle of Walmer. He would now ask the attention of his hon. Friend the Member for Hertford (Mr. A. J. Balfour), who addressed him personally with regard to remarks made by him in that House as to what was called slavery in Cyprus. It was true that he called attention at that time to the question as to whether domestic slavery existed in Cyprus, and also to the institution of forced labour in that Island. These were two distinct questions. With regard to the latter, there was a direct charge against the Government of having introduced the practice. As to domestic slavery, he then maintained, as he still maintained, that it ought not to be allowed in a country which was directly administered by this country. But there were other countries not directly administered by this country in which slavery had existed for a great number of years. For instance, he might refer to the Gold Coast. Of late years steps had been taken to discourage domestic slavery; but it had never been contended that slavery ought to be immediately put down there. Again, in the Malay Peninsula there were several protected States. In those countries domestic slavery existed at present just as it existed on the Gold Coast. [Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH dissented.] At all events, it was the opinion of the Colonial Office that at this moment domestic slavery still existed in two out of the three States of the Malay Peninsula. What we had to hold in view in the case of these indirectly administered countries was that every possible step should be taken in order to diminish the length of the existence of domestic slavery. In that principle he was entirely in accord with the hon. and learned Member for Chatham. The hon. Member for Tewkesbury (Mr. R. B. Martin) had said it was the intention of the North Borneo Company to get rid of domestic slavery as fast as they could; and Her Majesty's Government had taken powers in the Charter that would enable them to go to any length in putting down the practice of slavery when they thought it was right and proper, and when the circumstances of the country enabled them to do so. He had no desire to use disagreeable terms about the Company, in whom they had every confidence; but, at the same time, he might say that they could distinctly punish the Company if the wishes of the Government in this matter were disregarded. [Mr. GORST: How?] [An hon. MEMBER: Withdraw the Charter.] It was distinctly in the power of the Government to revoke or withdraw the Charter. The greater portion of the speeches made to-night had nothing whatever to do with the

Amendment. The hon. and learned Member for Chatham had been singularly lucky in procuring the promised support of his Amendment by hon. Members whose speeches had really been an argument against it. Hon. Members appeared to be going to vote with the hon. and learned Gentleman for maintaining the Charter subject to a slight alteration, although their speeches condemned it altogether. It placed them in a most anomalous position, and he could hardly think they would follow up their speeches by their votes.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Sir, it is perfectly true, as the hon. Baronet has observed, that at first sight a great deal of the debate we have heard has travelled far beyond the Amendment which has been submitted by my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gorst). Undoubtedly the vote which we shall have to give will be upon the narrow question which is submitted in the terms of the Amendment; but I think I shall be able to show that the discussion which we have listened to this evening springs naturally even out of the terms of the Amendment, and that in discussing this question, or any question connected with future administration by the Company in Borneo, it is quite impossible to avoid the importation of such considerations as have been introduced in the debate to-night. It has been a very interesting debate indeed, and I think many of us must feel we have had very important additions made to our political education; but I will confine myself, for a moment, to the particular question which is raised by the Amendment itself, and to which the hon. Baronet has referred. The question which my hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Gorst) raises is this—that we should pass some Resolution praying Her Majesty to be graciously pleased to revoke or alter so much of the Charter as gives an implied sanction to the maintenance of slavery under the protection of the British flag. Everybody must feel that if there is any point on which we are all at one, it is that it is the duty and the desire of every Government in this country, no matter from what Party it is drawn, to suppress—in every possible way—slavery in any part of the world, which is directly or indirectly under British dominion; and if it is possible to do more than is proposed to be done in this case by the Government and the representatives of the Company towards the entire suppression of slavery in Borneo, this House will be found ready to vote that that should be done. But I am bound to say that upon that particular point we ought to bear in mind the considerations which have been put before us, not only now by the Representatives of the present Government, but in former times by all who have had responsible duties in countries where slavery has prevailed; we must bear in mind the difficulty and delicacy of the subject; and if we see there is a *bonâ fide* endeavour to do that which all Englishmen desire, and if we see that is being carried into effect in a proper and serious spirit, we should not be too hard upon anything that may appear on the Paper to be a shortcoming in that respect. Well, but then the hon. Baronet (Sir Charles W. Dilke) says we have taken power by this Charter which will enable us to punish the Company if they fail to do that which one of its Directors has told us they intend to do. The hon. Baronet was directly appealed to on the subject, and very naturally asked how he proposed to punish the Company? As far as I could make out, that was a question which the hon. Baronet was not prepared to argue across the Table.

MR. GLADSTONE: By the withdrawal of the Charter.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: That is an important admission to make, and I think we had better take notice of it in view of what I may have to say later. Assuming, then, that the provisions which are inserted in the Charter are sufficient to enable the Government to revoke the Charter to promote the desired object of reducing slavery to a minimum, and, as far as possible, getting rid of that blot upon civilization in a country either directly or indirectly under British dominion, I wish to ask this question. How is it that upon this Amendment we have embarked upon so large a question as that which has occupied the greater part of this evening, and I may point out necessarily so? This is a question whether the administration of this country is to be carried on in a particular way or not. Let us suppose that the answer of the Government had been even less satisfactory than it may be held to have been. What would be the conduct of this House? We should call upon the Government to take some steps as would insure that the will of the House and of Parliament should be carried into effect. The Government say that the administration of this country is, in some way or other, under the control of the Government of the day, and is under the control of Parliament, and that it is perfectly beside the question, and gives an entirely false idea, to say that we have not assumed responsibility. You are responsible, and you admit your responsibility by the very argument you have used. If you had met us by saying—"This is a matter with which we have nothing to do; we have not assumed responsibility for the administration of this country, we leave it entirely to the Company which has been formed; we have no doubt that the gentlemen who are the Directors of that Company will do that which is their duty; but if they do not we cannot help it." That would have been an answer which would have satisfied us that there was no new responsibility assumed. But that is not the answer given. The answer given is that there is sufficient provision made for the restraint and the abolition of slavery; and if slavery is not abolished by the Company, we will take care it is, for we shall operate on the Company in a way which is not shown in the Charter. After that, do not let us be told that the Government have not assumed any greater responsibility. How would it have been if the Charter had not been granted? How would it have been, two or three years ago, if this question had been raised in this House, and anything had been said with regard to the existence of slavery in this part of the globe? The Government would have been bound to say that that was not a matter over which they had any control, and they could only express their regret with regard to it. But you have altogether departed from that position; and, therefore, it is absolutely impossible to contend that in what you have done you have not assumed responsibility. I do not wish to take any share in blaming the Government for assuming responsibility in respect to this country. I think there was a great deal to be said in favour of taking some course of the kind; but whether the particular course they have taken by granting the Charter was, or was not, the right one, I am not now prepared to say. With regard to the propriety of taking some steps in the matter, I am not disposed to be one who would cast blame upon the Government. The question was brought under the consideration of the Foreign and Colonial officers of the late Government; but it never was ripened sufficiently to be brought under the consideration of the Government as a whole. It was left by the late Government to be dealt with by their successors just as they liked. They were perfectly free to grant the Charter or to withhold it; if they preferred to grant it, they were at liberty to put in whatever conditions they pleased. I am not inclined to find fault with them for exercising their power; but what I do complain of is that we have not got frankly before us a real admission of the fact that they did assume a greater responsibility. If the right hon. Gentleman had got up and said—"I admit there is something in what we have done on this occasion which may be said to be inconsistent with the views we expressed when we were out of Office; but I must point out to the House that there is a good deal of difference between the free criticism from an irresponsible position and the action which a responsible Minister is obliged io take," we should not have been disposed to press too hardly upon him. All I should then have been disposed to say is—"We now see, by the acknowledgment of those who have been our critics in former times, there was a great deal more to be said for the conduct of the late Government than their critics were disposed to give them credit for." Instead of taking a line which I think he might very fairly and honourably have taken, I regret to hear the right hon. Gentleman drawing distinctions which seem to me to be too subtle, and to some extent unsound. I go the length of saying that the doctrines which he laid down with regard to responsibilities of this country for British subjects who go into foreign countries and into uncivilized countries are serious and alarming, because it is one thing for a responsible Government, with full cognizance of all the circumstances of the case, and with a knowledge of what the interests of the country demand, to come forward and say—"We call upon you to annex such and such territory," and it is quite a different thing to put ourselves at the mercy of any Englishman, or any body of Englishmen, who may choose to go for their own purposes into a foreign country, and for the Government to say—"These gentlemen may draw us on when they please; we will grant them a Charter which will make us responsible for the government of the country to which they have gone." We know perfectly well that the gentlemen who administer this Company are gentlemen of high character, and I have no doubt that we are safe to a very great extent in their hands; but the doctrines which are laid down would cover the case of gentlemen of a very different position and character. According to the doctrines of the Prime Minister, we really are entirely at the mercy of any number of gentlemen who may go into what we call an uncivilized country unless we pass a penal Statute, which the hon. and learned Member for Chatham was invited to produce, but which he very wisely declined to produce. Unless a penal Statute is passed preventing gentlemen going into these countries, any men may go, and having gone there, the doctrine of Lord Palmerston, *Civis Romanus*, immediately applies, and the Prime Minister gave us to understand, in language which certainly recalled to my mind the *Civis Romanus* doctrine, that those gentlemen having gone into a country beyond civilization, were still entitled to the protection of the British Power. They may go to uncivilized countries, and when they have done so it appears to me there is no power to prevent them—indeed, there is no reason why they should hesitate to form themselves into a Company. That is what these gentlemen did. There is nothing to prevent them acquiring rights from Native Princes; and having done that they are certainly in a position which, according to the doctrine of the Prime Minister, entitles them to the protection of England.

MR. GLADSTONE: I never said that. I spoke of the general practice of the country, which did not regard that as excluding them from the protection of England.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Then they are not excluded from the protection of England. The Prime Minister says—"What had these gentlemen to gain by the grant of a Charter of Incorporation? They had nothing to gain, because by placing themselves under a Charter they became restricted. They had everything to lose by it, and it was a very curious way of gaining something." But I suspect that the Company will tell you they gained a great deal more than that. There are many hon. Gentlemen in this House who are perfectly well aware of the reasons why the grant of a Charter of Incorporation became of such great advantage. As we know, the Companies Act was passed to enable persons to form themselves into Companies, with limited liability, and to obtain other advantages. Why was that Act passed? It was in order to get rid of the inconvenient and misleading form of Charters of Incorporation, which, in old times, was the only way in which bodies who wished to associate themselves together got the privilege of perpetual succession and other advantages. Why were these Charters of Incorporation given up? It was because it was said that the very fact of the Royal Assent being given, and the Royal Seal being attached, and so forth, gave to these Companies a certain strength and a certain interest, which was delusive in some respects, because it gave to them a character which they did not possess. That is exactly what these gentlemen got. By incorporation, and by obtaining a Charter, they got a recognition which would be held to carry the Company a good deal further in the matter of responsibility than otherwise it would have gone. I must say it seems to me that doctrines such as have been laid down are of a perplexing and bewildering character, and, to a considerable extent, of an alarming character. I do not wish to criticize the action of the Government nearly as much as the manner in which that action has been defended to-night. It seems to me that the defence has been short of the necessity of the case in one respect, and has gone very far beyond it in another. Now, Sir, I began by saying that I am not prepared to take part in censuring the Government for what they have done. I am not prepared to say that if we had had the Charter brought under our consideration, and had deliberately considered it, we might not have granted that Charter—whether with some conditions or modifications is a point on which I am not prepared to express an opinion. I feel there is a great deal of force in the arguments used in different quarters as to the necessity of doing something to develop the resources of the country and maintain the position of our traders; but I reserve the consideration of whether it is better to do it by means of a Charter of Incorporation, or in any other way. I am not prepared to express an opinion against the course which, upon the whole, has commended itself to Her Majesty's Government. The matter was one which, I have no doubt, they fully considered. They have gone into the question of our relations with foreign countries, and they have disposed of the cases of Spain, Holland, and the United States. The answer of the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has not so completely dealt with the case of the United States as my hon. and learned Friend opened it, because it appears, long after the cessation of the American Company—more than a year after the cessation of the American Company—some of these remonstrances were made on the part of the United States. However that may be, the Government have taken the trouble to inquire into and investigate all these claims on the part of foreign nations; and they have given to the country something very much approaching a guarantee that, so far as the relations with foreign countries are concerned, they are all right. They have given the Company the prestige, which a Royal Charter necessarily gives, in placing a stamp on their dealings with the Indian Chiefs. If that does not amount to annexation, I really should feel some difficulty as to the nature of the distinction, and what that precise phrase means. I think if there is any phrase which can be used to signify an intermediate position, it is that adopted by the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), when he described this as a case, not of annexation, but of affiliation.

MR. GLADSTONE: If I may be allowed to offer an explanation, I must admit that there was some ambiguity in the language I used in speaking of diminished responsibility. As regards the actual exercise of internal power by the Company, I must fully admit that we have undertaken the responsibility of watching over the exercise of that power, and have thereby charged ourselves with new interests and responsibilities. What I had in view was territorial responsibility, which I take to be the more serious part of the matter, arising from the possible relations of this country with Foreign Powers. This responsibility I conceive to be greatly diminished by the Charter, for, according to my view, we are in much less danger of being unable to correct or to control the proceedings of the Company than we should have been if the Charter had not been granted.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 125; Noes 62: Majority 63.—(Div. List, No. 51.)

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," again proposed.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, that before the Speaker left the Chair he should like to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he was in the receipt of a recent despatch from Consul General Treacher, and if he would lay it on the Table? Would the hon. Gentleman also lay upon the Table the Correspondence between the United States and the Sultan of Borneo in 1851?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE said, that if the hon. Gentleman would give Notice of the Question he would answer it.

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICE SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1881-2.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a Supplementary sum, not exceeding £7,772, be granted to Her Majesty, to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1882, for the Salaries, Allowances, and Expenses of various County Court Officers, and of Magistrates in Ireland, and of the Revising Barristers of the City of Dublin."

MR. SEXTON said, he had not been aware what the Vote was which was coming on first. He did not think it would be proper to pass over this Vote without some comment upon the new system of appointing magistrates, which the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had inaugurated in Ireland. He did not know whether the public interests had been benefited by the appointment of these magistrates. For some years the administration of justice in many districts had been presided over by unpaid magistrates, who naturally felt great displeasure when military gentlemen were set over them by the Chief Secretary for Ireland. He had never yet been able to gather that either the unpaid or the resident magistrates in Ireland were considered to be not devoted to the maintenance of the law; and, so far as the resident magistrates were concerned, they certainly did not show any remarkable partiality for the feelings of the Irish people. For his own part, he was entirely at a loss to understand why it had been considered necessary to supersede the authority of the unpaid magistrates. This was what the right hon. Gentleman had done. He had divided certain districts in Ireland into what, to borrow an Oriental phrase, might be regarded as Pashalics, and had established Pashas with independent power to subvert the law, and to exercise arbitrary powers, free from all control. As far as he had been able to examine into the matter, he was not aware of any beneficial effects that had followed from the inauguration of the new system. He knew that the right hon. Gentleman, in his recent visit to Ireland, paid many visits, and took many drives and luncheons with this new class of officials; but he was not aware that they had done anything to justify their appointment, or the extraordinary powers which had been placed in their hands. Mr. Clifford Lloyd, after a brief sojourn at Kilmallock, had been made superintendent magistrate. The unpaid magistrates were inclined to feel that the establishment of this new authority conveyed something like a reproach upon the old authority, and that it was not conducive to the preservation of law and order. What was likely to be the feeling of the resident magistrates of Ireland, and the unpaid justices, when they found themselves superseded, shelved, and set aside by some military or semi-military gentleman who had had the equivocal honour of obtaining the approval of the right hon. Gentleman? The state of the county of Clare had been worse since Mr. Clifford Lloyd was appointed superintendent magistrate than it was before. And it was not at all a matter of astonishment. Mr. Clifford Lloyd made his appearance in the town of Killmallock without any warning to the other magistrates; and the first intimation they had of his appointment was the spectacle of a stalwart gentleman in a suit of grey tweed, walking about the town, and inaugurating himself into office by laying his cane over the backs of the citizens in the streets. One of his first acts was to arrest a number of ladies. When Mr. Parnell visited the town, and was received with cordiality, Mr. Clifford Lloyd and his policemen instituted a prosecution against various ladies for obstruction or intimidation, or some of the other offences which it was now the fashion to set up in Ireland. The result was a ridiculous *fiasco*. On another occasion Mr. Clifford Lloyd, going round the village, found himself shouted at, to the danger of his dignity, by a boy of six years old, with the portentous name of Sampson. The formidable enemy to the British Crown was taken into custody and sent to prison. He might go into the acts of some other gentlemen; but he was inclined, on the whole, to confine himself to those of Mr. Clifford Lloyd, whose services, from a Governmental point of view, were considered to be of such immense value that, in order to make provision for him, they had superseded without consulting all the other magistrates of the district. He did not think there was anything in the condition of Ireland to justify the erection of this new class of magisterial semi-Pashalics. The result had been to excite the public temper and inflame the mind of the people of Ireland. The policy of the Government had excited especially the reckless classes, who were not under the control of responsible politicians, to the commission of midnight acts of violence and illegality which, so far from ceasing, would, in his opinion, continue and increase until the Government had the courage to bring in wise and temperate remedial legislation, and until they had the sense to appeal to the good feeling of the Irish people, by ceasing to apply unconstitutional checks to public liberty in Ireland.

Mr. BIGGAR said, this Vote was composed of a number of items so badly arranged that, with regard to many of them, the Committee were not in possession of any explanation at all. He had looked carefully into the Estimate, and he found that different sums were lumped together in such a way as to render it perfectly impossible to discover how the various officials were paid on account of whom money was charged for salaries. For instance, the salaries of 15 extra magistrates and of six special magistrates were all lumped together. The Committee were entitled to information withregard to these items; and he begged to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland what was the amount of salary paid to each of the 15 extra and six special magistrates, and whether that included assistance and extra pay? He would also ask the right hon. Gentleman as to the amount of success which had followed the appointment of these two classes of magistrates? Irish Members were being kept quite in the dark with regard to the action of these officials and the results which followed it. Their only source of information was the newspapers; and when they quoted these in reference to any matter that occurred and required explanation, Irish Members were informed that the newspaper reports were not to be relied upon. For that reason he applied to the right hon. Gentleman for a special Report as to the progress of affairs in the Department in question.

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, the salaries of the temporary magistrates appointed were the same as those of the third class resident magistrates—namely £47 10*s.* per month. The allowance for a clerk and private secretary in the case of the special magistrates was £100 and £150 respectively for each of those assistants. With regard to the opinion of the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) as to the feeling of the unpaid resident magistrates on the subject of the appointment of the special magistrates, he assured him there was no need for anxiety on that ground. In the present state of certain districts in Ireland, where there was great difficulty in preventing outrage, it was considered desirable that two or three additional magistrates should be appointed, having jurisdiction over a large area, for the purpose of arranging police patrols and preventing outrages as much as possible. They had also to take care that no more men were employed in any district than were necessary. The hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) had asked what amount of success had attended the appointment of the temporary and special magistrates. A certain amount of outrage had been detected; but, as the hon. Member was aware, the discovery of outrage was a matter attended with the greatest difficulty. Her Majesty's Government could hardly look for a great amount of success; and, therefore, they were obliged to be thankful for whatever good result attended their endeavours to protect life and property in Ireland.

MR. LEAMY asked the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether it was a fact, as stated by the hon. and learned Member for Chatham (Mr. Gorst) some days since, that during the last few months the outrages committed in county Clare, while Mr. Clifford Lloyd was there, were twice as numerous as they had been in the corresponding period of last year? Hon. Members were informed that Mr. Clifford Lloyd was invested with extraordinary powers, which appeared to make him almost supreme in that part of Ireland; and they were also told that he was selected because he had brought some districts of Ireland into something like a peaceful condition. That being the case, it was very desirable that the Committee should be informed what was the exact measure of success that had attended his administration. He believed that no Member of that House had the slightest idea of the absolute power which had been placed in the hands of Mr. Clifford Lloyd; and he asked the right hon. Gentleman whether it was a fact that some time ago Mr. Clifford Lloyd had threatened some tradesmen for not supplying goods to a person in their locality; whether he had said that if they continued in their refusal he would take steps to punish them; and whether, within the last few days, three persons had in consequence been arrested by him? Hon. Members were entitled to know if these things were true, and whether Mr. Clifford Lloyd could of his own motion decree that exclusive dealing was an offence punishable by law. He would also like to know whether there was any objection to state with what offence the persons who had been arrested were charged in the warrants? The hon. Member for Cavan (Mr. Biggar) had asked the Chief Secretary for Ireland what was the extra remuneration given to each of the special magistrates;

but the right hon. Gentleman in his reply had not told the Committee what this amounted to. He (Mr. Leamy) would therefore put that question again, and two or three others, to the right hon. Gentleman, for the purpose of clearing up the various items of charge in connection with the extra and special magistrates. (1.) What was the salary of the special magistrates? (2.) What was their extra remuneration in addition to their salaries? (3.) What was the subsistence allowance which each received? And, finally, what was the amount of salaries and subsistence allowances to the clerks?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, if the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Leamy) would give Notice, as had been suggested by him, of his Question relating to the condition of Clare, he would take care that the subject should be inquired into and an answer given. It was perfectly true that the gentleman so often alluded to—Mr. Clifford Lloyd—had worked a great change in a part of Limerick in which there had been a great deal of outrage. The number of outrages had been less since he was there, and it was to be hoped that his endeavours would be attended with success in county Clare. Mr. Clifford Lloyd had no official or magisterial power beyond that of any other magistrates. The official salary of the special magistrates was £47 10*s.* per month; private secretary's salary, £150; and clerk's salary, £100.

Mr. LEAMY said, the right hon. Gentleman had not stated the amount of the extra remuneration and the subsistence allowance.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, in addition to the salary of £47 10*s.* per month, the special magistrates received a personal allowance of one guinea per day and their travelling expenses.

Mr. R. POWER said, that while the Estimate contained charges for extra remuneration to six special magistrates, and for the salaries of six clerks to assist them in their duties, there was no charge for clerks to the 15 extra magistrates. He would like to know why one class of magistrates had clerks and the other not?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, the reason why clerks were given to the special magistrates was because it was impossible for them to get through their work without such assistance, owing to the very considerable extent of area under their supervision.

Mr. LEAMY said, he understood that the special magistrate received, first, a salary; secondly, extra remuneration; and, thirdly, subsistence allowance. The right hon. Gentleman had stated the amount of extra remuneration; but he had not told the Committee what was the original salary received. He asked what was the annual average sum which each of the six special magistrates received?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, the special magistrates received an allowance of one guinea per day, instead of the 15*s.* given to other magistrates. Travelling expenses were given to them all. They received £47 10*s.* per month, in addition to their present salaries, whatever those might be. They were not appointed for more than six months, although, of course, it was possible that their services might be required for a longer time.

Mr. BIGGAR said, he had listened with attention to the replies of the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland; but no answer had been given to the question of the hon. Member for Waterford (Mr. Leamy), as to whether certain persons had been put in prison as "suspects" under the Coercion Act for simply refusing to supply goods at their shops to a Mrs. Moroney? It was notorious that both the Chief Secretary for Ireland and the Prime Minister had, over and over again, declared that the refusal to supply goods was not an offence against the law; that no one was bound to supply goods or deal with any other person unless they liked to do so, although, of course, threatening a person for supplying goods was quite a different thing. If it were true that the persons referred to by the hon. Member for Waterford had been treated as described, he believed that Mr. Clifford Lloyd would come within the Act which made it illegal for any person to threaten another with regard to the sale of goods. It seemed to him that there was some official in Ireland who had invented a new offence, by making it illegal to do what the Prime Minister and Chief Secretary had repeatedly declared last year to be no offence at all.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he believed the hon. Member for Waterford was not in possession of the real facts relating to the arrests referred to; but if he would put a Question on the Paper he (Mr. W. E. Forster) would then be able to give him a definite answer. As regarded the question of refusing to deal, as he had frequently stated, that was not an offence; but it was an offence, by intimidation, to prevent people from doing that which they had a right to do. He was not aware that any legal steps had been taken against persons in Ireland under such circumstances as the hon. Member had alluded to, except where there had been intimidation.

MR. R. POWER asked the amount of Major Bond's salary, and whether it was included in this Estimate? He also desired to know the extent of the district over which he presided, and the number of arrests that had taken place there?

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, the salary of Major Bond was the same as that of the temporary resident magistrates of the third class. Major Bond's district was in the neighbourhood of Loughmask, in the county of Mayo. He might say that no arrests had been made there under the Act for the Protection of Person and Property at the suggestion of Major Bond.

MR. BIGGAR said, he could not remember that any expression of opinion had been made by the right hon. Gentleman as to the extent to which Major Bond had given satisfaction in the position which he held. He should be glad to hear something upon that point; and whether it was likely that Major Bond would be continued in the office of magistrate after the time for which he was originally appointed had expired?

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he thought the hon. Member for Cavan must be aware that no reports were made to the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland as to the satisfactory way in which magistrates might perform their duties. On the other hand, he had received no complaints with regard to Major Bond, whose continuance in office, like that of other magistrates, would rest with the discretion of the Government when the time for which he was appointed expired.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 124; Noes 6: Majority 118.—(Div. List, No. 52.)

(2.) £135,000, Zulu, &c. Wars.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH wished to ask the noble Lord the Secretary to the Treasury for some explanation of this Vote. It was divided into three heads; one of which, Sub-head A, was an item of £129,000, claims against Natal. It seemed to him that this was a charge which Natal might properly pay, and upon which the Government could insist. Sub-head B contained the charges for the Zulu Boundary Commission; and he wished to know whether this country was to pay the whole of those expenses? On the item of £4,300 in Sub-head C he would also like some explanation. There was a foot-note stating that the Government had agreed to accept £250,000 towards the expense of these wars; but that was a contribution very much less than the amount which, in his opinion, would be fairly due from the Natal Government. At the same time, he quite recognized the difficulty the Government might have in insisting upon a larger contribution from Natal; and what he wished to ask was, whether the agreement to contribute this amount had been sanctioned by the Legislature of Natal; and, if so, why the amount had not been paid to the credit of the Imperial Government; because if it had been paid there would have been, as he understood, no necessity for the Committee now to vote this sum of £129,000 which appeared in the Estimate?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, it might have been a legitimate course for the Government to omit these contributions from the Estimate; but they had thought it more fair to show the House the whole cost of the Zulu War, and the amount of contributions. One side showed the cost of the War; the other showed the amounts contributed by the Colonies. With regard to the question whether the contribution by Natal had been sanctioned by the Assembly, not only had a Vote been passed, but a local Act had been passed, a compromise as to all the charges being finally arrived at after prolonged negotiation. The Colony wished for the Assent of Her Majesty to an Act for the raising of a loan, and it was agreed that that Assent should be given on the condition that part of the loan was applied to the purpose of this contribution. The

Act had been passed, and tenders had been obtained; and it was expected that within a few weeks the first part of the loan—£250,000—would be issued. As to the various items, he thought the right hon. Gentleman would really be able to give the Committee as much information as he could, the entire expenses having been incurred while the right hon. Gentleman was in Office. Full information was given in the Report presented to Parliament by the Commission appointed to inquire into these matters. The third item was an advance made for arming the Colonial troops. It was thought absolutely necessary that they should be armed, for the safety of Natal; but the Colony had not at the time the necessary funds. Also in the Transvaal War it was considered necessary to establish a telegraph system; and as the Colony had not the means for doing that the necessary money was advanced. The expense of the Zulu Boundary Commission also had to be advanced; and it would be a nice question how far the Natal Government were interested in that matter. The items under Sub-head C were expenses incurred by the Army in connection with the War, and those expenses had hitherto stood either in the books of the War Office or the books of the Treasury. They had never been finally adjusted; and the Government considered that it was more fair to bring them before the attention of the House by taking a Vote for them.

Mr. RYLANDS said, he thought that the statement of the noble Lord was very satisfactory as far as it went, but scarcely embraced all the information the Committee was entitled to receive. The right hon. Gentleman opposite (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), having been the former Secretary for the Colonies, would no doubt recollect that in the last Parliament he (Mr. Rylands) brought forward a Resolution with regard to the War Charges which might fairly be claimed from Natal and from the Cape. He was met by the late Government with the assurance that they entirely agreed with his view as to the justice and necessity of pressing on the Governments of Natal and the Cape the claims this country had upon them for the War expenses. He believed that during the time of the late Government there was some Correspondence with the Cape and Natal upon this subject; but the Government were unable to bring the two Colonies to any arrangement. He believed he was correct in saying that the late Government sent out to South Africa experienced officers of the Treasury to inquire into these charges and report to the Government at home upon them. He now desired to ask the noble Lord what had been done since then by the present Government with a view to impressing on these Colonies the necessity of refunding to this country the considerable sums of money which were due on account of the War expenditure? The contribution from Natal was much less than might be required; and he presumed the explanation the Government would give for not getting more than £250,000 would be that they had got as much as they could, and had been obliged to adopt a singular expedient to compel the Natal Government to pay even what was really a small sum in comparison with the amounts advanced by this country. As he understood it, the Government stipulated that the loan for the purposes of railways should not be sanctioned by the Government unless the first portion of the loan was devoted to the payment of £250,000. Having regard to the fact that the Cape Colony was much more wealthy than Natal, that it had full representation and a very large amount of power in the transaction of its affairs, and having regard to all the circumstances that had occurred during these wars, in which that Colony was so much interested, it was not, and could not be satisfactory that the British taxpayer should be called upon to pay such an enormous sum of money on account of the wars in South Africa; and, as far as he knew, no money had been received from the Cape. He should be glad to find that he overlooked anything in the Papers; but he had no recollection of having seen any statement which would show that the Cape Government had either paid, or promised to pay, any money on account of the large sums which had been paid by the British Government. He hoped to hear from the noble Lord that the Government had these matters under their attention, and that there was some prospect of relief to the British taxpayer.

Colonel NOLAN said, that during the last five years we had had wars with the

Transvaal and the Zulus, and then we had had the Boers engaged in keeping the Zulus in check. We had had a very disagreeable war with the Boers, and after these blunders we could not expect the South African to pay the cost of these stupid wars. It was the greatest folly on our part to interfere in South Africa, and we must pay the money. We ought not to interfere unless we were prepared to arm the Natives and pay the expense. It was the greatest folly to endanger our position in South Africa by these wars.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF inquired how we were to get this money from the Government of Natal? The Government had offered to give Constitutional government to Natal; therefore, how were we to force them to vote £250,000? Could we expect that they would vote enormous sums for the services we rendered at Laing's Nek?

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he could not see how the Colonies were to pay this money, or how we could ask them for it. The policy of the Government had entirely broken the connection between Natal and the Cape, by the appointment of two separate Governors; and that would certainly be an additional reason why we should not ask them for any amount of money.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) did not seem to have a very high opinion of the loyalty and good faith of the Colonial Governments. The Government of Natal passed an Act to provide this money, and he saw no reason for supposing that they would not fulfil their engagement. He agreed with the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands) in regretting that the contributions made were not larger; but there had been no want of will on his part to make these contributions larger; but it must be remembered that from the Cape point of view the interest of the Cape in the Zulu War was not as great as that of the Imperial Government. That War was undertaken for the benefit of Natal, and the Cape had nothing to do with it, and no interest in it. They entirely declined to pay anything in respect of that War; but after a long negotiation they had agreed to pay £150,000. He did not think that at that time of night it would be of any use to enter into the various expenses of the South African Wars.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH asked whether all the Correspondence with the Cape and Natal upon this question, subsequent to the assumption of Office by the present Government, would be published; because it was desirable that the House should know how this amount had been arrived at? He also wished to know whether the loan of the Natal Government had been guaranteed by the Imperial Government?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH, in reply, said, that there was no guarantee by this country. The Correspondence could be laid upon the Table if moved for.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked whether the £250,000 had been already voted by the Natal Government, or whether it was to be voted under the new Constitution which the Earl of Kimberley had offered to Natal? Popular Governments were not so ready to vote money as Governments which were under the domination of Governors.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH replied, that this money was provided for in the Act for railway purposes.

Vote *agreed to.*

CIVIL SERVICES (EXCESSES).

(3.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That a sum, not exceeding £19,830 14*s.* 10*d.*, be granted to Her Majesty, to make good Excesses on certain Grants for Civil Services, for the year ended on the 31st day of March 1881, viz.:—

Class II.—Salaries and Expenses of Civil Departments.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Board of Trade	654	5	2
The Mint, including Coinage ..	334	13	7
Fishery Board, Scotland ..	226	15	3

Class III.—Law and Justice.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Chancery Division of the High Court of Justice	293	9	1
County Courts	7,250	14	6
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain	28	15	3
Constabulary of Ireland ..	5,671	0	9

Class IV.—Education, Science, and Art.

	£	*s.*	*d.*
Science and Art Department of the United Kingdom ..	240	9	2

CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES.

	£	s.	d.
Consular Services	4,641	14	10
Suez Canal (British Directors) ..	31	7	4
Suppression of the Slave Trade ..	457	9	11
Total Amount to be Voted for Civil Services ..	£19,830	14	10

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF desired to ask a question about these excesses, because it appeared to him they were constantly called upon to pay sums of money for purposes for which the Government had not made proper Estimates. In respect to the Consular Services he found an excess of £4,641.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR rose to Order, and asked whether these excesses ought not to be put separately from the Chair, because it was possible each one of them might be open to question?

THE CHAIRMAN: It is usual to propose them in a lump sum.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR presumed that if hon. Members had any observations to offer with regard to the different Votes they would be taken in order. He would like to make a few remarks with reference to the first excess.

THE CHAIRMAN: If the hon. Member move any reductions of the Votes the reductions will have to be taken in order.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he wished to say something with regard to the first item; but it would depend upon the answer he received whether he moved a reduction or not. There was an excess of £654 on the Board of Trade Vote, and they were told in the explanation on page 3 that this excess arose from the charge to the Vote of fees paid for inquiries into wrecks, which were formerly paid out of the Wreck Charges. He endeavoured last year to elicit from the President of the Board of Trade a reason why a new arrangement was made with regard to the expenses connected with the office of Receiver of Wreck; and he ventured then to express the opinion that the new arrangement would unquestionably result in an increase of charge, and in a permanent charge in the Estimates. These excesses bore out completely the anticipation which he then formed. The right hon. Gentleman assured the Committee that there was not the least danger in excesses such as he (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had mentioned; but he would be glad to know how it was these excesses now appeared. He was never able to understand why there should be a charge in the Estimate at all on account of the Receiver of Wreck. The fees paid in previous years were sufficient to meet all the expenses connected with the business; but the alteration which was made in the Estimates last year appeared to him to saddle the country with a charge which was likely to grow as time advanced. His anticipation was perfectly correct, for they were now called upon to provide money which, if the old arrangement had been carried out, they would not have been called upon to vote.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, there was one disadvantage under which they laboured in discussing the excesses to-night, and that was that they had not received the Report of the Committee on Public Accounts on the subject. There was really little need to discuss the items. In some cases there must be excesses, and the present excesses formed a very small proportion of savings on the whole Votes of the previous year. But, undoubtedly, it was a serious inroad upon the practice of the House that the excesses should be voted until they had been examined by the Committee on Public Accounts. By this time that Committee ought to have been appointed, and it ought to have been upon their recommendation that the excesses were voted. He did not know whether the noble Lord would like to withdraw the Excess Vote until he had had an opportunity of proposing the appointment of the Select Committee on Public Accounts; but, undoubtedly, some means ought to be adopted by which our monetary system should be as clear as possible.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN said, he was sorry that on a previous occasion, when the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) questioned him with regard to this matter, he had not succeeded in conveying to him what really was the state of the case. The hon. Gentleman was perfectly correct in saying that he (Mr. Chamberlain) did say that the change in keeping the Accounts did not involve any extra charge. The charge for Wreck Commissioners' Inquiries was set against sums received from wreck; and neither of the items appeared in the Accounts—the one was set against the other, and no charge came upon the Estimates. That was thought to be an improper way of keeping accounts, and, in order to afford greater information to the House, the fees had been carried to the credit; while, at the same time, the charges for the Wreck Commissioner had been brought into the Estimates; but no additional cost was incurred.

MR. RYLANDS said, it was a matter of great advantage they should have an account of every receipt, whatever the nature might be. It gave the Committee a greater control over the expenditure if they were asked to vote the full Estimate. He quite agreed with the observations of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. Sclater-Booth) as to the necessity of a serious investigation of these excesses by the Committee on Public Accounts. The right hon. Gentleman knew very well from his experience the cause of the excesses; on the face of it, excesses were an evidence of bad management. The matter required some investigation, and he should be very glad indeed if the Committee on Public Accounts could have reported to this Committee that the excesses were all in order; and he was sure that if the Committee on Public Accounts had so reported, this Committee would have voted the excesses with much greater confidence. At the same time, it was a serious question whether the noble Lord could withdraw this Vote, which, no doubt, was required to be placed in the Appropriation Act, to make up the Accounts for 1880-1. If the Vote could be postponed without any disadvantage to the Public Service it would be most advisable. He, for one, however, would not venture to press for a postponement, if there was any probability of any serious inconvenience arising.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND supposed that the excesses must be voted, and that, when the Committee on Public Accounts was allowed to be appointed, the excesses would be carefully examined, and the blame, if any there was, must be retrospective. But he could not help expressing his sense of the great inconvenience caused by the non-appointment of this and other Sessional Committees.

MR. ONSLOW said, it was usual for these excesses to pass through the hands of the Committee on Public Accounts, because they were voted by the Committee. He was aware the Motion for the appointment of the Committee was blocked; but how long was it to be blocked? They might go on until Easter, and even until Whitsuntide; and still the Committee would, in all probability, not be appointed. If the Committee on Public Accounts was useless, why appoint it at all? Why not pass the Votes year after year without the sanction of that Committee? The Government ought to take steps to secure the appointment of the Committee as soon as possible, by placing its nomination as a first Order of the Day. It had always been considered a very necessary thing that the Committee on Public Accounts should inquire into the Accounts, and that it should be appointed as early in the Session as possible; but to-night they were asked to vote money for excesses before that Committee had even been appointed. The noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) ought to give them some assurance that the Government would find a day between now and Easter on which the Committee could be appointed.

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, the Motion for the appointment of the Committee was not an Order of the Day; and if the Government were to propose the postponement of the Orders of the Day, to admit of the appointment of the Committee, it was more than likely the proposition could not be made until after half-past 12. He could assure hon. Members that a very small portion of the time of the Committee on Public Accounts was taken in examining the Votes on which there were excesses. It was, practically, a Committee to audit and superintend the whole expenditure of the country.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he wished to remind the Committee that these excesses no more belonged to the finance of the current year than they belonged to the finance of the next year; they really belonged to the finance of 1880-1, which was closed 12 months ago. He thought it was convenient that the money should be voted now; but if the excesses had been of a very important character, undoubtedly it would be better that the Vote should be postponed until the appointment of the Committee on Public Accounts.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR begged to remind the Committee that the Government had taken a very extraordinary course to manifest their anxiety with regard to the appointment of the Public Accounts Committee. Last Tuesday they had their Notice for the appointment of the Committee on the Paper; but they allowed the House to be counted out. If they had kept the House together, it would have been the easiest thing in the world to have secured the appointment of the Committee that evening. Before he sat down, he wished to ask whether the item of £654 was to be understood to be completely covered by the fees paid into the Exchequer?

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF said, he would suggest to the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) that it would be desirable to take the discussion on the appointment of the Committee on Public Accounts on Monday night, instead of resuming the discussion on the Rules of Procedure. As to the Consular Services, he wished to point out to the noble Lord the Secretary to the Treasury that the Estimates showed an increase of £7,000, whereas there was really a decrease. If, in addition to that, there were these excesses, he could not think that the Estimate for next year had been very carefully considered; and, therefore, he would press upon the noble Lord the necessity of submitting the Excess Vote to the Public Accounts Committee.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, it would be an extraordinary system of finance by which they referred the Estimates for the coming year to the Committee on Public Accounts. All that Committee had to do was to see that the expenditure was made in accordance with the purposes for which it was voted by Parliament. It would not be within the competence of the Committee to make any comparison between the expenditure of the past and coming years.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, it was very much to be regretted that the Government did not keep a House last Tuesday for the appointment of the Committee on Public Accounts.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he was not quite sure that if a House had been kept last Tuesday the Motion would have come on before half-past 12.

Mr. ONSLOW said, they ought to know what arrangements the Government proposed to make for the appointment of the Committee. There was certainly a block in the way; but surely it was the province and duty of the Government to appoint a day for the full discussion of the Motion.

The CHAIRMAN: It is quite out of Order to discuss the question as to whether this Committee shall be appointed on any particular day. That appertains to the House, which has already fixed the question for a particular day.

Mr. ONSLOW said, the question had cropped up in a very peculiar way. Hon. Members had pointed out that this was a Vote which ought to have come before the Public Accounts Committee before the Committee of Supply was asked to pass it. He thought he was in Order in asking the noble Lord——

The CHAIRMAN: I have already informed the hon. Member that it is out of Order to discuss this matter.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked if it would be in Order for a Member of the Committee to move that the Chairman should leave the Chair, and ask leave to sit again; so that the Committee on Public Accounts could be appointed, and could examine into these excesses?

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF would be very glad if the Chairman would be good enough to give an answer to the hon. Member, because this was a very important question, with which the Government appeared to be trifling.

Mr. ONSLOW said, that, to put matters on a proper footing, he would move that the Chairman should report Progress, and ask leave to sit again. Upon that Motion he was entitled to ask the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India what steps the Government intended to take in order to secure the appointment of the Committee? The House had been counted out on three evenings that the Motion had been on the Paper, and the Government had taken no steps to keep a House.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is perfectly within his right, if he desires it, to move that I report Progress; but it is irregular to discuss a question which has been ruled out of Order on the Motion that I do report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Onslow.*)

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked whether it would be in Order for his hon. Friend to give his reasons for moving to report Progress?

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member is perfectly in Order in moving that I report Progress; but the hon. Member would not be in Order in drawing attention to a Motion which has already been ruled out of Order.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I am surprised that any hon. Member should question the authority of the Chair, and it seems to me that such a course cannot conduce to the good order of our debates. The Chairman, as I understand, says the hon. Member is perfectly in Order in moving to report Progress if he thinks fit to do so; but that under cover of a Motion to report Progress he is not entitled to discuss a Motion which stands on the Notice Paper for a future day. I do not intend to be guilty of the irregularity of discussing the question that has been referred to, and I will only say that the Government are extremely anxious to appoint this Committee. It is all very well to say that it should be put down as the first Business of the day; but hon. Members must know—["Order!"]

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: I rise to Order. The noble Lord is referring to the subject that you, Sir, have ruled it is not in Order to refer to.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: I perfectly admit the justice of the interruption, and I will not say a word more, except that the Government are most anxious to appoint the Committee as soon as possible.

Mr. ONSLOW said, he was sorry to recall it to the Chairman's mind that he had moved to report Progress, and that the Motion had not been put from the Chair. He was giving his reasons for making that Motion when he was called to Order; but since that the noble Marquess had answered those reasons, and stated that the Government were anxious to appoint the Committee without delay, he should withdraw his Motion.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he wished to draw the attention of the Committee to the important item of £5,671 on account of the Constabulary in Ireland. What he wanted to ask the right hon. Gentleman was, whether he could tell the Committee what was the total charge levied on the counties in Ireland on account of Police, and what would be the total charge in the Estimates besides that during the financial year for which these sums were voted? He should also like the right hon. Gentleman to tell them whether the total establishment of Constabulary had been exceeded; and, if it had not, whether it had been exceeded in any and, if so, what counties?

Mr. SEXTON said, he should like to put two or three questions to the right hon. Gentleman with regard to this Vote for Constabulary. He should like to ask what was the present position of Sub-Inspectors Stritch and Allan. Some time ago, Sub-Inspector Stritch was found guilty of murder by a Coroner's Jury, and the subject having been brought under the notice of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, the right hon. Gentleman said he would inquire into it. He (Mr. Sexton) wished now to have an answer from the Chief Secretary for Ireland. Would the sub-inspector be put on his trial for the crime of murder or for a lesser crime? He also wished to know whether the right hon. Gentleman had come to any decision as to the conduct of Sub-Inspector Allan, who, it would be remembered, unnecessarily interfered with the Chairman of the Town Commissioners on the occasion of the Chief Secretary's addressing the crowd at Tullamore? He (Mr. Sexton), when he had referred to this incident, a short time ago, had drawn attention also to the fact that Sub-Inspector Allan was the person who had directed an assault upon two young men, one of whom had been ruined in consequence, and was confined to his bed. Were measures to be taken to bring Sub-Inspector Allan to justice? Within the past two or three days other instances of misconduct on the part of the police had been brought under his notice. In one case a constable named Kennedy had, a few days ago, torn down 40 placards posted on the walls calling on certain electors to vote for a particular person as Poor Law Guardian.

THE CHAIRMAN: I would ask the hon. Member whether the incidents to which he refers occurred during the period for which these Votes are taken?

MR. SEXTON: I presume so. I have, however, no knowledge on the point.

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. Member remarked that these things occurred within the past few days. In that case they did not take place within the period to which the Votes apply, and cannot now be discussed.

MR. SEXTON said, in that case, he would abandon the inquiry for the present. There was an incident which occurred last October to which he would refer—namely, the case of Father O'Dwyer. He would ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland if he would be graciously pleased to attend to this matter, which was a serious case of outrage by the police at Limerick? A sub-inspector named Rogers ——

THE CHAIRMAN: Will the hon. Member give the date?

MR. SEXTON: October, last year.

THE CHAIRMAN: This Vote is only for the period ending 31st March, 1881; therefore, the hon. Member cannot discuss this case under it.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he had addressed some specific questions to the right hon. Gentleman, and supposed he was able to answer them. Could the right hon. Gentleman inform the Committee what was the total charge on account of the Constabulary for the financial year ended 31st March, 1881? How much of the charge was to fall on the Estimates, and how much was to be charged by presentment on the different counties of Ireland?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: The total sum expended during the year is £1,169,042. I cannot at this moment say what was the sum charged on the counties for extra police; but, certainly, up to the 31st March, 1881, it would not be a large sum. I am not quite sure whether there was any sum charged; but the matter is one which concerns the expenditure more than a year ago, and I cannot, therefore, tell him the amount. If he will give Notice of a Question, I will make inquiries, and give him the information he desires.

MR. R. POWER wished to know whether the Attorney General for Ireland intended to answer the questions put to him by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) as to whether Sub-Inspector Stritch would be put on his trial, and whether Sub-Inspector Allan's conduct was to be inquired into?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, he had nothing whatever to do with Sub-Inspector Allan, and did not intend to make any inquiry into his conduct. As to the question put by the hon. Member for Sligo with reference to Sub-Inspector Stritch, the query was a very proper one; and, in reply, he (the Attorney General for Ireland) had to say that he had made the necessary inquiries into the case of the sub-inspector, and the other constable named by the Coroner's Jury. He had directed a prosecution against those persons. They were awaiting their trial, which had been postponed until next Assizes to enable the investigations to be completed.

MR. SEXTON said, that as to the Chairman's ruling he wished to raise a point of Order. The Vote under consideration, no doubt, referred to the period up to March 31st, 1881; but he would submit that as the members of the Police Force whose conduct he called in question were in the force before that date, and continued in it at the present time, he was entitled to mention the incidents of which he had spoken.

THE CHAIRMAN: It is quite clear that it would only be regular to discuss any action of the Police Force that occurred during the period which is covered by this Vote.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, this question as to the amount chargeable against the Estimates and that levied on the counties was a very important one. He should be prepared to contend that the Government was causing levies to be made on the counties in Ireland which they ought not to do, and had no right to do. He wished, if he could, to obtain the materials for discussion in this matter, and to leave the Committee to judge of the propriety of the proceeding on the part of the Government. Instead of giving Notice of a Question, he would now ask the Chief Secretary for Ireland whether he would consent to lay on the Table a Return showing the entire force of Constabulary during the past 12 months and up to the present date, the distribution of that force as between the different counties, the average force in each county, and the extra police drafted into each county for which charges had been levied on the counties by Grand Jury presentments?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Substantially, the information the hon. Gentleman requires ought to be given; and if he will write down the exact items, I think I shall be able to agree with him as to a Return which will give the required information.

Mr. WARTON said, he wished to make one suggestion, which he thought he should be in Order in doing. All these matters were brought under one statement of excesses; and he would put it to the noble Lord the Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Frederick Cavendish) whether it would not be better to have them put in separate accounts? When it was considered that there were 11 different items, relating to England, Scotland, the United Kingdom, Melbourne, Zanzibar, and other places, fishing, coining, &c., it would be seen that it would be more convenient to have them put in separate accounts.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, this Vote had for some years been brought before Parliament in its present shape. He himself had made a suggestion similar to that which had come from the hon. and learned Member some years ago, and he would ascertain whether it would not be possible to adopt it.

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next;

Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

SUPPLY.

ARMY (ANNUAL) BILL.

Resolutions [March 16] *reported,* and *agreed to.*

Ordered, That the Resolution which, upon the 16th day of this instant March, was reported from the Committee of Supply, and then agreed to by the House, be read, as followeth:—That a number of Land Forces, not exceeding 132,905, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding Her Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883.

Ordered, That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide, during twelve months, for the discipline and regulation of the Army:—And that Mr. Secretary Childers, The Judge Advocate General, Mr. Trevelyan, and Mr. Campbell-Bannerman do prepare and bring in the same.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 105.]

WAYS AND MEANS.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

(1.) *Resolved,* That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the years ending on the 31st days of March 1881 and 1882, the sum of £424,844 14*s.* 10*d.* be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

(2.) *Resolved,* That towards making good the Supply granted to Her Majesty for the service of the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, the sum of £6,793,498 be granted out of the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom.

Resolutions to be reported upon *Monday* next;

Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

House adjourned at a quarter before Two o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Monday, 20th March, 1882.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*Second Reading*—Railways (Continuous Brakes) (21); Pilotage Provisional Order (Tees) * (33).

PARLIAMENT—THE EASTER RECESS.

QUESTION.

In reply to the Earl of Redesdale,

Earl GRANVILLE said, it was proposed to move the adjournment of the House for the Easter Recess on Friday, the 31st March, and that the House should meet again on Thursday, the 20th of April.

RAILWAYS (CONTINUOUS BRAKES) BILL.—(No. 21.)

(*The Earl De La Warr.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Earl DE LA WARR, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, that the subject was one with which the House could not be wholly unacquainted. It had for some time past been periodically brought under the notice of Parliament. The Railway Accidents Commission in the year 1877, after hearing much evidence and as the result of many experiments, recommended in their Report the use of continuous brakes. Shortly after this, the Board of Trade, in consequence of the inaction of Railway Companies in the matter, issued a Circular urging upon them the importance of the question, and pointing out what was deemed necessary for an efficient brake. Little, however, was done; and in 1878 a Return was ordered by Parliament from all Railway Companies to show what kind of brake was in use upon their lines, and the number of vehicles fitted with it. Since that time these Returns had been made, and the last, ending December, 1881, had just been laid upon the Table of the House. Not a few Members of the House were Directors of Railway Companies; some took an active part in the business of Railway Boards; and to them the question of continuous brakes must be one with which they were familiar. Therefore, their Lordships would receive all information which might be necessary for arriving at a fair and right conclusion upon an important matter which much concerned the public safety in railway travelling. In all questions relating to railways this should be considered —that for more than half-a-century railways had been extending their influence and their usefulness until they had become almost the only means of locomotion for the public generally; and it was important to remember that they were in the hands of private Companies who had had considerable powers granted to them by Parliament, and that with certain limitations the public were dependent upon them as regarded charges for conveyance of passengers and goods, convenience in travelling, and also as regarded safety and precaution, so far as possible, against accidents. Parliament, having conceded these powers to Railway Companies, was in a great measure responsible for the right use of them. It could not, therefore, be urged with any reason that Parliamentary supervision ought not to be employed. At the same time, it was far better that Railway Companies should move forward themselves without Parliamentary pressure. But there were occasions when pressure might be necessary, and where the public safety demanded it. By this Bill Parliament was not called upon to give an opinion upon a great engineering question, or to decide a controversy upon a subject with reference to which it could not be expected to be in possession of sufficient information to arrive at any conclusion, but only to insist upon such an amount of action on the part of Railway Companies as they were all agreed it would be necessary to make at some time or other. He believed that now there were really not two opinions as to the necessity of the adoption of continuous brakes. He did not think there was anyone who was conversant with railway management who would say that, safety in railway travelling being in question, it was not necessary to have an efficient continuous brake. But if they looked to what had been done by Railway Companies, did they find that such progress as might have been expected had been made? The last Return now showed that after nearly five years that the question had been before Parliament not so much as one-half of the vehicles and engines of passenger trains had been fitted with a continuous brake of any kind, and, as remarked by the Board of Trade, "some of the brakes so returned very imperfectly fulfil that designation." He was speaking of railways as a whole; but by referring to the Return it would be seen that some Companies were exceptions to the general inactivity which had prevailed. Seeing that, he had therefore brought forward this Bill, the object of which was to make it compulsory upon all Railway Companies to employ an efficient brake upon all passenger trains—not a particular brake, such as the Westinghouse, or Clark's, or Fay's, or Smith's, or any other, but only that it should be an efficient one and fulfil certain conditions which were considered necessary for efficiency. The conditions were those which, after mature consideration, had been adopted by the Board of Trade. The conditions were as follows:—(*a*) It must be efficient in stopping the train, instantaneous in action, and capable of being applied without difficulty by engine-drivers and guards; (*b*) in case of accident, it must be instantaneously self-acting; (*c*) it must be capable of being easily put on and taken off the engine and every vehicle of the train; (*d*) its materials must be of a durable character, so as to be easily maintained and kept in good order. Those were simple requirements; there was nothing in them which might not readily be carried out, and with reference to them he might quote the words of one of their greatest engineers, James

Watt, that "in mechanism the supreme excellence is simplicity." But with reference to the second condition—"In case of accident it must be instantaneously self-acting," he had one observation to make. Some objection had been taken to this requirement of what was sometimes called automatic action. He could not, however, but think that this arose from a misunderstanding. The automatic or self-acting principle, as it was better called, was intended to apply chiefly to cases of accident, such as breakage of the train. No doubt, it was an objection that the self-acting principle should admit of the brake "creeping on," as it was termed, when not required, thus causing delay and perhaps accident, of which instances were recorded. But if care were taken that self-action should only operate in cases of accident, it would seem in a great measure to remove the objection. Clause 1 of the Bill contained the regulations he had referred to. Clause 2 made the Company liable on whose line a vehicle not properly fitted was running, whether such vehicle belonged to them or not. Clause 3 gave power to the Board of Trade to make certain exceptions. Clause 4 gave jurisdiction to the Railway Commissioners to enforce the Act. Clause 5 gave power to the Board of Trade to inspect the rolling stock of every Railway Company whenever it was thought fit. Such were the provisions of the Bill, and as three years were given for the completion of what was required, he did not think that Railway Companies would have any reasonable cause of complaint. At all events, he was sure that the Bill would receive the best consideration at their Lordships' hands, involving as it did questions of the public safety in travelling, the lives and injuries of railway servants and, at the same time, the interests of Railway Companies themselves. The noble Earl concluded by moving the second reading of the Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl De La Warr.*)

LORD COLVILLE OF CULROSS said, he did not intend to oppose the second reading of the Bill, as with part of it he heartily concurred, believing that the time had come when it should be made compulsory on Railway Companies to employ continuous brakes with every passenger train. As to the part with which he could not agree, it referred to the automatic action of the brake, respecting which there had been many experimental trials, resulting in a great divergence of opinion among practical men. Some engineers approved of it, while others, men of great experience, did not, but, on the contrary, saw in it a new element of danger rather than of safety. Only recently a serious railway accident in America was attributed to the use of automatic brakes. He thought that legislation on so intricate and novel a matter ought rather to emanate from a Government Department than from an irresponsible Member of Parliament. It was only a few days ago that a very important meeting was held of Railway Chairmen and Engineers on this very subject; and he believed that ere long communications would take place on the subject between the Railway Companies and the Board of Trade. He would, therefore, recommend his noble Friend, if he would not withdraw the automatic portion of the Bill—a step which he (Lord Colville of Culross) would ask him to take—that he should give time for the consideration of the whole measure, and to that end that he should postpone the Committee to a distant date.

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN said, he thought the object of this Bill was undoubtedly a very good one. On the whole, this system of brakes had been found desirable; but, at the same time, he could not agree with his noble Friend who introduced this Bill (Earl De La Warr), in what he rather gathered were his very sanguine expectations as to the results which would arise if the general adoption, or compulsory adoption, of continuous brakes was carried out. The noble Lord who had just sat down (Lord Colville of Culross), and who was, of course, a very great authority on such subjects, stated that many engineers were not of opinion that the general adoption of such a brake would be a real benefit. The same difference of opinion was observed in the case of another railway invention—the block system—and his noble Friend, if he remembered rightly, introduced a Bill to render compulsory the block telegraph system. That Bill was referred to a Select Committee, presided over by a noble Duke who sat near him (the Duke of Somerset), and they spent a great deal of time and attention on the subject; and the result was that the Committee did not recommend that the Bill should be made law. However, he observed that since that time the block system had, to a very large and increasing extent, been adopted by the various leading railways. There was nothing, so far as he could see, in this Bill which would check the railways in the efforts which they were now making to carry on experiments, and to increase the efficiency of those breaks; but, at the same time, he thought that if this Bill were read a second time, it would require considerable amendment in Committee—more especially with regard to the conditions as to the requirements of any brake. His noble Friend, no doubt, would affirm that these conditions were the same as had been put forward by the Board of Trade; but very little reflection would show that there was a very great difference between a Circular issued by a Department—a Circular which might be modified or recalled at any time—and such provisions embodied in an Act of Parliament. These remarks applied particularly to the provision as to self-acting brakes. It was quite obvious that if a brake was self-acting in case of emergencies, it would be self-acting on other occasions. He had seen an express train on a steep gradient brought to a dead stop, contrary to the will of the driver, by an automatic brake, and unable to proceed down hill. Had it not been that such a situation involved danger, there would have been something ludicrous in the spectacle of an express train being brought to a dead stop in this way. His noble Friend had explained that that could be avoided in the future; but, at the same time, it illustrated the difficulty they must necessarily experience in laying down rules in a matter of this kind. He did not know whether the Board of Trade would be enthusiastic in their reception of the Bill, seeing that it would impose such a difficult task upon them; but if Parliament thought it necessary that this addition should be made to the duties of the Board of Trade, he had no doubt they would get a Vote of Supply for extra assistance. The whole question was much more difficult than at first appeared, because the Board of Trade had to strike the judicious mean between such interference with the Railway Companies and other great interests as would take away responsibilities from these bodies, and those regulations that would enable the Board of Trade to exercise that amount of control that would satisfy the country that they were fulfilling their duty as the guardians of the public safety in such matters. Therefore, he had no doubt their Lordships would feel that this Bill, if read a second time, would require very careful consideration in Committee, and in that expectation he was prepared to support the second reading. He would add that, on the whole, the Bill was looked on with favour by railway employés as calculated to enable them more safely to fulfil their duties. In the expectation that Amendments would be introduced into the Bill in Committee, more especially with regard to the automatic clauses, he should vote in favour of the second reading.

Lord SUDELEY said, that, on the part of the Government, he did not propose to offer any opposition to the second reading of the Bill. Several experiments had lately been carried on by some of the largest Companies, and there was a general desire expressed by them to come to some definite solution of this question. No doubt there were several clauses which would require discussion and amendment; but these matters could be left for the Committee stage. He trusted that the noble Earl would postpone the Committee until as distant a date as possible, say, until the month of May, in order to enable the communications which were passing between the Board of Trade and the Railway Companies to be further advanced. The subject was one of great importance, and, from its peculiarly technical character, required great consideration in dealing with it.

Earl DE LA WARR, in reply, said, he would postpone the Committee till after Easter, and then fix it at such a time as would be convenient to the noble Lord and the Department he represented.

Motion *agreed to;* Bill read 2^a accordingly.

ARMY—GENERAL ANNUAL RETURN OF THE BRITISH ARMY.

QUESTION. OBSERVATIONS.

Lord TRURO, in rising to ask Her Majesty's Government, If it is not possible in future years to lay before Parliament at the commencement of or early in each Session the General Annual Return of the British Army for the year immediately preceding it? said, it was not prudent to enter into any general discussion on simply putting a Question, and he did not wish to cast any censure upon Ministers on one side or the other. Neither should he attempt to enter at any length whatever upon the state of Her Majesty's Army; but he would as shortly as possible put before their Lordships a few figures from which they could draw their own conclusions as to its deplorable condition. In 1880 he found that the whole strength of the Army was 188,986 men —91,887 in England and the Channel Islands, 97,099 in India and the Colonies — a preponderance, therefore, of 5,212 in favour of the latter. Now, turning to the source from which that strength was derived—namely, recruiting, he found that there were 25,535 recruits. Of these men 4,833 were deserters, so that nearly one-fifth of that body of men were deserters. But not alone did they desert. They usually took their kits and uniforms with them, so that the pecuniary loss incurred by these desertions, according to the last Annual Return, amounted to no less than £21,748. But 1,557 of these men were recaptured and imprisoned, or punished otherwise, making the total number of *bonâ fide* deserters 3,276 men. There were figures still more unsatisfactory. Fraudulent enlistment largely prevailed. Over 1,021 recruits were enlisted at the age of 16, and 156 were recruited at 17, making 1,177 fraudulent enlistments, for which the country would have to pay, that being, with the deserters, a deduction of 4,453 men from the numerical strength of the Army. No wonder that of late there had been expressions of dissatisfaction throughout the country as to the progress of enlistment. Then, as regarded discipline, the number of courts martial in the Indian and Colonial Armies for the graver kind of offences was no fewer than 15,242, and the number of minor offences 216,033. In the Home Army the number of courts martial was 9,108, and of offences 13,109. In the Home Army there were 706 cases of assault upon superiors, and 3,256 of stealing necessaries. The reason why he asked that these Returns should be laid before Parliament at an earlier period of the year was, that it was only upon these Returns that legislation was based. These Returns alone gave to the country information which would enable constituents to give instructions to their Representatives. He would conclude by asking the Question of which he had given Notice.

THE EARL OF MORLEY, in reply, said, he must confess that the speech of his noble Friend (Lord Truro) had taken him by surprise. He was quite prepared to give an answer to the Question put on the Paper by his noble Friend; but when his noble Friend, without having given him the slightest Notice, either public or private, took advantage of that Question to go into the whole condition of the Army for the last two years, he thought his noble Friend had taken a course altogether unusual. Some of the figures quoted by his noble Friend required the best answer that could be given at so short a notice. The noble Lord called attention to certain figures from the Return of 1880, giving the number of desertions and fraudulent enlistments, and to the condition of the Army; and if his speech were left unanswered, an impression would be left on their Lordships and the country that the last Return showed that the Army was in a deplorable state—far worse than it was in former years. If the noble Lord had dealt fairly with the figures he would have quoted figures which he (the Earl of Morley) would quote, and which would show that the Army was not in so deplorable a state compared with previous years as the noble Lord described. In the first place, with regard to desertions, the figures showed that the number of desertions had not greatly increased during the last two years. In 1879 the proportion of desertions per 1,000 men was lower than it had been since the year 1868.

LORD TRURO, interrupting, here said, the noble Lord was mistaken if he supposed that in calling attention to this matter he had any intention of inconveniencing the Government, or casting any reflection upon the Department. What he simply wanted was an answer to the Question, Whether the Government would furnish the General Annual Return of the Army earlier in the year; and whether the position of the Army, as described by him from the figures quoted from the Blue Books, was one in which it ought to be allowed to remain?

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, that the figures quoted should have been compared with those of former years to be of real service to those who desired to consider this subject. He wished to correct an impression which might be created by the noble Lord's speech. He stated that last year the number of desertions was 4,833, which gave, on the whole, 26 per 1,000 men of the Force. This was the gross loss by desertion. The noble Lord then took the net loss by desertion, which was 3,276, or 18 per 1,000, and had made the mistake of adding the fraudulent enlistments, which very considerably increased the apparent number of desertions. But the men who rejoined after desertion had been already included in the gross number of men who had deserted, and to add them to the net number of desertions was to count them twice. The number of men entered as having rejoined after desertion was less in 1880 than in 1879, because fraudulent enlisters were now, under the Army Discipline Act, treated in a different way from deserters, and dealt with in the corps into which they had fraudulently enlisted, instead of being relegated to their former corps and then tried for desertion, in which case they would be deducted from the gross number of deserters as men who had rejoined. Coming next to the question of courts martial, he would show that the published figures did not indicate any such great deterioration in the Army as was imagined by his noble Friend. The proportion of courts martial per 1,000 men in 1865 was 109, but last year was only 84 per 1,000 men, being a reduction of nearly 25 per 1,000 men. In the same way the number of minor offences had decreased. In the year 1868—the earliest year recorded in the last Returns—the number was 150,771, and in the year 1880 it was 127,176. The cases of insubordination were in 1865, 1,272, as against 639 last year. These figures were sufficient to prove that there was no *primâ facie* case that the discipline of the Army was inferior in 1880 to what it had been in former years; though he would admit that with regard to certain offences matters were not as satisfactory as could be desired. As he said before, it was difficult at the moment to give the exact figures; but he thought that he had said sufficient to prove that the condition and discipline of the Army was improving. In answer to the Question of the noble Lord, he could assure him that the War Office authorities were most anxious that there should be no delay in presenting the Annual Returns to Parliament. These Returns were, however, of a very intricate and voluminous character, consisting of no less than 93 closely-printed pages, and of 91 tables, many of which had to be compiled from Returns from each individual battallion and depôt in the Service. These Returns were made up to the 1st of January in each year. Some of the regiments were in Hong Kong, some were in India, America, and other Colonies. It took some weeks to receive these Returns, and in some cases it was necessary to refer them back to the regiments for correction. Then the compilation of tables required some time. Some of them were compiled from 30 or more pages of figures. Under these circumstances, he could not hold out a hope that the Returns, which were made up to the 1st of January every year, would be ready at the commencement of a Session, and he could not even promise that they would be ready during the Session. He would cause inquiries to be made in the Department, with a view of ascertaining whether they could not be presented at an earlier period of the year than they were at present.

EARL FORTESCUE said, that in his opinion, the statement made by the noble Earl (the Earl of Morley) was highly satisfactory, inasmuch as it showed a decrease in the numbers both of desertions and of courts martial. But although the number of the latter had diminished, it was still unpleasantly, not to say alarmingly, large. He had heard that a considerable proportion of these trials were attributable to the fact that a certain number of men were annually released from prison before the expiration of their sentences and sent out to serve in India. These men having already committed offences deserving severe punishments were, of course, a constant source of disorder, insubordination, and crime in their respective corps. In order to put this matter before the country more clearly, he intended shortly to move for a Return of the number of released prisoners sent out in the last few years to serve with different regiments in India.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE — THE CHANNEL TUNNEL SCHEME.

OBSERVATIONS. QUESTION.

VISCOUNT BURY, who rose to ask a Question having reference to the proposed Tunnel between this country and France, said, that the Question was one of importance, not only with their Lordships' House, but to the country generally. The last time he had mentioned this subject he was told by the noble Earl the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Granville) that the matter was to be relegated for consideration to a Military Committee, which was to examine and report on the whole subject of the Channel Tunnel, and advise the Government as to the course it should pursue in order to assist them in making up their minds. He now understood, and thought he could say without contradiction as a matter of public notoriety, that the terms of reference to the Military Committee were so constructed that the Committee were prohibited from inquiring into the great, and indeed the only, point of real public interest—namely, whether the construction of the Channel Tunnel was advisable from a strategic point of view. He was told that the Committee had done what they were ordered to do—namely, to direct their attention to the question whether the mouth of the Tunnel would be defensible in case of its construction; but that was an after consideration and not of any great moment, and not nearly so important as the one which had previously been referred to. The country looked with great distrust upon the construction of the Tunnel, and those who agreed with him (Viscount Bury)—and they were very numerous both in the House and in the country—considered that the matter had been rather too much hurried over. There was a Committee appointed a little while ago by the Board of Trade on this matter. What had been done by that Committee? Where was its Report? Had it been dissolved? It was said out-of-doors—and he could be corrected, if he were wrong—that after examining one or two witnesses—two well-known military men of the highest possible reputation were under orders to attend before the Committee; but it was generally understood that those officers were entirely opposed to the construction of the Tunnel, and suddenly their Lordships heard that the Committee itself was abandoned, and that the opinion of the officers was not taken. Now they heard that another Committee had been appointed, and they were told in the same breath that the new Committee were not to take cognizance of the only point of national interest in the whole inquiry. He hoped his noble Friend who was about to answer the Question (the Earl of Morley) would say something assuring to those who were afraid that the Tunnel was being allowed to slip out of the grasp, he would not say of the Government, but of the people of England, who had a right to a voice in the great national question as to whether or not the Tunnel should be constructed at all. If the noble Lord who usually sat on the Cross-Benches (Lord Brabourne), and who had constituted himself in a special degree the spokesman of those who advocated the Tunnel, were in his place that day, he should have asked him whether he thought it consistent with the respect due to Parliament to pursue the somewhat extended system of puffing which had hitherto prevailed in connection with the subject before their Lordships? He (Viscount Bury) was told that in the other House there was a book, in which any Member of either House could inscribe his name as evidence of his desire to inspect the works of the Tunnel, and thereupon he was furnished with a free pass over the line to Dover, and a ticket for a champagne luncheon at the end of the journey. He did not mean to insinuate that that material form of advertisement would have much effect upon Members of Parliament; but he could not refrain from pointing out that in a contested election it would be considered as bribery by treating, and held to be illegal. The question of the construction of the Tunnel must be investigated in a judicial manner by both Houses, and to issue invitations to the judges in a cause was not exactly the course which ought to be pursued. He begged to ask Her Majesty's Government, Whether it is true that the Military Committee now sitting for the purpose of advising the Government on the Channel Tunnel scheme are prohibited by the terms of the reference to them from inquiring whether the construction of the Tunnel is or is not advisable from a strategic point of view;

and, whether the Government will lay the terms of reference to the said Committee on the Table of the House?

THE EARL OF MORLEY said, he was rather surprised the noble Viscount (Viscount Bury) should express doubt as to the scope of inquiry of the Scientific, not Military, Committee which was now examining into the question of defending the mouth of the Tunnel, because his (the Earl of Morley's) noble Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Earl Granville), in an answer which he gave about a month ago, stated very distinctly that the inquiry would be confined to the defences of the mouth of the Tunnel, and that the national question as to the advisability or non-advisability of permitting the construction of the Tunnel would be left to the military authorities and the Government to discuss after they had received the Report of the Scientific Committee. He (the Earl of Morley) could only repeat, though at somewhat greater length, the answer then given by his noble Friend. The Committee was composed entirely of scientific men, military and civil. It was presided over by Major General Sir Archibald Alison. The other Members were Major General Gallwey, Inspector General of Fortifications; Colonel Sir John Stokes, R.A. D.A.G.; Colonel Sir Andrew Clarke, Commandant of the School of Military Engineering; Mr. E. Graves, Engineer-in-Chief to the General Post Office; Mr. C. H. Gregory, C.E.; Colonel Alderson, R.A., Assistant Director of Artillery Stores; Colonel Majendie, R.A., Inspector of Explosives, Home Office; and Professor Abel, Chemist to the War Department. When he mentioned those names, it would be seen at once that the Committee was of a purely scientific character. The Committee was to make a full and exhaustive investigation from a scientific point of view, and without reference to the ulterior object of national expediency into the practicability of closing effectually the mouth of the projected Tunnel.

VISCOUNT BURY: Without reference to the expediency of constructing the tunnel?

THE EARL OF MORLEY: Distinctly, without reference to the larger question. They were to satisfy themselves whether it was possible beyond any reasonable doubt that in the event of war, or apprehended war, the Tunnel and its approaches could be actually closed to an enemy under the existing Acts of Parliament, or under the Bill which was now being promoted. The question was to be considered in great detail. The Committee were to consider by what means—whether by destruction or obstruction, or flooding, or by works of defence or offence, or any other means—the mouth of the Tunnel could be defended. The noble Viscount said that was a subject for after consideration; but he (the Earl of Morley), on the contrary, ventured to think it was a matter for previous consideration. As soon as the Committee had reported as to the practicability or not, and the best means, of defending the Tunnel, it would be referred to the Military Advisers of the Crown to advise whether the Tunnel should be constructed on strategic grounds. He did not wish to enter into that much wider question to which his noble Friend had referred. He did not propose to lay the terms of reference to the Committee on the Table of the House. He had, he thought, explained sufficiently and fully what those terms were. They had not the slightest wish to conceal anything in the matter, and as soon as Her Majesty's Government came to a decision as to the course which they would pursue with regard to the Bills now before Parliament, they would be prepared to lay such Papers as they prudently could—some of them being of a confidential character—before Parliament. He hoped his answer would be satisfactory to the noble Lord, who justly anticipated that the terms of reference did exclude the general national question as to the advisability of permitting the construction of the Tunnel or not from the consideration of the Committee, whose examinations were confined to the scientific question which the Government considered ought to be discussed before the general question was decided by the Military Advisers of the Crown.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: I do not wish to express an opinion on what the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Morley) has called "the national expediency of the matter." But as this question is undoubtedly one that does excite a good deal of feeling and speculation out-of-doors, I should wish to know more clearly what is the precise course of investigation that the noble Earl has shadowed forth? I understand that the Scientific Committee will determine, in the first place, whether the mouth of the Tunnel can be sealed or not to an enemy, and that, after that question is decided, then the military authorities of the Crown are to take the matter in hand. Is that to be in the form of a Military Committee, that will consider some ulterior question to be laid before them by the Government, or does that mean that the Military Advisers of the Crown will determine the matter in consultation with the Committee? I also desire to ask the noble Earl whether Parliament is to be called in, as a third party, to consult in respect to this matter of national expediency?

EARL GRANVILLE: Most decidedly, Her Majesty's Government have no intention of excluding Parliament from the consideration of this very important subject.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: There is one other matter which should be mentioned in connection with the Report of the Scientific Committee, and it is this—I should like to know when we may look for the Report; and, whether the Bills introduced into the House of Commons will be deferred until that Report is laid before Parliament?

EARL GRANVILLE: It is the intention of the Government, as far as lies in their power, to prevent the Bills being proceeded with until the Government is in a position to give an opinion of its own on that subject.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: When do they expect the Report?

EARL GRANVILLE: I cannot answer as to that.

VISCOUNT BURY said, he was afraid he could hardly regard as satisfactory the answer of his noble Friend (the Earl of Morley). No one in his senses doubted that the Tunnel, if constructed, could be defended. The question was, whether it ought to be constructed? The danger they had to face was not the losing the Tunnel by a direct attack; but that a landing might on some occasion be effected elsewhere in the country—not near the Tunnel at all—that England might experience some reverse, and that the possession of the English side of the Tunnel might be obtained as a material guarantee from them. In that case they would be absolutely defenceless. The Scientific Committee might report that the mouth of the Tunnel would be defensible; but that would have nothing to do with the real question at issue. The main point was whether, from a military point of view, the Tunnel ought to be constructed; and that was a matter which ought to be discussed in Parliament, and ought not to be decided by the result of the inquiry now being held.

EARL GRANVILLE: The noble Viscount has asked a Question which I think has been fully answered. The noble Marquess opposite (the Marquess of Salisbury), if I may say so, showed much greater discretion in saying that he did not wish to initiate any discussion as to the merits of the Tunnel schemes.

VISCOUNT BURY said, he had not entered into the merits of the Tunnel; and he intended his remarks to be taken as formal notice that he would raise the question again.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: In what I said I only wished to guard myself from expressing any opinion on a matter of which I am ignorant.

House adjourned at half past Six o'clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Monday, 20th March, 1882.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee—Resolutions* [March 17] *reported.*

WAYS AND MEANS—*considered in Committee—Resolutions* [March 17] *reported.*

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 2)*.

Committee—Report—Bills of Sale Act (1878) Amendment [8]; General Police and Improvement (Scotland) [77].

QUESTIONS.

STATE OF IRELAND—LORD GORMANSTOWN'S ESTATE, CO. MEATH—SETTING FIRE TO HOUSES.

MR. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is a fact that the agent of Lord Gormanstown, Mr. H. M'Dougall, did, a few days ago, on the Meath property of his Lordship, set fire to the houses in which were a number of people whom he charged with having taken forcible possession, although he had failed to substantiate his case before a legal tribunal; and did Mr. M'Dougall act legally in so doing?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, it was a fact that some houses had been set fire to on Lord Gormanstown's property. He (Mr. W. E. Forster) advised that, pending the period for redemption, the property evicted for non-payment of rent should not be destroyed.

CHARITY COMMISSION — LORD CREWE'S CHARITIES.

Mr. W. H. JAMES asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, If it is a fact that application has lately been made to the Charity Commissioners for the application of a portion of the revenues of Lord Crewe's charities for the development of the harbour and trade of North Sunderland; if he would state whether the Commissioners have declined to entertain the proposals of the Trustees; and, if he would have any objection to state the grounds of their refusal, and to lay the Correspondence relating to this subject upon the Table?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, in reply, said, that there appeared to be some misapprehension in connection with this subject. No such application as that referred to in the hon. Member's Question had been made, and, therefore, it was unnecessary to lay any Papers in relation to the matter upon the Table.

THEATRES AND MUSIC HALLS (METROPOLIS)—PROTECTION FROM FIRE.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND asked the Chairman of the Metropolitan Board of Works, If he has yet received the report of Captain Shaw as to the actual condition of the London Theatres in respect of security from fire, which report was instructed to be made on the 13th January last; if so, what that report states as to the adequacy of exits and precautions against fire, particularly in old theatres; and, if not, when he expects to receive such report?

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG: Sir, I beg to inform the hon. Member that Captain Shaw has not yet made any Report on the state of the London theatres; and the work is one requiring so much labour and time that I am not at present able to say when he will be able to do so; but I hope we shall have an instalment of the Report in a short time.

Mr. DIXON-HARTLAND asked how many London theatres Captain Shaw had inspected during the last two months?

[No reply.]

STATE OF IRELAND—ALLEGED OUTRAGE BY SOLDIERS.

Mr. HEALY asked the Secretary of State for War, If his attention has been called to a paragraph in the "Cork Examiner," headed "Outrage by Soldiers," complaining of the conduct of the soldiers of Buttevant Garrison, who, it is alleged, on Sunday, 19th February, scaled the walls of St. Mary's Abbey, rifled a tomb, and dragged a corpse above ground, being discovered in the act of tearing the gloves from the dead man's hand; whether it is true that the men gave false names when caught, but that the number of one was found (from his glove) to be 312; and, whether any investigation has been held, and with what result?

Mr. CHILDERS: In reply to the hon. Gentleman, I have to say that my attention was called to the narrative of this disgraceful outrage, and I found the Commander of the Forces in Ireland had, without any delay, instituted an inquiry, which was followed by a further investigation at my request by the Resident Magistrate. Perhaps I had better read the Report of the latter, which contains all the facts we have been able to elicit—

> "Colonel Swettenham held a thorough inquiry, and to-day he permitted me to examine the two soldiers who alone of the party were proved to have been in the cemetery; but there is nothing to disprove the story told by these men, that they were in the churchyard along with other soldiers and civilians, and were called over to the wall of the Abbey, and went inside it to see an open coffin, but did not touch it or see any outrage committed. These men were not asked for their names, but the gloves of one of them were found in the Abbey. Two other soldiers were asked to give their names to Canon Buckley, but I could not satisfy myself that they gave false names. The two men proved to have been in the cemetery were punished by Colonel Swettenham for the trespass only, but my investigation to-day left me without sufficient

evidence to justify any criminal prosecution before the magistrates."

The facts are, briefly, that some persons unknown, but suspected to be young soldiers, opened a vault, drew a coffin outside it, opened the lid, but were not guilty of any further desecration.

STATE OF IRELAND—TERRORISM.

Mr. FORESTER asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Major Mansergh, who advertised an auction of his effects to be held near Dundrum, county Tipperary, on the 8th March; whether, owing to the prevailing terrorism, the auctioneer employed was at the last moment deterred from conducting the sale; whether, in consequence, the auction had to be abandoned; and, whether he will take steps to prevent similar occurrences?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that he understood that the sale in question had been abandoned, and that notices were posted stating that the reason for the abandonment of the sale was the state of terrorism in which the district was. He need scarcely say that the Government would use all means in their power to put down terrorism

THE VATICAN — DIPLOMATIC INTERCOURSE—MR. ERRINGTON'S MISSION.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether the attention of Her Majesty's Government has been called to a paragraph in "The Standard" of March 14th, headed "Mr. Errington's Mission," in which the following passages occur,

> "They" (the rulers of the Church) "reply that . . . Mr. Errington led them to hope that a Mission in regular form might be established (and this, as may be remembered, I had from the lips of the Cardinal Secretary); and it is, moreover, asserted that there are, in the Secretary's Office at the Vatican, documentary proofs of the wish of the English Cabinet to establish such a Mission, and of their opinion of its expediency and usefulness;"

and, whether there is any truth in these statements?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary, and I myself have stated on several occasions that Her Majesty's Government have made no proposal or request to the Vatican. I have, therefore, some doubt whether I am acting with perfect self-respect in consenting to give any further answer to the hon. Member; but I had better, perhaps, say, once for all, that the correspondent quoted is entirely mistaken in supposing that Her Majesty's Government have expressed any such wish as that named in the Question.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARREST OF MICHAEL SLATTERY.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that Michael Slattery was arrested in Clonmel on 16th January last, at five o'clock in the morning, and conveyed to Naas Gaol, where he arrived at two o'clock in the afternoon, and that he was not permitted to receive any food during the journey; and, whether he will give general instructions that, in future, necessary refreshments should be supplied to suspects on their way to prison?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the person in question had had opportunities for obtaining refreshment during his journey, but that he had refused it

LAW AND JUSTICE (IRELAND)—ELECTION OF PETTY SESSIONS CLERK AT EDENDERRY, KING'S COUNTY.

Mr. MOLLOY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, at the late election of clerk of petty sessions of the Edenderry District, King's County, there appeared as candidates, amongst others, the following: Robert Strong, clerk of petty sessions of the Carbury District, a most respectable man, and of many years' good and honourable service, and Edward Hopkins, who is in every way qualified for the post, and who was strongly recommended by, amongst other persons of the district Colonel Bruen; and, whether the Mr. Barnes who has been appointed was disqualified under the Act and Treasury Minutes regulating these appointments; and, if so, will he cause a new election to take place; and, if not, upon what grounds, and by what authority, the said Act and Minutes are to be thus contravened?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, the hon. Member had put a Question on this subject before, and had received an answer from the Attorney General. He did not think he had anything to add to that answer. Mr. Barnes had been elected to the position by the unanimous vote of the magistrates present. There was no Act of Parliament or Treasury Minute regulating these appointments, and the Lord Lieutenant had given his consent to the appointment of Mr. Barnes.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—MR. MICHAEL DAVITT.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether it is a fact that professional visits of medical gentlemen to Mr. Michael Davitt in Portland Prison take place in presence of the Governor of the Prison, and of the medical officer of the General Prisons Board; and, if so, what reasons exist for refusing Mr. Michael Davitt's usual medical attendant, Dr. Kenny, permission to visit him under these conditions?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: In reply to the hon. Member's Question, I have to state that I have always been very willing, and even anxious, that the friends of Mr. Davitt should be satisfied as to the state of his health, and I have given facilities for that purpose. The reason that Dr. Kenny, who was formerly allowed to attend him, is not now permitted to do so is based on the ground that the political part which Dr. Kenny has taken seems to the Government to unfit him for forming an unprejudiced opinion as to the effect of his imprisonment upon his health. I am, however, happy to say, for the satisfaction of the hon. Member and the friends of Davitt, that I can give him some authoritative information. I not only wished to satisfy myself, but also the friends of Davitt, by allowing friends of his to visit him, and they have reported to me privately in a satisfactory manner. I could not give these private reports; but I see one of those visitors has published a letter in *The Irish World*, which is, no doubt, an authentic source of information. In *The Irish World* of last week he says—

> "You will be glad to hear that Mr. Davitt is well, and that he has increased six pounds in weight since I last saw him, that he has no complaint to make, that he seems in wonderful spirits, and that he reads and writes every day."

The Irish World then goes on to say——

Mr. O'DONNELL rose to Order. He wished to know whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman was in Order in quoting from a publication which he had prevented hon. Members from receiving?

Mr. SPEAKER: The right hon. and learned Gentleman is quite in Order.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: *The Irish World* says—

> "Mr. Davitt is in the enjoyment of excellent health, and has nothing to complain of in his treatment. He is in as good spirits as if he were outside, satisfied with his diet and sleeping accommodation, and he takes an intense pleasure in the care of his garden. To wind up, we can say that his health has materially improved, and that he is now sound and strong."

I thought that a man in his position would require mental as well as physical recreation, and therefore I have ordered that what books he wishes he should be allowed to use, and that he should have the use also of writing materials. These have been a great satisfaction to him. I have also permitted his friends to see him, and I do not think they will take an improper advantage of that permission. This will allow his friends to satisfy themselves as to his condition.

Mr. REDMOND: The right hon. and learned Gentleman has quoted from a recent issue of *The Irish World* newspaper. I should like to ask whether he will give facilities to the Irish Members to receive copies of that paper through the post? At the present moment he is using his authority as Home Secretary to prevent the circulation of that paper through the post.

Mr. HEALY: The right hon. and learned Gentleman states that Mr. Davitt is allowed to see what books he likes. I should like to ask whether it is a fact that copies of *Hansard* have been refused to him; and, in that case, whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman will have any objection to the volumes of *Hansard* for last year, and as many as have been issued this year, being sent to Mr. Davitt?

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: If anyone likes to read *Hansard*, I am sure he may do so, as far as I am concerned. I should have thought that would have been an additional punishment.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT.

MR. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to two letters in the "Freeman's Journal" of 14th March, respecting treatment of suspects, signed by Mr. Nicholas A. Devine, recently released from Armagh Gaol, and Mr. James O'Connell, at present in Monaghan Gaol; whether it is a fact that there is no hospital in Armagh Gaol; whether the sanitary arrangements at Monaghan are as described; and, whether he has inquired generally into the complaints contained in those letters; and, if so, whether he will state the result?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, the facts are not as described in the letters to which the hon. Member refers. The Chairman of the Visiting Board and the officers are satisfied as to the sanitary arrangements of these gaols. I have made inquiries, and I find that the allegations are, for the most part, without foundation.

STATE OF IRELAND — CHARITABLE MEETINGS—THE CONSTABULARY.

MR. SEXTON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that, upon a recent occasion, two constables of the Irish Constabulary Force intruded themselves into a room of the Catholic Presbytery at Thurles, county Tipperary, where a committee of ladies and gentlemen were at the time engaged in making preparations for the holding of a bazaar for a local purpose; whether those constables refused to leave, and did not leave for a considerable time, although assured by the Rev. James Cantnill, the owner of the house, that the object of the meeting was purely charitable; whether the local head constable, at an interview the previous evening with the Rev. Mr. Cantnill, had been informed that the meeting would have relation to the bazaar alone, and had left it to be inferred that he was satisfied with such assurance; whether the local magistrate and sub-inspector of police, being Catholics, and being present at Mass on the day of the meeting, and before the meeting was held, were invited, as parishioners, to attend it; whether, instead of satisfying themselves in this inoffensive manner as to the character of the meeting, they caused the offensive intrusion of the constables; and, whether he sanctioned this proceeding; and, if not, whether he will secure that the like shall not again occur?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I find that this Question refers to an advertised meeting held at Thurles on the 1st of January. The Constabulary had reason to believe that the Ladies' Land League intended to hold a meeting on that occasion. The sub-inspector accordingly sent a head-constable on the 31st of December to warn the Rev. Mr. Cantnill against allowing the meeting to be held. He replied that it was for a purely charitable purpose, and that he had no objection to the police attending. Two policemen were accordingly sent. They were admitted and remained about 20 minutes, when they left. Their instructions were, that if permission was refused, they were not to persist. They found that a number of members of the Land League attended, but no business of the Land League was being carried on.

MR. SEXTON asked if the right hon. Gentleman would give instructions that in future the police should not intrude themselves when the object of the meeting was avowedly charitable?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, if the avowed object of the meeting be charitable, that is no proof that it will be conducted entirely for that purpose. I cannot say that, under all circumstances, the police should be ordered not to attend when the object of the meeting is avowedly for a charitable purpose.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE POSTMISTRESS OF BOHERMEEN.

MR. METGE asked the Postmaster General, If he will state the grounds upon which Mary Malinn was deprived of the office of postmistress to the district of Bohermeen, in the county of Meath, she having held that office for the last six years with the sanction of the Secretary to the Post Office, Ireland, no charge having ever been brought against her in her official capacity, her father having held the same office for a period of between thirty and forty years, and her brother being at present in the service of the Post Office; whether it is not the case that she had received certificates of character from her parish priest, and also from a neighbouring magistrate; and, whether any influence had been brought to bear on the Secretary of the Post Office, in order to have her removed from the said office; and, if so, the nature of such influence?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, in reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that John Malinn, and not Mary Malinn, was the keeper of the post office at Bohermeen. John Malinn died in November last, and the office being one of small value, it is not in my gift, but in that of the Treasury. The usual course was adopted, and, on the vacancy being reported to the Treasury, the Treasury appointed Catherine Flynn.

Mr. METGE: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered the last portion of the Question.

Mr. FAWCETT: That is a Question which should be addressed to the Treasury.

Mr. METGE: Then I beg to give Notice that I will ask the Secretary of the Treasury this Question on an early day.

PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS (CORRUPT AND ILLEGAL PRACTICES) BILL.

Mr. LEWIS asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether, before proceeding with the Corrupt Practices Bill, he will cause to be laid upon the Table of this House a full copy of a letter addressed to the Right Hon. Lord Richard Grosvenor, M.P. a portion of which appeared in the Report of the Chester Bribery Commission?

Mr. THOROLD ROGERS asked Mr. Attorney General, Whether, before bringing in his Corrupt Practices Bill, he will cause to be laid upon the Table of this House the cheque for £3,000, drawn by a member of the Carlton Club upon a fund standing at Drummond's Bank in the name of a member of the late Government, which cheque was given to one Pegler, alias Matthews, and the proceeds of which were expended in bribing the electors of Oxford; and, why it is that the same Pegler, alias Matthews, who so expended the £3,000 provided by the Carlton Club, has not been prosecuted?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James): I am sure the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis) and the hon. Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) have some good reasons for putting these Questions on the Paper; but I hope they will forgive me for saying that it is much to be regretted that Questions of this character should be asked. The answer to these Questions is that both of these documents, in all their material parts, will be found referred to in the Reports of the Chester and Oxford Bribery Commissions respectively. The letter, to which reference has been made, in all its material parts is set out by the Commissioners in their Report in regard to corrupt practices at Chester, and the same answer may be made to the hon. Member for Southwark with respect to Oxford. There is one part of the Question of the hon. Member for Southwark to which I would wish to make an explicit answer. It was why a person in a certain case had not been prosecuted? An information was filed against the person nine or ten months ago, and a warrant was issued for his arrest. No one knew where the person was to be found, and it had consequently been impossible to effect his arrest.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE POSTMASTER OF HOLLYWOOD.

Mr. M'COAN asked the Postmaster General, Under what circumstances Mr. Quick was recently removed from the postmastership of Hollywood, county Wicklow; and, if he is prepared to state to the House the nature of the charge or charges, if any, on which the removal was ordered?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, in reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that Mr. Quick was removed from the postmastership of Hollywood because he was found attending meetings of an association which had been declared to be illegal, after having been fully warned of the consequences which would result.

THE LAND COMMISSION (IRELAND)—APPOINTMENT OF SOLICITOR.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether Mr. Geoffrey Browning has been appointed

Solicitor to the Land Commission; whether another gentleman had practically been selected for the office, who was rejected, upon the Commissioners learning from him, upon inquiring what his political views were, that although he was not an active politician, he had acted professionally, seven years ago, as conducting agent for Mr. Parnell, upon his first return for Meath; and, if the Commissioners were aware of the fact, or made any inquiry to ascertain whether Mr. G. Browning has himself acted as conducting agent for the senior Member for Dublin at the last two elections?

MR. SEXTON: Before the right hon. and learned Gentleman answers the Question, I should like to ask him if he is aware that Mr. Justice O'Hagan, the judicial member of the Land Commission, is the author of several inflammatory political ballads, for the singing of which people have been sent to gaol in Ireland?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): No, Sir. I am not aware of that which the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton) imputes to my knowledge. With reference to the Question of the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy), I have to state that the Land Act of last Session (Section 45) authorizes the Land Commission, with the consent of the Lord Lieutenant, to appoint and remove their Solicitor, and I am informed that in the exercise of this power Mr. Geoffrey Browning has been appointed Solicitor to the Commission. In making this appointment I am satisfied that the Land Commission examined into and considered the qualifications of every candidate who applied for the office, and of everyone whom they thought likely to be suited for it, and satisfied themselves of Mr. Browning's competency before they appointed him. I am also satisfied that they acted in reference to this appointment to the best of their judgment, and on their statutory responsibility; but I am not informed what facts they were aware of or what inquiries they made.

MR. HEALY said, he would ask, on an early day, if there was any truth in a statement which recently appeared in *The Dublin Morning Mail* alleging that an eminent solicitor, who was nominated for the office in question, was declared disqualified by the Chief Secretary for Ireland on the ground that he had acted as conducting agent for Mr. Parnell at the Meath Election in 1875, although the three Commissioners protested against the absurdity of disqualifying a man who had never identified himself with the Land League, and who had never seen Mr. Parnell until he went to conduct his election in 1875, five years before the passing of the Land Act.

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I think I may answer that Question. I have not read the article referred to by the hon. Member; but if it alleges that I refused the sanction that the Government have to give to the appointment of any person whatever, it is totally untrue.

CUSTOMS—THE NEW WAREHOUSING SCHEME.

MR. ROUND asked the Secretary to the Treasury, Whether he will reconsider the question of granting special terms of retirement to clerks in the Customs in the case of those clerks in the warehousing departments who were made "redundant" three years ago, by the merely partial application of the "Playfair" scheme of re-organization, and who, having been prejudicially affected by the subsequent suppression of the vacancies that have arisen on the upper division, are now, after a period of service of little less than twenty years, excluded even from the full benefit of the Treasury Regulations, made under the powers of Section 7 of "The Superannuation Act, 1859," whereby a term of service of ten years extra to that actually performed is taken into calculation in computing pensions on the abolition of office?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Sir, the Playfair scheme was not, as the hon. Member seems to suppose, merely partially introduced into the Customs Departments at the last re-organization. The whole permanent clerical establishment was divided into an upper and a lower division, certain superfluous clerks of the old staff being continued in lieu of lower division clerks. Such loss as these redundant clerks may have sustained by the change was fully compensated by the improved salary and prospects which they received. Should any of these clerks be retired on abolition terms they will receive pensions calculated on the terms provided by the Treasury Regulations made under the provisions of Section 7 of the Superannuation Act of 1859, whereby, if the service has been less than five years, one year is added; if five years and less than 10, three years are added; if 10 years and less than 15, five years are added; if 15 years and less than 20, seven years are added; while 10 years are only added if the service has amounted to at least 20 years. I see no reason for departing from this scale in the case of the Customs redundant clerks.

ARMY—CASE OF MICHAEL FLYNN.

MR. REDMOND asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether his attention has been called to an application for pension from Michael Flynn, late of C battery, F brigade, R.H.A., and previously of the East India Company's service; whether it is a fact that this man served in the Indian mutiny with bravery, and on one occasion captured a Sepoy spy, for which he received no reward whatever; whether it is a fact that in 1863, during a field day, he received a crush from a horse which invalided him and eventually forced him to leave the service; whether he is now entirely without pension; and, whether he will reconsider the case, with a view to making some provision for him?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, I had heard nothing of this case, which is some 17 years old, until I read the hon. Member's Question; but the facts appear to be that Michael Flynn, after serving the East India Company for two years, enlisted in the Royal Artillery in 1859, and was discharged in 1865. His character was recorded as "bad," and he was discharged for unfitness, the result of a disease which I need not name. His short service, of course, gave him no claim to permanent pension; and I may say that neither at the War Office nor the India Office is anything known of his acts of bravery, or of his supposed accident in 1863.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—LETTERS BETWEEN PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT.

MR. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it is a fact that the following "Executive Order" has been posted in Armagh Gaol:—

"As to letters from one imprisoned suspect to another they should not be forwarded unless they are confined to personal matters having no connection with politics or administration;"

and, whether the word "administration" covers all matters relating to prison treatment; and, if so, what are the grounds for such a regulation?

MR. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, those are the terms of the Executive Order which has been issued. The word "administration" does not cover all matters relating to prison treatment.

TRADE AND COMMERCE — TEA AND COFFEE DUTIES IN THE UNITED STATES.

MR. R. N. FOWLER asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to a Bill, now before the Congress of the United States, repealing the duties on tea and coffee products of the possessions of the Netherlands; and, whether Her Majesty's Government will urge on the Government of the United States to amend the Bill, so as to place tea imported into America from this Country in the same position as that imported from the possessions of the Netherlands?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, the effect of the Bill would appear to be to abolish, in the case of tea and coffee, the produce of the Possessions of the Netherlands, the differential duty levied on those articles when produced in countries East of the Cape of Good Hope, and imported into the United States from places West of the Cape. We are awaiting a Report from Her Majesty's Minister at Washington as to its bearing on tea and coffee produced in British Possessions.

INLAND REVENUE DEPARTMENT — UNLICENSED DEALING IN PLATE.

DR. CAMERON asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the circumstances attending a conviction recently obtained against William Forrest, at Glasgow, for selling plate without a licence, to the admitted fact that he was seduced by the false representations of an officer of the Inland Revenue into the breach of Law of which he was convicted; that the department instituted the prosecution in ignorance of this, and, since learning it, have reprimanded the officer; and, whether, taking these circumstances into consideration, he will recommend the Commissioners to remit the penalty imposed?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Sir, it is true that there were misrepresentations on the part of the officer of the Inland Revenue who made the detection in this case; yet, as Forrest was duly convicted by the magistrates of an offence against the Revenue laws, it would not be advisable for the Board of Inland Revenue, of its own motion, to mitigate the penalty unless recommended by the magistrates to do so. But any recommendation by the magistrates would, of course, receive the favourable consideration of the Commissioners.

THE LAND COURT (IRELAND)—STATE OF BUSINESS.

Mr. T. A. DICKSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If, taking into consideration the fact that over ten thousand applications to fix a fair rent await hearing in the counties of Tyrone and Armagh, the Government will direct that separate Sub-Commissions shall sit permanently in the above two counties until progress is made and the present block of business removed?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: Sir, I have been in communication with the Land Commissioners with reference to the subject of this Question, and I hope to be able to arrange matters so as to prevent the pressure of business to which this Question alludes.

Mr. O'DONNELL asked whether it was the intention of the Government to give exceptional facilities to the two counties mentioned in the Question over the rest of Ireland?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: It is not intended to give exceptional facilities to any part of Ireland.

STATE OF IRELAND — THE CONSTABULARY—CORPORATION OF DROGHEDA.

Mr. DAWSON asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to the action of sub-inspector O'Callaghan, who, at the meeting of the Corporation of Drogheda on the 8th March, interposed in the proceedings and said "he would not allow the word coercion to be used," and that, at the same meeting, head constable Moffatt said "that the language was not permissible;" and, whether such interference on the part of the constabulary with the proceedings of a municipal body has the sanction of the Government?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that offensive epithets had been applied to the Sub-Inspector, who had addressed the Chairman; but what he had said did not appear to be very alarming. He had said that if such language were used he should feel it his duty to withdraw from the meeting. ["Hear, hear!" *from Irish Members.*] Hon. Members cheered; but that did not seem to be a very formidable threat. The Chairman then caused the word to be withdrawn. The head constable did not address any observations to the meeting.

STATE OF IRELAND—SPEECH OF THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND AT TULLAMORE.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the police allowed a meeting to take place at Tullamore, King's County, which was addressed by the Right Hon. W. E. Forster; and, whether it is true that a number of other meetings have been proclaimed in that county on the ground that they were calculated to provoke a breach of the peace; and, if so, can he state what reason the police had to anticipate that Mr. Forster's meeting would be less calculated to give rise to disorder than other assemblies recently proclaimed?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he wondered whether Questions would ever end on the subject of the meeting he addressed at Tullamore. A number of meetings had been proclaimed in King's County; but the Government had no reason to anticipate that there would be any breach of the peace on the occasion on which he addressed the meeting in question, and they were quite right in their anticipation.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the arrest and imprisonment of Mr. John M'Carthy and Mr. John Harte, of Killoe, in the county of Longford; whether Mr. M'Carthy has not been three months in Armagh Gaol, and Mr. Harte nearly the same period in Omagh Gaol; whether these men, arrested on "reasonable suspicion," were men who had borne a good character; whether the part of the county to which they belong is peaceful and free from outrage; and, whether, under these circumstances, he will give directions for the release of Mr. M'Carthy and Mr. Harte from prison?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that Mr. M'Carthy was arrested on the 6th of December and Mr. Harte on the 1st of March. They had since been removed to Enniskillen. He was sorry the hon. Member had asked him about the character of the men in question. He did not wish to say anything against their characters; but he could not report that they had borne a good character. One of them had been convicted of having unlicensed arms. Their cases, however, were being reconsidered, and he would communicate the result in a few days.

MR. LEAMY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If it is true that Mr. James Hegarty, of Falcurragh, county Donegal, recently confined in Derry Gaol in default of finding sureties to be of good behaviour, was deprived of the privilege of receiving visits oftener than once a week; was not allowed to receive newspapers sent to him by his friends; was compelled to take exercise with prisoners committed for trial on serious charges; and was sentenced to twenty-four hours' solitary confinement on a charge of whistling in his cell, although the warder of that part of the prison in which Mr. Hegarty was confined declared that the charge was untrue; and, if he can state why Mr. Hegarty was subjected to such exceptional treatment?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he found, on inquiry, that the Governor had misconstrued the Prison Rules in the case in question. He was under the impression that he was dealing with the old Rules in the treatment of this prisoner. He (Mr. W. E. Forster) had taken every possible care to avoid the recurrence of any such cases in the future.

Mr. Justin M'Carthy

SCIENCE AND ART—THE TRANSIT OF VENUS.

SIR JOHN HAY asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether any, and what, preparations are to be made for observing the transit of Venus?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Sir, at the suggestion of the late Astronomer Royal the preparations for observing the transit of Venus in December next have been confided to a Committee of the Royal Society, who have been good enough to give the Government the benefit of their valuable assistance. Preliminary arrangements for the expeditions are in active progress under the supervision of this Committee; £275 has already been voted for this service on a Supplementary Estimate for 1881-2. The right hon. and gallant Member will find, at page 367 of the Civil Service Estimates, that £14,680 is provided for the coming year, and a sum of about £1,000 for reduction of the observations is expected to be required in 1883-4. Besides this, a number of instruments are to be lent from the Greenwich Observatory; a party is to be conveyed to and from Madagascar in a ship of war; and stationery and other requisites will be supplied at the public expense.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—LETTERS TO PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT.

MR. JOSEPH COWEN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will undertake to return to their writers the letters sent to the political prisoners in Irish gaols that are opened and not delivered to the prisoners?

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he found that it was contrary to the Prison Regulations to return letters which were not delivered to the prisoners; and he could not, having regard to prison discipline, depart from that rule.

MR. SEXTON asked if the right hon. Gentleman would modify the Rule so far as to inform the writers that the letters had not been delivered?

MR. J. COWEN said, he had occasion to write to "suspects" upon matters which were not political, and he was unable to ascertain whether the letters had been detained or not.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I will consider the Question asked by the hon. Member for Sligo (Mr. Sexton).

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL CONVENTION.

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the "Native Location Commission," provided for in Articles 21 and 22 of the Transvaal Convention, has been constituted; and, if so, what work it has performed; and, whether its proceedings have been satisfactory to Her Majesty's Government?

Mr. COURTNEY: Sir, on the 3rd of January last the British Resident wrote to the High Commissioner that, having in view the desirability of an early assembling of this Commission, he proposed to meet the President at an early date, to arrange for the due constitution of the Commission. That is the latest information we have on the subject.

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether any, and, if so, what sums of money have been paid under Articles 9, 10, and 11, of the Transvaal Convention, to Her Majesty's Government, or what arrangements have been made, under those Articles, or what additional money provided by Her Majesty's Government for the Transvaal, up to the present time?

Mr. COURTNEY: Sir, the British Resident has intimated that the Transvaal Government is not in a position to pay and satisfy at present the claims awarded against it; and in order to save those entitled to compensation from inconvenience and distress the British Resident has been authorized to pay the claims awarded upon his receiving from the Transvaal Government a formal notification of its inability to meet them at present, and of its desire that the British Government should advance the necessary funds. The amount which has been or may have to be so paid is not yet precisely known; but the British Resident has reported that the probable total award against the Transvaal Government may be £110,000. No money has been received from the Transvaal Government under Article 11 of the Convention, which mentioned 12 months from the 8th of August, 1881, as the period within which the first instalment of the debt should be repaid.

THE TRINITY HOUSE—TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION BETWEEN LIGHTHOUSES AND THE SHORE.

Mr. AKERS-DOUGLAS asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether any steps have yet been taken to secure telegraphic communication between lighthouses and lightships and the shore?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, that the Board of Trade were in communication some time ago with the Trinity House on this subject. He had informed the Trinity House that he should be prepared to sanction the communication in the case of one lightship as an experiment. He had since been informed that negotiations were in progress with one of the Telegraphic Companies for connecting the Sunk Lightship with the shore; and in about a fortnight he expected to have the whole plan before the Board of Trade. Whilst desirous that this experiment should be made, he was afraid it would be costly; and at present he was doubtful whether the expenditure would be justified by the results.

ARMY (INDIA)—FURLOUGH AND PENSIONS.

Sir TREVOR LAWRENCE asked the Secretary of State for India, What reason exists why the Indian Furlough and Leave Rules of 1875, which allow one year's leave counting for pension after every five years' service, should not be applied to all officers in the Staff Corps and Indian Army, with retrospective effect, so as to accelerate retirements in the present excessive number of field officers; and, whether, as the recently published pension scheme makes a marked distinction in favour of officers who joined the Staff Corps before September 12th, 1866, he will be able to recommend such a modification of the scheme as will extend its advantages to officers on the General List, and to officers of the late Indian Army, and of the General List who joined the Staff Corps after September 12th 1866?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, the Rules which governed the service for pension of those officers who entered the Indian Army before 1875 were well understood by them, and their voluntary absences from duty were doubtless governed by that understanding. The Rules of 1875 could not conveniently be applied to officers of already long service, though they were given the option of taking advantage of them if they considered their terms, on the whole, more favourable. It was not, however, intended, nor would it be reasonable, that they should take the benefits of the new system and discard its drawbacks. With regard to the second part of the hon. Member's Question, I would point out that the recently-published pension scheme is based on the privilege already secured to those officers who joined the Staff Corps before September, 1866, of succeeding to colonels' allowances in a fixed period—a privilege which does not belong to those on what is called the General List, or those who joined the Staff Corps after September, 1866. I have no intention of extending this privilege to those classes which do not already possess it. I may say now that the whole question of Indian military pensions has recently been under my most careful consideration. In communicating my decisions on them to the Government of India, I said that the Rules, as they now stand, are not, with due regard to the public interest, susceptible of further extension. I adhere to this view, and am not prepared to entertain proposals for any such extension.

Sir TREVOR LAWRENCE asked the Secretary of State for India, If he will explain why time spent at Addiscombe was allowed to count towards pensions, both "original" and "additional," under the Indian Pension Scheme sanctioned by the Despatch of August 4th 1881, but under the recent Despatch towards "original" pensions only, and not "additional"; and, whether the effect of this is not to place Addiscombe officers, who have not exceeded their prescribed amounts of leave for "original" pensions, in a less advantageous position under the latter than they were put in under the former Despatch, owing to their having to make good their Addiscombe time before they can claim the pension under the latter Despatch, to which they would have been entitled under the former?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, it was by inadvertence that under the terms laid down in my despatch of August 4 last, the time spent at Addiscombe became, by implication, included in the service qualifying for the extra pension. This was set right in the amending despatch of December 8, 1881. In no case does Addiscombe service count towards the additional pension.

Sir TREVOR LAWRENCE asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether it is not the case, according to the last Army List, that there are in the Madras Army, in the four cavalry regiments, 21 field officers to 13 captains and subalterns, and in the forty-one infantry regiments, 179 field officers to 85 captains and subalterns; and, whether he proposes to take any steps to remedy this disproportion which would seem injurious to the esprit de corps and the efficiency of the Madras Army?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, the latest Madras *Army List* shows that on the 1st of January, 1882, there were actually serving with the Madras regiments of Cavalry and Infantry but 96 captains and subalterns to 151 field officers, including captains having brevet rank, which is certainly a disproportionate number of the field officer grade. This disproportion will, however, be at once considerably re-adjusted by the recent measures adopted in concert with the War Office for facilitating the admission of young officers into the Staff Corps, through which the existing deficiencies in the Madras regiments will, it may be hoped, be completed with subalterns of under four years' service. These measures, combined with the recent Rules limiting the tenure of regimental commands, coupled with the more favourable terms of retirement lately introduced, will, I believe, in due course, bring the regimental establishments down to their normal proportion of the several ranks; and I do not propose to take any further steps in that direction. Meanwhile, I continue to receive very favourable reports of the spirit and efficiency of the Madras Army.

THE LAND COMMISSION (IRELAND)— MR. FOTTRELL'S PAMPHLET.

Mr. TOTTENHAM asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether the pamphlet entitled "How to become Owner of your Farm," was, previous to its issue by the Land Commission, submitted to or brought under the cognisance of any official connected with that body other than Mr.

Fottrell; and, if so, whether it was approved or revised by such official?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, he should have supposed that the Correspondence presented to both Houses of Parliament would have answered that Question.

SOUTH AFRICA—NATAL—THE NATIVE POPULATION.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether it is to be understood from the Papers regarding Natal laid before the House that, in the event of the European colonists who exercise the franchise accepting responsible government, it is intended to hand over to the legislature and government representing them the rule over the native population (exceeding the Europeans in number, in the proportion of 400,000 to 80,000), without giving the natives any voice whatever in the matter, without any provision for their representation in the new elective assembly, and without reservation to Her Majesty's Government in England of any greater power than in the case of the Basutos attached to the Cape Colony?

Mr. COURTNEY: Sir, the Questions of my hon. Friend are of an argumentative character, and they seek to obtain an interpretation and defence of Lord Kimberley's despatches to Sir Henry Bulwer of the 2nd of February. I hope my hon. Friend will forgive me if I demur to answering his Questions. The despatches are, I think, plain and intelligible, and they have been published in Natal, and a General Election ordered on the basis of them. It would be very inconvenient, if not dangerous, to give verbal glosses and interpretations of them here, which might be transmitted to Natal in an abbreviated and confused fashion injuriously affecting the issues put before the constituencies of the Colony.

Sir GEORGE CAMPBELL asked whether the Natives were in any way to be consulted with regard to the carrying out of these arrangements?

[No answer was given.]

THE INDIA OFFICE—THE SHIPPING BUSINESS.

Mr. CODDINGTON asked the Secretary of State for India, If it is the fact that a single firm of brokers have recently been appointed to do the whole shipping business of the India Office in London and most of the outports; and, if so, why this change has been made?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, it appeared that the former system of taking up all freight, as a rule, by open tender, gave openings for combination among the brokers against the interests of the Government, and, in consequence, a new system has been adopted for six months as an experiment. A firm of shipping brokers is now employed to obtain and submit for consideration offers of freight for India, in order that, through them, the India Office may be assisted in ascertaining the state of the shipping market, and in conducting the necessary negotiations and shipping arrangements with a view to securing favourable terms. The results have, so far, been very satisfactory.

STATE OF IRELAND—SEIZURE OF THE "IRISH WORLD" NEWSPAPER.

Mr. LEWIS asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether, if the Government has been served in respect of the seizure of the "Irish World" newspaper in the Post Office, he will state to the House under what Act of Parliament or Law, written or unwritten, the Government has acted in making such seizure?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, it is out of no disrespect to the hon. Member that I can give no other answer to his Question than that Her Majesty's Government has acted in this matter under proper legal advice.

WAYS AND MEANS—TAXATION OF REAL PROPERTY.

Sir BALDWYN LEIGHTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, in the readjustment of the taxation on real property referred to in the Speech from the Throne, it is the intention of the Government to deal only with local rates, or with all such taxation as can be shown to be inequitably charged on land or houses; such as the incidence of the land tax formerly levied equally on personalty under the Act 4th William and Mary, cap. 1; the inequalities of income tax on lands and houses under Schedule A, levied on the gross income, whether paid or not; the cost of public prosecution charged on the sheriffs of counties; the Succession Duties in certain cases; and other unequal taxation; and, if not, whether, in view of the great agricultural depression, he will give his attention to the same with a view to equitable and early relief?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Gladstone): Sir, the Question of my hon. Friend opens the entire subject of direct taxation in its application to land, and invites me to deal with it during the present Session. It is a subject so large and complicated that I really doubt whether it could be dealt with at once under even the most favourable circumstances as to time, and when everything was quite ripe for handling it. At present I do not think that time has arrived, and I cannot hold out any expectation of such an event.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE TEA AND COFFEE DUTIES.

Mr. MACFARLANE asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If, before the introduction of the annual Budget statement for this year, he will take into his serious consideration the desirability of reducing or abolishing the Duties upon tea and coffee, the consumption of these beverages tending to the promotion of temperance and sobriety; and, if the revenue cannot bear the loss that would arise from this step, he will consider the possibility of making good the deficiency by increasing the tax upon spirits two shillings a gallon?

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Gladstone): Sir, the Question of my hon. Friend is of a kind which it is the uniform rule of the Finance Minister to decline answering; and I have to apologize to him and to the House for having been inadvertently led to deviate from this rule during the present year. I can hardly excuse myself for it, except by saying that I think it was my first fault in that respect, by answering in regard to one or two particular duties that would not be interfered with. I have felt the inconvenience of that in the cropping up of one or two other Questions, for I have been asked whether other duties will be interfered with? The hon. Member is probably well enough acquainted with the balance of the Revenue to be able to form an opinion for himself on the subject. In asking to be excused from giving an answer to the present Question, I hope the bad example which I set in the present year will only be remembered for the purpose of avoiding it, inasmuch as the practice is, in certain states of the Public Revenue, a very great public inconvenience indeed if it were to be imitated.

CUSTOMS AND INLAND REVENUE—SEIZURE OF MALT COFFEE.

Mr. WHITLEY asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether the attention of the Government has been called to a recent seizure, by the Excise authorities in Liverpool, of an article known as malt coffee, sold undisguisedly as a mixture of malt and coffee; and, whether, having regard to the recent Treasury Minute of 20th January last, permitting the importation of "any vegetable matter applicable to the uses of coffee or chicory, roasted or ground, mixed without reference to the proportion of the mixture," and having regard also to the permitted mixture of other vegetable substances with cocoa, the Government are prepared to relax any old Law which may operate as a restriction on Home trade, and so encourage British manufactures, if it should, upon investigation, be held that the article in question is an infringement of any existing Law?

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Yes, Sir; the attention of the Treasury has been called by the hon. Member, and by the noble Lord his Colleague, to the circumstances mentioned in his first Question. The seizure was made by the Excise authorities in pursuance of the Act 43 *Geo.* III. c. 129, which enacts, in Section 5, that if any article prepared for the purpose of resembling coffee shall be found in the possession of any dealer, it shall be forfeited, and the dealer fined £100. Moreover, no duty had been paid upon the malt. With reference to the second Question, I have to observe that there is nothing opposed to the above-mentioned section in the recent Treasury Minute. In 1860 a duty was imposed on chicory, or any other vegetable matter applicable to the uses of coffee or chicory; the object of that duty being, as was stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to protect the coffee revenue, which could not be expected to grow so long as an article that assumes the appearance of coffee is admitted free, while coffee itself pays a high duty. The duty on coffee and on chicory, or any other vegetable matter applicable to the uses of coffee or chicory, has since that time been equal; and the recent Treasury Minute has simply allowed the importation, on payment of duty, of mixtures, the components of which previously paid duty when imported separately. The Minute in no way authorizes the sale of any article previously forbidden. But as malt may now be roasted without any duty or Excise restriction, the Revenue would be endangered if a mixture of malt and coffee were allowed to be made in this country and sold as coffee.

WAYS AND MEANS—THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he intends to suspend, before the Easter holidays, the Debates upon the Clôture for the purpose of introducing the Budget for 1882-83; and, if so, upon what day?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE): The noble Lord is aware that it is the practice to have the Accounts made up on the 31st of March; and as the 1st of April is the Saturday before Passion week, that will make it an impossibility to propose the Budget before Easter. I will endeavour before Easter to give a convenient Notice of the day. There will be no adjournment of the Procedure Debate with a view to the Budget.

PARLIAMENT—THE EASTER RECESS.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Can the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister give the House any information in regard to the Easter Holidays?

MR. GLADSTONE: We shall propose that the House should pursue the course which has become common of late years. Last year the holiday was lengthened somewhat, in consequence of the length of the time the House had been labouring before Easter. This year it is the average time, and we propose to do what has been usual of late years. We shall meet on the Tuesday in Passion week for a Morning Sitting, and then adjourn till the Monday week following.

NAVY—TRANSPORT OF TROOPS FROM NATAL.

MR. CARBUTT: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty a Question of which I have given him private Notice, and in doing so it must not be supposed that I believe one word of the statement which I am about to read. My Question is, Whether there is any truth in the charge against the Government contained in the following leading article which appeared in *The Perthshire Constitutional* on the 15th of March—namely:—

> "From the extracts which are published in another part of to-day's paper, it would appear as if Sir Donald Currie is not supporting Mr. Gladstone for nothing. The Government is accused of showing a distinct partiality for the line of steamers managed by the Member for Perthshire. All the troops, it is said, now being sent home from South Africa are being conveyed by the Castle Line—none whatever being sent by the Union Line, although it carries the mails on alternative weeks. The name of Mr. Gladstone is associated with many scandalous pieces of jobbery; but if the information we publish to-day be correct, there could be nothing more disgraceful."

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, this statement has been copied into so many papers, and leading articles are being written in many papers which ought to know better, that it is due to the hon. Member for Perthshire and the Admiralty that I should state how the case really stands. When it was decided to bring away part of the force at Natal, tenders were advertised for on the 2nd of September, 1881, with all the usual amount of publicity. On the appointed day tenders were received from the two Mail Companies at rates per head for the men conveyed, and from 12 other ships on time charter. These tenders were reported on to their Lordships in the following terms:—

> "The tenders of transports are all at rates that would work out for troops home much higher than the tender of Messrs. Currie and Co., which is the lowest rate at which troops have ever been conveyed by steamer either to or from the Cape."

Upon this Report their Lordships confirmed the engagement. In December, 1881, tenders were again advertised for with the same publicity. This time seven ships were offered on time charter, while Messrs. Currie and Co. alone tendered at rates per head, which rates resulted in a much lower charge than if transports had been engaged. It was thus amply shown that a transport, having to make an empty voyage out, could not compete with the low rates per head offered by a regular packet service for the homeward voyage. On two subsequent occasions, therefore, in January and March of this year, the Department obtained their Lordships' sanction for applying to the two mail lines only, the result being that Messrs. Currie and Co. made the lowest offer in the first case, and the Union Company did so in the last. In both cases, of course, the lowest offer carried it. The result has been extremely satisfactory, both as regards the terms secured and the manner in which the service has been performed. The idea that the Prime Minister was cognizant of these transactions, to those who know how business of this nature is conducted in an English Public Department, needs neither comment nor refutation.

MR. CARBUTT: In consequence of the answer given by the Secretary to the Admiralty, I beg to give Notice that I will ask the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether his attention has been called to a scurrilous leading article in *The Manchester Courier* of the 13th of March, and whether he will lay upon the Table of the House any Papers connected with the relief of Ekowe, which bear upon the services of the hon. Member for Perthshire?

STATE OF IRELAND—ATTEMPTED MURDER OF MR. CARTER.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether any steps had been taken for the discovery of the perpetrators of the outrage on Mr. Carter while returning from Belmullet fair; whether any intimation had been received of a threat made to shoot the widow and burn down her house in which the wounded Mr. Carter was now lying; and, whether any steps had been taken to protect the widow and her house?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that, as to the first part of the Question, the police had received orders to do their utmost to discover the perpetrators of the outrage. As to the latter part of the Question, the threat had been made, and the police were carefully watching over the safety of the widow.

STATE OF IRELAND—REPORTED OUTRAGES.

SIR WALTER B. BARTTELOT asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he had heard that three gross outrages had just occurred in Ireland as reported in the evening papers; whether he had heard that Mr. George Crawford, of Stirrupstown, near Clonmellon, was driving to church with his family yesterday morning, was fired at and seriously wounded, and now lying in a precarious condition; whether he had heard that between twelve and one o'clock this morning the police on their rounds, in Tighe-street, Dublin, came upon the body of a young man lying insensible in the roadway, who had been shot just below the ear, a wound three inches deep being discovered; and, lastly, whether he had heard that Sub-Inspector Doherty had been shot by a revolver at Boyle, and was not expected to recover?

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, he had heard of the murder, but could give no information as to the motives for it. He was unable to answer the latter part of the Question, as to which the hon. and gallant Gentleman had better give Notice. He had not yet read the evening papers.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND) — FARMS BOUGHT UP BY THE EMERGENCY COMMITTEE.

MR. M'COAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether he would lay upon the Table of the House a Return of the total number of tenants evicted from farms in Ireland which had been bought by agents of the Emergency Committee since the passing of the Land Act?

MR. W. E. FORSTER asked the hon. Member to give Notice of the Question. He very much doubted whether he had any official means of obtaining the Returns.

MR. M'COAN: The sheriffs.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARREST OF MICHAEL SLATTERY.

MR. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether it was a fact that Michael Slattery was arrested in Clonmel on 16th

January last at five o'clock in the morning, and conveyed to Naas Gaol, where he arrived at two o'clock in the afternoon, and that he was not permitted to receive any food during the journey; and, whether he would give general instructions that in future necessary refreshments should be supplied to suspects on their way to prison?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, Slattery was offered breakfast at Limerick Junction, but refused to take it. He took a quart of ale, however.

NOTICE.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE NEW RULES OF PROCEDURE.

MR. GLADSTONE: I beg to give Notice that, after the House shall have disposed of the Resolutions as to Procedure as far as Resolution 12, I shall move that the first seven, and also the last three, be made Standing Orders of the House; the other two, being Amendments of Standing Orders, will not require any special Motion.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PUTTING THE QUESTION).

RESOLUTION. ADJOURNED DEBATE.

[SECOND NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [20th February],

> "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, to be the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House, or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made, 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

And which Amendment was,

> To leave out from the first word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "no Rules of Procedure will be satisfactory to this House which confer the power of closing a Debate upon a majority of Members,"—(*Mr. Marriott,*)

—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words 'when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker,' stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

MR. RAIKES said, that the House would remember that various remonstrances had been addressed to the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury in order that the discussion of the question might proceed in unbroken continuity. Those remonstrances had failed altogether. He (Mr. Raikes) should not have referred to it, had it not been that since the debate had been adjourned, they had been made familiar with a process which had been extensively practised out-of-doors, and which was commonly called "the manufacture of public opinion." An eminent professor of that black art sat very near the Prime Minister; and he therefore thought it was just as well to place upon record, at the moment of resuming this debate, the peculiar circumstances which had caused its continued adjournment. He wished to point out that the seven days which had been subtracted from the debate on these Rules of Procedure had been taken, not in consequence of any action on the part of those sitting on that side of the House, nor on the part of any independent Members of the House, but that this interval had been occupied with other Business solely on the invitation of the Leader of the House, and that he, and he alone, was responsible for all this consumption of time. It was necessary to remind the House that even had the Rules been already passed that Session, they could not have been brought to bear so as to accelerate the course of Public Business. As it had been his (Mr. Raikes's) lot to deal with Parliamentary Obstruction, the House would pardon him if he stated some of the reasons which led him to regret not only that the Government had brought forward this particular proposal, but had put it in the front of their proposals, so as to make it appear to the country as if this were the end-all and be-all of their scheme; and that their other Resolutions, however admirable—and he thought some of them very admirable—were dwarfed to comparative insignificance by the paramount importance attached to the first. The proposal contained in this Resolution was recommended on four distinct and various grounds: One was that it would be in conformity with the practice prevailing in contemporary institutions; another, that it could be justified by Constitutional precedent; a third—though this was not put by the right hon. Gentleman himself—that it was rendered necessary by Party exigencies; and, finally, that it was a fitting demonstration of the patriotic indignation aroused by the obstructive proceedings in that House. He would deal first with contemporary institutions. It appeared from the replies given by our Representatives abroad to a Circular of Earl Granville that the *clôture* existed as a recognized institution in the Legislative Assemblies of France, Germany, Austria, the United States, and several other minor countries. But it was not universal. The exceptions were all of them noteworthy, and especially that of a country whose case seemed to the Prime Minister so unimportant that, of course by inadvertence, he quoted it as an example of the *clôture*—he referred to Hungary. Now the *clôture* did not exist in the Representative Assemblies of Hungary, Portugal, Spain, and Sweden and Norway; and anyone who for a moment compared those countries, politically, perhaps, of less consequence, with those in which the Rule obtained, would at once perceive an important point of difference. They were countries in which Parliamentary government was of ancient growth, where freedom, through whatever vicissitudes it might have passed, was an immemorial tradition, and where the Assemblies were much more worthy of being styled a Parliament, and not merely a Legislative Body such as those Assemblies in which the provision of the *clôture* existed. In the countries where the *clôture* existed representative institutions had either been the outcome of revolutionary outbreaks or of the indulgent whim of some benevolent despot; and particularly in Germany and Austria a combination of these two causes; and, like the ugly child of ugly parents, they carried in their unlovely features reminders of both the sources from which they were derived—on the one hand, the licence of democracy; and, on the other, the hard hand of despotism. The *clôture*, if it were desirable to exhibit its most unpleasing aspect to those who took an interest in Constitutional history and Parliamentary practice, could hardly be better presented to them than by indicating the fact that it obtained almost exclusively in novel Bodies, unaccustomed to liberty, and devoted to special purposes, which formed only a part of what Englishmen understood to be the duties of Parliament. But that was not the only lesson to be drawn from the Papers presented to the House. There were also other Papers purporting to give an account of the Procedure in the different Colonial Assemblies, from which it appeared that the *clôture* had been established and worked well—it always worked well—in Tasmania, South Australia, the Cape of Good Hope, and New Zealand. It had been tried, but not renewed, in the great Colony of Victoria, and, as far as he knew, it did not exist in the greater Dominion of Canada, or in the large and valuable Colony of New South Wales; and with all respect to the Legislatures of Adelaide and Hobart Town, he submitted that their example was not more important to the House of Commons than would be a bye-law of the Corporation of Nottingham, or of the Local Board of Oswaldtwistle. A much more significant fact was the date of the Circular. It was a point to which he wished to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the First Lord of the Treasury. A great deal had been said of Obstruction, and it had often been urged that the Obstruction, particularly during last Session, of hon. Members below the Gangway on that side of the House made some sort of *clôture* necessary. It was singular, then, to find that the Circular of Lord Granville, respecting the *clôture* in other countries, was dated August 25, 1880. The prescient eye of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs—he sometimes wished the noble Earl was a Member of the House of Commons—had foreseen the coming trouble; and the noble Earl, either with or without consultation with his Colleagues, and when he had not been more than three months in Office, addressed this Circular to Her Majesty's Representatives abroad, imploring them to obtain for him information with respect to the establishment of the *clôture* in other countries. That Circular had a certain reference, by a curious accident, to a publication of some importance which appeared also in August; but in the year 1879, exactly one year before Lord Granville in his Circular invited materials for the establishment of the *clôture* in the House, the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister was writing on the subject in *The Nineteenth Century*. He (Mr. Raikes) was sorry to find that the right hon. Gentleman had shown, by his leaving the House, that he did not wish to hear him (Mr. Raikes) quote that article; but at that time, no doubt, circumstances were wholly different from what they were in the previous year. He would not read the best of his extracts from the article to which he referred, because they had been already used earlier in the debate by the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott); but he should like to communicate one or two of them to the House. In that article the Prime Minister said—

> "To prolong debate even by persistent reiteration on legislative measures is not necessarily an outrage, an offence, or even an indiscretion. For in some cases it is only by the use of this instrument that a small minority with strong views can draw adequate attention to those views. By adequate attention I mean attention proportioned to their real value or to the public impressions connected with them, and the inconveniences which may follow from their being disregarded. There are abundant instances in which obstruction of this kind has led to the removal of perilous or objectionable matters from legislative measures, and thus to the avoidance of great public evils."

They knew that "nothing succeeds like success;" and it appeared that the test of legitimate Obstruction, in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman, was only that it should be in some measure successful. He wished also to quote another passage from the right hon. Gentleman's article—

> "It is precisely in the class of cases where the Party is small and the convictions strong that the best instances of warrantable Obstruction may be found."

If he might interpolate a remark, he fancied that the right hon. Gentleman, in writing those words, might have had in his mind the occasion on which he formed a minority of 1, with a signal and brilliant success, and spoke, as he (Mr. Raikes) believed, 15 columns of *The Times* newspaper—surely a notable instance of the Party being small and the convictions strong. [Mr. GLADSTONE: What was the date of that?] In 1857. He was speaking of the Divorce Bill. However, the quotation went on—

> "The offence [that is, Obstruction] hardly can be so dealt with in a case where the subject in debate is wide and of real public moment; still less in a case where it is one on which the public has lively susceptibilities marshalled on the side of the obstructor, least of all where he can show that by his tenacity he has been able to modify the action of the Government and the provisions of the law. When we apply these tests to the case commonly known as that of a few Irish Members in connection with the flogging clauses of the Army and Navy Bill, the keenest advocate of penal measures against them may, perhaps, be led to pause."

It appeared, however, that the right hon. Gentleman had not paused very long. While dealing with the point, inasmuch as he (Mr. Raikes) had had to sit through 21 nights of the discussion on the Army and Navy Bill, he would quote what another eminent Liberal authority, who was not now a Member of the House, had said on the subject; and, bearing in mind the reference of the Prime Minister to the Irish Members, he would compare his views with those of the right hon. Gentleman. In *The Nineteenth Century* Review, October, 1880, Lord Sherbrooke wrote—

> "I am very sorry to have to admit that in the discussions on the Mutiny Bill and on the question of flogging especially, the evil and discreditable practice of deliberately wasting the public time was largely resorted to in quarters from which better things might have been expected."

He (Mr. Raikes) thought the noble Lord might have added, if he had the article of the right hon. Gentleman before him, that that practice had been countenanced in quarters from which better things might have been expected. There was only one other extract from the article of the right hon. Gentleman with which he would trouble the House; but it might be taken as having a special interest in connection with the Business of this Session. At page 209 he found these words of the right hon. Gentleman—

> "The lessons read and to be read to the country on the subject of Obstruction ought not to have for their main text the conduct of the Irish Members. At worst, they are but accessories. The Executive Government now is the principal offender. The statement thus made ought not, however, to be taken for granted. Our Irish friends have been the main agents in procuring the expenditure of 20 or 21 days of the Session upon the consideration of a new code of military law."

The House would excuse him (Mr. Raikes) for having read these extracts, because he had a very vivid recollection of the proceedings referred to, when five or six weeks of the Session were spent in the consideration of that new code of military law, and could not but remember that the right hon. Gentleman, who now asked for powers greatly in excess of any that had ever before been demanded to put down Obstruction, was then a Member of the House, and sat on the Opposition Benches. He would now give a few words to the question of Constitutional and Parliamentary precedent for the course they were invited to adopt; and, with respect to it, the Government, he was bound to say, had not put that particularly forward in their position. Indeed, the right hon. Gentleman, although he indulged in a very lengthy narrative of the various steps taken at various times to modify or curtail the length of debate in that House, was clearly unwilling, or perhaps unable, to point to anything he could regard as a good precedent in the history of this country for the change proposed. But where the right hon. Gentleman had feared to tread, other hon. Members of the House had ventured to rush in. In a letter which appeared in *The Times* rather more than a year ago, a storehouse of great archæological interest was opened to the gaze of England by the noble Lord the Member for Calne (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice), and the hon. and learned Member for Southwark (Mr. Rogers). They had discovered that in the early part of the 17th century Resolutions were passed and an Order adopted by the House, which pointed to some means of arresting and checking the progress of a debate. But it would be found that these precedents referred entirely to the personal action of the Speaker on individual Members; and he would remind the House that the most important instance to which the noble Lord and the hon. and learned Member had called attention had reference to the proceedings connected with the judicial murder of the unfortunate Earl of Strafford, and that the Order on which they relied was introduced by the House apparently with a view to accelerate the debate upon the question of impeachment, or it might have been —for on this point there was some doubt —to hasten the Bill of Attainder. That was rather an ugly association, and he ventured to think that the right hon. Gentleman might well say—"Defend me from my friends," since the remarkable acumen of the noble Lord and the forensic experience of the hon. and learned Gentleman could furnish him with no more pertinent examples than those unlucky instances of the occasional intolerance of the House in the early period of the 17th century afforded. There was, however, a more recent precedent in the course taken by the House last year—a course practically wrung from it by an almost, if not altogether, unprecedented combination of circumstances. The House had been compelled to sit during a length of time that was absolutely intolerable, and under circumstances of themselves absolutely insupportable. It was engaged in passing a measure which, by the consent of the enormous majority of the House, and on the responsibility of Her Majesty's Government, was declared to be absolutely necessary for the preservation of peace and order, such as they were, in Ireland. The Speaker had found it necessary to interpose, and at last to terminate a debate which appeared to him to have run to scandalous lengths. And, at the same time, the Speaker said, what the right hon. Gentleman had well reminded the House of—that he did so because he felt that he ought on that occasion to take that course; but that it was a course which, in his opinion, should not be repeated; and he cast upon the House the responsibility of dealing with the evil another year. The great feature of the Urgency Resolution was that in order to declare a state of Urgency for a particular Bill, which was vouched for by a Minister of the Crown as being of the highest importance, it was necessary to obtain a majority of 3 to 1 after that declaration had been read. And the Speaker took that as an indication of the feeling of the House in the Rule which he shaped that wherever a *clôture* was to be effected in any debate, it was only to be done by a majority of 3 to 1. Now, he (Mr. Raikes) wished to point out that the Resolution did not apply to the ordinary transaction of the Business of the House, but to measures of exceptional and paramount urgency; that it required a Cabinet Minister to make a solemn declaration to the House; that 300 Members, at least, should be present; and that a majority of three-fourths should agree to a state of Urgency. And the Speaker, invested with his exceptional powers, considered it to be his duty to lay down, further, that no debate should be closed except by a majority of three-fourths of the Members voting. If ever there was a precedent fitting to the case in which it was adduced, it was that. But was the ordinary Business of the House to be conducted in accordance with doctrines and Rules infinitely more stringent than those adopted in one particular case of extreme Urgency, and in the absence of the Irish Members, when it was thought necessary to prescribe for the further conduct of a particular debate? The right hon. Gentleman did very well in not quoting it in the course of the debate, but only referring to it in the most incidental manner, because anyone who was familiar with the circumstances under which Urgency became a Parliamentary institution, or with the form in which it was brought to bear upon the House, would see that the proposal now before it was not merely a very great step in advance, but an attempt to make universal and general that which in that particular case was only excused on the ground of being particular and limited. He wished, now, in the third branch of his speech, to refer to an argument in support of this proposal which had been used, not by the First Lord of the Treasury, but by a Member of the Government, second only in importance to that right hon. Gentleman—one who was not so frequent a speaker; but the country, perhaps, took all the more interest in the occasional speeches which he made. The argument to which he (Mr. Raikes) referred was derived from Party expediency, and it had been made use of by the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) in addressing his constituents at Nelson, in North-East Lancashire, on the 17th of December, 1881. He would make all excuses for the noble Marquess, considering the circumstances in which he found himself. Having to address persons of whom, presumably, he did not know very much, and with whom he had not at least been in frequent contact, the noble Marquess had to form an idea of his audience by selecting some salient type of the sort of mind he would wish to influence. In North-East Lancashire there was a borough of some political importance, or, at least, political interest, because it sent to the House a very conspicuous Member—he (Mr. Raikes) referred to the borough of Burnley. He was not aware whether his hon. Friend (Mr. Rylands) was an elector of North-East Lancashire; but, at all events, he was a prominent personage in that district. The noble Marquess, when he addressed the people of Nelson, must have had in his mind's eye some particular type of politician whom he wished to influence—one not presumably fond of curtailing debate. He (Mr. Raikes) did not know whether his hon. Friend (Mr. Rylands) was present at the meeting; but he was sufficiently present in spirit to affect the mind of the noble Marquess. The noble Marquess had refrained from addressing the hon. Member for Burnley in the language which Lord Sherbrooke had used in his article in *The Nineteenth Century* of October, 1880, which was to this effect—

> "Everyone who addresses the House is *in posse*, if not *in esse*, the enemy of the transaction of Business. He has what Bentham would call an anti-social interest."

If the noble Marquess had wished to persuade the hon. Member for Burnley, he would scarcely have told him that he was impaled upon the horns of an ugly classical dilemma, and that he was either "*in posse*, if not *in esse*, the enemy of the transaction of business," or dwelt upon his "anti-social interest." The noble Marquess had been much too ingenious for that. This was what the noble Marquess said, speaking at Nelson on December 17, 1881—

> "Before I conclude, I should like to say two or three words upon the condition—the present condition—of Business in the House of Commons, and on the necessity for some reform of the procedure of Parliament. I may be asked why I should speak upon this subject in the country? It may seem to be a matter for the consideration of the House of Commons itself, and of the House of Commons only; but it is, in my opinion, a subject in which the country, as well as the House of Commons, has the deepest interest. And I will tell you what I think that interest is."

It was not reform of the Procedure of that House, or the reconstruction of the Legislative machine, but—

> "It is, simply, whether the country cares to have any of those great legislative reforms, for which it voted at the last Election, carried into execution during the duration of the existing

Parliament or not. There is the question of local government, and, connected with it, the difficult question of local taxation."

The noble Marquess went on to say—

> "But to go to other measures. Do you care still, as you cared two years ago, about a thorough reform of the Land Laws—a reform of our land system which will make the land less a monopoly in the hands of a few than it is now? ["Hear, hear!"] And again, do you care, as you cared two years ago, that the county franchise should be assimilated to the borough franchise—["Hear, hear!"]—and that that measure should be accompanied by a redistribution of seats?"

["Hear!"] He observed that the latter proposal was not so loudly cheered by hon. Members opposite.

> "Do you care, as some of you cared two years ago, that the question as to the restriction of intemperance and the reform of the Licensing Laws should be dealt with or not? If you want any of those things done, I have no hesitation in saying that the first thing to do is to reform the existing procedure in Parliament. Every one of these subjects offers itself, especially the question of Parliamentary Reform, to an immense extent to the proceedings of Parliamentary Obstruction. There is not one of them which does not present a variety of sides open to attack, and which the opponents of every kind will be able to avail themselves of under our existing system, and which, under the obstructive proceedings which have recently been brought to so great a perfection, may not be successfully obstructed. In speaking my own opinion as a Member of Parliament, and not as a Member of the Government, whose decision upon this subject I do not yet know, I may say I am of opinion that no remedy will be found adequate which does not give to the House, and to a majority of the House, far greater powers than it now possesses for the purpose of disposing of its own time, and of deciding what subjects it will discuss, and at what length it shall discuss them."

He did not know whether the noble Marquess had consulted his Colleagues before he went down to Nelson; but certainly he had let the biggest political cat ever seen out of the flimsiest of bags on that occasion. That was the way in which the noble Marquess approached the question of the reform of Parliamentary Procedure, and his remarks certainly had the merit of frankness; and it would be the fault of that House and of the country if they believed that, in forcing upon them these particular proposals for the reform of their Procedure, the noble Marquess, one of the leading Members of Her Majesty's Government, was actuated by any motive higher than that of endeavouring to carry out a particular Party programme. He now came to the fourth branch of the arguments put forward by the Government, and that was the one derived from patriotic indignation. The only connection which the Government had established between the indignation of the country at the obstructive proceedings in the House and the proposed New Rules was supplied by the fact that the Reform Bill of 1832 had been carried, in the first instance, by a majority of 1. He certainly felt that, having regard to the last Parliament, he had good cause for yielding to no one in indignation at the unwarrantable protraction of debate by means of the misuse and abuse of their Forms of Procedure. He was tempted to speak of that abuse in terms which he (Mr. Raikes) could hardly make sufficiently moderate for use in that House. He was sure that the right hon. Gentleman had spoken the sentiments of all in that House, and, indeed, of the whole of his countrymen, when he denounced the scandalous abuse of the Forms of that House as a means of avoiding a decision. To denounce that abuse, however, was one thing, to devise a particular remedy for the evil was another. He would ask the right hon. Gentleman if he was not throwing away a golden opportunity, when the feeling was so strong and so unanimous throughout the country in favour of some action being taken by the House? When he flung upon the Table a proposal which must necessarily develop into an apple of discord, even if it had not been fostered and tended by the noble Marquess, he would ask the Prime Minister whether it was even yet too late for him to turn his attention to some other method of dealing with the evil in a manner which might command general assent? There was another Resolution on the Paper which he (Mr. Raikes) was sure would be acceptable to both sides of the House, and which, at least, deserved a trial by the Government—a Resolution which proposed to develop and extend the provisions of the Standing Order of February, 1880. He would only say in that connection that a good deal of demonstration had been sought for, and a little had been created in favour of the Government proposals in the country by an Association at Birmingham with which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade was or had been connected——

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Had been connected.

MR. RAIKES: Well, the Association with which the right hon. Gentleman had been connected, but with which he was no longer connected.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN explained, that he was no longer officially connected with the Association in question, though he was still connected with it politically.

MR. RAIKES: The Association with which the right hon. Gentleman was no longer officially connected, but with which he was still politically connected—he was glad to hear that qualification—had sent round the "fiery cross" and whipped up a certain number of Resolutions on the Government lines. They did not seem to have made much stir in the newspapers in which they appeared; but he (Mr. Raikes) imagined from something said by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), in the course of his speech on the first night, that the pressure brought to bear on this matter had not been, in this instance, so much public as private pressure; and it was quite possible, although the House had not seen so many Resolutions as might have been anticipated from what took place when the wires answered so well to the pull, that certain hon. Members might have received communications from a good many of their constituents whose opinions they respected and deemed important. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon made use of a simile in his remarks, the meaning of which he (Mr. Raikes) did not quite catch. The right hon. Gentleman compared his Party to a noble animal which, when it heard the crack of a whip from an outrider, contented itself with muttering an imprecation.

MR. GOSCHEN: The right hon. Gentleman is putting not only the cart before the horse, but the driver before the horse. I spoke of the driver, not of the animal.

MR. RAIKES accepted the right hon. Gentleman's correction, but thought that it only made the confusion of the simile worse confounded—unless the driver was in the habit of cracking his own whip in order to get an excuse for muttering an imprecation. At any rate, when the Liberal Party were putting forward these proposals on the sound of the crack of the whip, they could hardly be said to be brought forward with the same authority as would have been the case had they been supported by the spontaneous enthusiasm of the Party now in Office. He could not but think that it was somewhat unreasonable that this proposal should come from the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman had told them in the close of his speech, and in one or two other speeches, that he had sat in the House of Commons for 50 years. In the course of that time he (Mr. Raikes) felt sure that the right hon. Gentleman had consumed a very much larger amount of the time at the disposal of Parliament than any other Member, or any half-dozen Members, that had sat in that House since the days of King John. ["Oh, oh!"] Hon. Members would bear in mind that he did not for a moment say that that time had not been well occupied; but he did assert the fact that if the time were to be measured with a sand-glass—the time consumed by one Member and another—they would find it was as he had stated. ["Oh, oh!"] He was sorry hon. Gentlemen should dislike that statement, for he was stating it merely as a fact. They knew that the right hon. Gentleman was a great orator—one of the greatest the world had ever produced—that he had sat in the House a very long time; and when they took those two circumstances into consideration, it must be evident that he had occupied far more time than any other Member there. That being so, was it not a curious irony of fate that it should fall to the lot of the Prime Minister to propose this Resolution? Was it not a singular thing that that should be so? When the Prime Minister was inspired to bring forward this proposal, what should have been the sensible and natural course for him to take? The proposition, it was to be assumed, was intended for the benefit of both Parties. The system was to be used by both Parties as they came into Office, and was not to be devoted only to carrying out the Nelson programme of the noble Marquess. It was to be a system that was to last for all time, and to be used first by one Minister and then by another. What, under the circumstances, should have been the course of the Leader of the House? He should have gone to the person who, next to himself, was most interested in the preservation of the order of Business—he should have consulted the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon as to the course which was most likely to redound to the credit of Parliament, and which was most likely to be convenient for the transaction of Business.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I do not wish to interrupt my right hon. Friend; but I think I ought to say that there was a communication made to me.

Mr. RAIKES: Very likely. He did not wish to deny that a communication was made; but what he meant was that the proposal now submitted to the House was not the result of any consultation between them. [Sir Stafford Northcote: That is so.] It was all very well to make a communication; but if you did not act upon the advice of the person with whom you communicated, practically it might as well have not been made at all. There was another person connected with the House whom the Prime Minister had consulted — and, doubtless, the right hon. Gentleman was fully entitled to consult him; but when he did consult him, that person certainly ought not to have been quoted to the House by the Prime Minister. He was aware that the right hon. Gentleman was at considerable pains to exonerate the Speaker from any responsibility for the proposals submitted to the House; but it was one thing to take that course so far as one part of the speech was concerned, and another to fortify that proposition by quoting from the speech the Speaker had delivered to his constituents. That, though a small matter, was an indication of the relations which were in the future likely to be developed between the Leader of the House and the occupier of the Chair. ["No, no!"] He was speaking wholly impersonally; but he must say that it was an unfortunate thing that when a proposal was made for a complete change in the system of Business in the House, the Leader of the House, in introducing it, should think proper to throw in the van of the authorities he quoted the opinions of the Speaker. He did not wish to say anything which might seem in the slightest degree to reflect on any person they had known, or were likely to know, in the exercise of their duties in the Chair. But the House would see, and it was impossible to deny, that the adoption of the Resolution before them would place the Speaker in an entirely new position. He would read to the House another brief extract from his favourite author—Lord Sherbrooke. But in citing words employed in connection with Urgency last year, he must point out that the position which the Speaker was then called upon to occupy in that House was, from the very fact of its temporary character, far less onerous. Yet, with regard to that position, Lord Sherbrooke had written—

> "It is hardly too much to say that, instead of being the Representative of the whole House, the Speaker has become, by the recent changes, an official on the side of the Party which is in power for the moment, and that upon him henceforth the hardest and most invidious parts of public duty will fall. He may continue to bear the name of Speaker; but the essence of his position will be gone."

That, in itself, was a reason why the House should pause before taking this leap in the dark. They valued many things in the House; but there was hardly anything which they valued more than the Speaker's position. There was nothing more precious in the House of Commons, except its own liberty, than the dignified position and freedom from Party suspicion which attached itself to the Chair. He would say no more on the subject, as he felt that he had already trespassed on the patience of the House. He would not attempt now to dissect the arithmetical puzzles which were proposed by the right hon. Gentleman in order to perplex Members of the House in the future, if the Rules were to become part of the institutions of the House; but he might point out that it was a peculiar thing, which he had not seen elsewhere, that while, under the 1st Rule, it would be possible for 101 to silence 39, the moment the 40th man came into the House, it required 100 more Members to counterbalance his individual vote. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman contemplated that as one of the possible results of the proposal; but he could not conceive how anyone who professed his dislike to fantastic majorities and complicated systems could have contemplated such a state of things. They were told that it was very wrong that a majority of three-fourths or of two-thirds should be required to put down a minority, and they were presented with a system which, while it varied with the condition of the House, required first a majority of 5 to 2, and then a majority of 5 to 1; yet, all of a sudden, a happy moment was reached when a mere majority dominated, and, instead of being 5 to 1, it was only 201 to 200. That might be logic; but it was a kind of logic from which those recoiled who had been brought up in a University where mathematics were appreciated above logic. It might be a problem worthy to occupy the brain of some casuist or schoolman; but it was hardly the form in which a great change in Procedure should be submitted to the House of Commons. Supposing the Government were going to use the machinery it was proposed to create to put down minorities in the House, and supposing the minorities were, as would frequently be the case, Irish minorities, did the Government think now, when their legislation was not too successful, and was opposed by a very large section of the Irish Members, what would it be when the House came actually to deny a hearing to those who, though a small minority of the House, might represent the great majority of the Irish people? This Resolution would deprive such a minority of the opportunity of even stating their grievance. In doing so the House would be putting into the hands of the agitator a new and most formidable weapon; and even if this most odious exercise of power should be avoided actually, the fact that it might be employed would hang over the heads of Members of the House, and they would not be slow to tell their countrymen what they thought of their position in the House of Commons. He (Mr. Raikes) had noticed that when the Prime Minister was speaking he was not so keen, neither had he exhibited his ordinary vigour, in supporting his proposition as he did on some occasions. He had thought a certain melancholy pervaded his speech—a sadness which was not often to be found in them, and which was not to be traced in the Nelson speech of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington), nor in the utterances of the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain). It seemed as if the Prime Minister believed that the country was within measurable distance of the time spoken of by Mr. Tennyson—

> "When banded unions persecute
> Opinion, and induce a time
> When single thought is civil crime
> And individual freedom mute."

He thought that the noble Marquess believed that they were already on the threshold of such a dispensation, and that the myrmidons of the Birmingham Party were already exulting in the opinion that they had passed the border, and had entered into the promised land. He, however, did not share in that belief. The common sense of this country, in his idea, would still repel any such condition of things as that, and he trusted it might belong only to the most distant future; and, moreover, the common sense of this country would make itself felt in that House, even before the end of the discussion upon which they had entered. The privileges which hon. Members were asked to surrender were not their own, but rather those of the constituencies who sent them there. The trust which they were asked to abandon was a trust not to be exercised for their own individual benefit, but for the benefit of the people of this country. And, whatever might be the result of that particular division, of this, at least, they might rest assured—that before long there would come a day of serious reckoning to those who had neglected those privileges and proved that they were undeserving of that trust.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Sir, I am sure there is no Member of this House to whom the House would be more disposed to listen with attention than the right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Mr. Raikes). The position which he filled in the last Parliament, and the experience which that position enabled him to gain in many of the questions which are now come under our discussion and deliberation, render him eminently qualified to give an opinion to the House which would be very carefully weighed by it upon the subject of the Rules of Procedure which have been submitted by the Government. But I think the House would have preferred, and that it expected, that the right hon. Gentleman would have given us something more of his own personal experience, and that he would have taken less time in favouring us with quotations from the opinions of others, a resource which is open to other Members of the right hon. Gentleman's

Party, who have not the experience which belongs to him; and, Sir, I cannot refrain from saying that I regret to observe that the right hon. Gentleman does not seem to have brought back to Parliament all that impartiality and calmness of spirit which I am sure distinguished him in the position which he recently filled, and which, at any rate, ought always to distinguish Gentlemen filling that position; and I am sorry that he should have thought it necessary so far to depart from the spirit in which this proposal has been made to the House by the Prime Minister as to endeavour to lead it away by every possible channel from the calm and impartial atmosphere in which it ought to be debated into the region of Party recrimination. The right hon. Gentleman has not scrupled—and in that, I believe, he has scarcely carried with him the approval of his own Party—to point to my right hon. Friend at the head of the Government as the last man who ought to have brought forward this proposal; and he went on, and not indistinctly, to hint that my right hon. Friend had, in his generation, wasted more of the time of the House than any other Member of it.

MR. RAIKES: The noble Marquess will, I am sure, allow me to say that I never said that.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: No, Sir; the right hon. Gentleman did not say that; but there are many ways of conveying an intention without making a direct assertion, and without employing the actual language which describes it. ["Oh, oh!"] What was the meaning of the right hon. Gentleman's allusion to the time of the House which the Prime Minister had occupied, unless the right hon. Gentleman wished to convey the impression that some of the time had been wasted? And I regret to think, Sir, that the right hon. Gentleman should also have thought it necessary to bring in the allusion which he made to the opinion of the Speaker in the Chair. Sir, the right hon. Gentleman (the Speaker), no doubt after full deliberation, knowing how much the attention of the country has been devoted to this subject, thought it right, in addressing his constituents, moderately to express certain opinions of his own upon this subject. My right hon. Friend was, I think, perfectly entitled—not to quote, and he did not quote, that speech—but to refer to that speech in the moderate and guarded terms which he used. Sir, I think, further, that it scarcely had a tendency to improve the tone of this debate that the right hon. Gentleman should have brought so unfounded a charge against the Government, as that they were endeavouring, most improperly as would have been the case, to enlist your authority in support of the proposals for which they, and they alone, are responsible to the House. Well, Sir, I have said that I think it is to be regretted that the right hon. Gentleman should have devoted so much time to *The Nineteenth Century*, and given us so little of his own opinions on this matter. Sir, I do not mean to claim the right hon. Gentleman as having been at any time a supporter of the power of the *clôture;* but there was a time when the right hon. Gentleman did not think it necessary to denounce the *clôture*, or the idea of it, in terms so strong as he has employed this evening. The right hon. Gentleman was examined before a Committee of the House of Commons in, I think, the year 1878; and I find a reply to a question which was put to him by Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen, in reference to the suggestion which he had made himself. Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen asked him whether his proposal did not amount to a proposal for the *clôture*, tempered by the interposition of the Chair; and, in reply, the right hon. Gentleman said—"I can hardly say that it amounts to the principle of the *clôture*." And I admit that it did not. He went on to explain —and I will admit, further, he succeeded in doing so—in what he thought it differed from the *clôture* as it existed in other countries; but it does not seem to me that the right hon. Gentleman's mind was then so firmly closed against the principle of the *clôture*, when he did not think it necessary to repudiate the imputation that his suggestion resembled the *clôture* in stronger terms than these. Well, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman quoted at some length in referring to the example of other countries, and he seemed to find a very strong argument against this proposal in the fact that there were four countries in Europe—I think Hungary, Portugal, Norway, and Sweden —in which the *clôture* did not prevail; and he referred to some of the Colonies also in which it had not been adopted. Well, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman did not enter into sufficient historical detail to support his assertion that the *clôture* did not exist in those countries which had the tradition of Parliamentary Government; and I think he would find it rather difficult to support the assertion. But what I maintain is, that no argument against this proposal can be deduced from the example of foreign countries which have not adopted the *clôture.* I think, however, a very strong argument might be adduced in support of the proposal, when it is considered that, in many countries—where the work of Parliament is far lighter, far easier, far less important and overwhelming than is the work which devolves upon the House of Commons—it has, nevertheless, been found necessary to adopt a system of this kind. But that there should exist in Europe countries such as Hungary, and Norway and Sweden, and Colonies where the work is light and easy, and it has not been found necessary to adopt such a system, appears to me to prove nothing at all when the question under discussion is—"How is the Business to be transacted of a Parliament that is so overburdened as ours?" Sir, the right hon. Gentleman also referred to what he called the "paramount importance" which is attached to this proposal by the Government. I will state by-and-bye why we do indeed attach paramount importance to the proposal; and I will state why, in my opinion, the principle of that proposal adds to that importance. In my opinion, the actual effect of the proposal, as now before the House, has been immensely exaggerated on both sides of the House, and the alarm which has been evinced in regard to it has been immensely exaggerated by the right hon. Gentleman and hon. Members opposite. What, Sir, is this proposal? After all, it is only a certain modification of the existing Rules and restrictions which we have in regard to the conduct of debates. I suppose it will be admitted that every Assembly must have Rules to regulate the conduct of its debates. We have certain Rules now, although, in my opinion, they are extremely inadequate. Perfect freedom of discussion does not exist now. A Member cannot speak when he thinks fit, unless he be called upon by Mr. Speaker. He cannot speak more than once in the same debate in the House. He must speak to the question before the House, and he is not permitted to speak on what he may consider something infinitely more important—some other question which is not before the House. These are all restrictions of debate which have existed, and which exist, which are not complained of, and which are not felt, because the House is accustomed to them, and because the general sense of the House perceives that, without restrictions such as these, anything in the shape of orderly debate would be an impossibility. My right hon. Friend showed the other day, when he moved this Resolution, that the liberties of debate have, within recent times, been already greatly restricted. For some years after the passage of the great Reform Act, it was possible to raise no less than four questions upon the presentation of a Petition, and debate them all. Now, these four opportunities of debate on the presentations of Petitions have been absolutely suppressed; and, Sir, considering how much alarm and how much excitement is caused by the proposals which are now before us, I can very well imagine with what an amount of real or simulated indignation the proposal would now be received by some hon. Members if that power were still in existence, and it was proposed to abrogate the possibility of debating on the presentation of a Petition. Why, Sir, it would be said—and it might be said with justice—that that was a far greater innovation than the one which is now proposed, because it was an interference not only with the privileges of Members of the House, but also an interference with the privileges of their constituents, those whom they represent; it was an interference with the effectiveness of the rights then possessed by the constituents. Since that time the presentation of a Petition has ceased to be the effectual mode of calling the attention of Parliament to a question which it once was, and now it really is only a mode of supporting certain proposals which may be before the House. Well, Sir, other changes have been made. The number of opportunities for the discussion of Bills by hon. Members has been considerably reduced. Formerly it was within the power of Members to discuss every question as it was put from the Chair, hat the Order of the Day be read. Those opportunities have been taken away. It is undoubted, therefore, that this House has the right, and has used the right, to make Rules for the order of debate, and to restrict the opportunities of debate when necessary to do so; and the question which the House has before it is, whether the existing limitations of debate are sufficient for the due conduct of Business? Now, Sir, that question—Are the limitations of debate adequate?—admits of but one answer. Very few of the propositions which are brought forward in this House are capable of anything like a mathematical demonstration; but I believe the answer to this question approaches nearly to being capable of a convincing mathematical demonstration. I will not, however, attempt on this occasion to enter into any such demonstration. I will only endeavour to indicate two or three of what I consider to be the points which would appear, and have to be worked out in such a demonstration. In the first place, I suppose it will not be denied that the time at the disposal of the House is a limited quantity. The health and strength of Members are now sufficiently taxed, and I do not suppose there are any Members who would be disposed to contend that the duration of the Session could be greatly protracted, certainly none to contend that the hours of sitting by the House could be at all prolonged. Well, Sir, what is the work to be done within the limited amount of time? There is an amount of work to be done, a part of which is obligatory, and a part of which, if not absolutely obligatory, is, at all events, needful and necessary. In the obligatory portion of the work of Parliament is included the consideration and discussion of the financial proposals of the Government, and of other proposals—not financial—which are made by the Government, and the discussion of the Army, Navy, and Civil Service Estimates of the year. That is work which must be performed by the House. Then there is work that is equally obligatory—namely, the discussion of the policy of the Government—its foreign policy, its Colonial policy, its Indian policy, its domestic policy. For discussion of all those, when questions are raised, opportunities must be found. The first duty of Parliament—or, at any rate, one of the first duties of Parliament—is to call in question, when it thinks it fitting to do so, the policy and conduct of the Government. Sir, there then remains legislation. There is legislation which may be roughly divided into two categories. First, there are proposals for administrative and legal reforms, as to which there are no sharp differences of opinion—proposals, for instance, for the reform of criminal procedure; for the prevention of corrupt practices at elections; measures relating to education; measures relating to the sanitary condition of the people; and hundreds of other subjects which I need not now enumerate. And then, Sir, there will also be, from time to time, different measures of a political character, which each of the great Parties in the State think it necessary to bring forward. The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down has devoted some attention to a speech which I made in the country during the Recess, and has attacked me for advocating this measure for the purpose of carrying a Party programme. Well, Sir, I do not scruple to say that measures of this political character are, from time to time, as essential for the consideration of Parliament, and for adoption, after discussion, by Parliament, as measures which do not possess a Party character at all. I do not believe that the political life of the country, the freedom of this country, and I do not believe that its security and welfare can be maintained unless it is in the power, from time to time, of each of the great Parties of the State to bring forward measures for great legislative changes. I do not hesitate to say that there are at the present time in contemplation measures which have long been under the consideration of the country, and in which I believe the country is deeply interested, which are impossible and incapable of being carried into law unless some change in reforming our procedure is made. And I believe that the majority of the country are in favour of those measures; and I believe also that the majority of this House is in favour of them. I do not wish them to be carried without full discussion; but what I say is that I wish, if they are proposed, and if they are discussed, that they should be decided upon their own merits, upon the opinion of the country, and in accordance with the opinion of the House; that they should not be defeated merely by the want of the necessary time to discuss them, and by the privileges which our present system gives, not for defeating them by argument, but for defeating them by Obstruction. But, Sir, however conversant the Members of this House may be with the difficulties under which we labour in the transaction of our Business, it is perfectly easy to understand that the country, which does not participate continually in our discussions, is but imperfectly acquainted with the obstacles with which we have to contend. The question of the reform of our procedure is not one which is likely to excite very warm interest in the country, therefore, unless it can be connected with measures in which the country does take an interest; and I am not in the slightest degree ashamed—and I do not retire in one single respect from what I said to my constituents—that this question of procedure was one which interests them. If the people of this country are still as interested as they were two years ago in the carrying of certain measures of political reform, the only mode in which they can arrive at that end is by assisting the Government, and the majority in this House, to reform its mode of procedure. Then, to complete the summary of the work of the House, I have only to refer further to legislation conducted by independent Members, some of which is frequently of a very valuable character; and, finally, the discussion of what may be called abstract questions, which are brought forward from time to time by independent Members, and which have often done very good service in preparing the way for a decision on questions which are not yet ripe for legislation. Well, Sir, I think it is perfectly clear that it is impossible, under any system, that the whole of the work which now devolves upon the House of Commons can be got through in any one Session, and what is still more absolutely clear is that no approach can be made to the performance of this work, with anything like care and deliberation, and even decency, unless our proceedings are conducted with some order, with some method, and upon some principle, and until the amount of time employed in discussion will bear some relation to the importance of the matter under discussion. Now, Sir, I venture to say that at present there is scarcely an approach even to an attempt to exercise any such discrimination as to the apportionment of our time. To that assertion there is only one qualification or exception. It is true the House does give to the Government—presumably acting with the support of the majority of the House, and able to act upon some more settled scheme than individual Members—the nominal arrangement of the Business for three nights in the week. I say it nominally gives this power to the Government. It is nominal only, because, as the House is aware, on Fridays, though the Order for Supply is the first to be set down, as any Amendments may be moved to Supply, Friday is, practically, an independent Members' day. The other two days are partially given to the Government. Even as to these, qualifications exist. If it be Supply which the Government considers it necessary the House should devote itself to, then, upon the question that the Speaker leave the Chair, Amendments may be moved, and every conceivable question may be raised, and the Supply might be converted, as two nights were converted last week, practically, to the Business of private Members. But suppose Supply is not the first Order of the Day. Suppose the Government ask the House to undertake the consideration of a certain measure or measures, then, no doubt, they have this power. They have power of deciding for the House what shall be the measures you shall first take up on the particular day. But when once the Order is read from the Chair, and once the debate begun, then all control either on the part of the Speaker, on the part of the Government, on the part of the House, on the part of a majority in the House, or any Member or portion of the House, vanishes, and the debate must go on as long as any Member chooses it shall go on, however long the subject may have been previously debated, however simple it may be, however clearly expressed may be the wish of the country upon the subject, however pronounced may be the opinion of the House, or however many former opportunities may have been given for the consideration of the question. The House parts absolutely with the control of its own time and places it at the disposal of any Member who chooses, for whatever purpose, to appropriate it to himself. I have said, Sir, that I think the importance of the actual operation of this rule has been very considerably exaggerated; but I also say, and I repeat, that I do not think it is possible to exaggerate the importance of the principle it contains. The principle which it contains is, in my opinion, this—it is an assertion that the time of the House belongs, not to every individual Member of the House, but to the House itself. It is an assertion of the principle that the privilege of speech is a privilege which the House permits to be exercised for its own instruction, for its own information, in order to form its own opinion, and that it is not a personal privilege to be used irrespective of the convenience and the efficiency of the House. The statement that the privilege of speech is not a personal right attaching to the position of a Member of Parliament may be an assertion that will startle some hon. Members; but I think a very little consideration will show it to be a true assertion, and I should like very much to see the contrary of that assertion formulated and defended. If it is true that the privilege of speech is a personal privilege, it belongs, I presume, equally to every Member of the House. Every Member of the House has a right to make use of it to an equal degree when he pleases, and if every Member of the House were to make but a very sparing use of that privilege, the question would very soon be brought to a *reductio ad absurdum.* Well, if the right can only be exercised by the few, and by the forbearance of the vast majority of the House, I should like to know on what ground it can be contended that such a right as this is a personal right at all? There is, it seems to me, an immense deal of confusion in the use of some terms, of which a great deal is heard in this debate. We hear a great deal about putting an end to freedom of speech and liberty of discussion. Now, freedom of speech and liberty of discussion exist, not only in this House, but they exist in this country to the fullest extent. Any man may speak what, where, and when he pleases, provided that he speaks within the limits of the law, and that he does not by his speech incite to any breach of the law. But, Sir, except in this House, liberty of speech does not extend to providing a man with an audience. He must find his own audience. He may say what he likes; but no one is bound to listen to him, except in this House, where those whose duty it is to attend are obliged to listen to everything, whenever a Member may please to talk, whether they desire to hear him or whether they do not. The privilege which is claimed is not the privilege of free speech. It is not the privilege of saying what he wishes to say and what others wish to hear; but it is something more than that. What is claimed is the privilege of appropriating an appreciable portion of the time—the precious and valuable time—of the House, for which, possibly, the House has very much better employment. The principle which, in my opinion, is contained in this Resolution is one of which I do not think it is possible to exaggerate the importance—the principle that the time of the House should belong to the House itself, and that the privilege of speech is one to be used for the convenience and for the advantage of the House, and not for the personal convenience or the personal advancement of the speakers. It is said that this Rule, if carried, may be abused. I admit that any rule may be abused. The possibility of its abuse, however, can only be proved by the assumption of cases of the most extreme kind; and by the assumption of extreme cases you may prove the possibility of the abuse of any condition of things that you can conceive. I do not deny that if you assume a partizan Speaker and an absolutely intolerant majority, it may lead to the undue suppression of debate in this House. ["Hear, hear!"] Well, I say that that is a supposition which is not impossible, but which, at all events, is utterly improbable. ["No, no!"] Allow me to say why I think it improbable. Some hon. Members seem to think that this is the only place in this country where discussion can take place. They forget the Press, and they forget the right of public meeting. Do you suppose for a moment that public opinion in this country is only formed by debate and discussion in this House? Do you suppose a great many questions are not much more fully, more completely, and, I venture to say, more ably discussed outside this House than in it, and that many subjects are fully debated and discussed in the country before they are ever mentioned at all in this House. Well, what will be the effect of any abuse of this Rule in a majority for the suppression of discussion in the House? Why, instantly the discussion which was forbidden in this House would take place in the country; and is it possible to conceive a more telling, a more damaging argument which could be used against any majority than to enable the minority to go to the country and say—"Our mouths have been tryannically closed by the House of Commons; we appeal to you, the country, to hear us, and let us state our opinion. Why, Sir, no majority, however powerful, could long resist the damaging effect which would be caused by an appeal to the public spirit of the country under such circumstances. Therefore, I think I am justified in saying that an undue suppression of debate, or of the freedom of speech, in this House is so utterly improbable a contingency that it is not one which need be taken into consideration at all. But I say, further, that if we are to go on arguing, not on what is probable, but what is possible, and if we are to assume the most extreme cases, then I maintain, without fear of contradiction, that for every suggestion that can be made of the possibility of abuse of these proposed Rules, it is easy, in fact it is easier, to prove the possibility of the abuse of the system which now exists. That is perfectly evident, considering the number of questions which are submitted to the House, and the number that can be raised. I have already said that if only a very small proportion of the Members of the House were to use, even to a limited extent, the privilege of perfect freedom of speech, it would be easy for a very inconsiderable minority to bring our present procedure to an absolute deadlock in a very short space of time. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Stanhope), on the last night of this debate, referred to the opinions of De Tocqueville and others on the subject of the tyranny of majorities. I only ask those who are frightened by this phrase, "the tyranny of the majority," to ask themselves, at the same time, the question, whether it is not possible also to have the tyranny of a minority? I do not think that in this country we know much about a tyranny of majorities; but I do think in this House we do know already something of the tyranny of minorities, and all I ask from any Member of this House, who is disposed to give this proposal an impartial consideration, is that when an extreme possibility is suggested by which this Rule might be abused, he will put to himself the corresponding possibility of abuse under the existing system. Now, I should like to say a word or two on the question which we know by a great authority is the one question which we have before us—that is, whether this Rule is to be set in operation at the will of a simple majority, or a majority differently constituted? Now, it would be very convenient if, before the debate proceeds further, it could be clearly understood whether the Amendment which we are now discussing is really intended to raise the question of the *clôture* in any form at all, or whether it is intended to raise the question of *clôture* by a simple majority? If the latter is intended, it certainly does not accomplish the object in view, because the Amendment which has been moved by the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott) is one which, if carried, would defeat the proposition altogether. The Amendment says—

> "No Rules of Procedure will be satisfactory to this House which confers the power of closing a Debate upon a majority of Members."

That is to say, upon any majority. The hon. and learned Member does not confine his objection to a simple majority; but his objection would extend to a majority of three-fourths or four-fifths, or any majority. I am not complaining of this. Possibly the Amendment perfectly expresses the opinion of the hon. and learned Member himself; for, as far as I understood, his speech was directed, not against the principle of *clôture* by a bare majority, but against the principle of *clôture* in any shape or form.

MR. MARRIOTT: The Amendment I first proposed had the word "bare" in it; but I was told the word "bare" was not a Parliamentary word, and that the word majority meant a majority of 1, and this view was, I thought, confirmed by the Clerk at the Table. Therefore the Amendment was proposed as it stands. ["Hear, hear!"]

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: Well, Sir, I am very glad to hear those words. I interpret those cheers to mean that hon. Members are not opposed to the proposal altogether, but only to the proposal of a bare majority. I do not know whether "bare" is a Parliamentary word or not. I am extremely sorry the word is eliminated, because I think it would have made the proposal much clearer than it is. At all events, if "bare" is not a Parliamentary term, I should think "simple" is, and that that would better express the meaning of the hon. and learned Member; but if his Amendment was intended to meet the point of a bare majority, it would be rather unfortunate, for the whole of his speech was directed against the proposal in any shape or under any limitation, and so was the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. There is no doubt about the opinion of the Leader of the Opposition on this point, because he has given Notice of his intention, whatever modification may be introduced into this Rule, to move its rejection; and were one to understand, therefore, the position of the right hon. Gentleman, and those, I suppose, who sit near him, as one of absolute opposition in any shape or form, or with any limitation whatever, to the assumption by any majority of the House of the power of closing a debate, I think that it would probably be most convenient that we should discuss that question first, and that the debate should be, as far as possible, confined to the question whether we are to have the *clôture* in any shape or form or not, and that we should wait till the question is more completely raised whether any modification as to the composition or proportion of the majority is to be introduced. I will, therefore, only say one or two words upon this point. But, as I have already observed, we have been told that this is the only question we have discussed. I should like to make one observation upon that. I must say that I have the strongest opinion upon this subject, and I will endeavour, in one or two words, to give my reason. In the first place, I maintain that it is for those who contend that a majority for this purpose should be composed in an unusual and exceptional manner—it is upon them that the burden of proof rests. Every other question submitted to the House is decided by a bare majority, and it is for those who contend that for this special purpose the power of the House is to be exercised by a majority differently composed to say why such a reason should be given. It is true that last year, in a condition of Urgency, a majority of 3 to 1 was required; but that has been universally admitted to have been an exceptional condition of things, and not to be a precedent upon which the House could safely rest. Then, I say, further, that it is unnecessary to provide a majority composed in other than the ordinary way—I say it is unnecessary, because if there is a possibility of an abuse of this power, I maintain that it is much more likely to be applied to small minorities than large minorities. A large minority has always ample power to protect itself. There are so many opportunities for raising discussion and debate in this House—so many opportunities of moving Amendments, and the power would have to be so constantly employed in the face of large unwilling minorities—that I do not think it is possible to conceive that a majority could close the mouth of a minority but little inferior to itself. Then a large minority is largely representative of the country, and all those opportunities for discussion out-of-doors, to which I have already referred, are and must be always open to a large minority; and it is impossible to conceive anything more suicidal than would be the conduct of a bare majority in exercising its powers under this Rule to close the mouths of a very considerable minority. It is true that it is possible, in the case of a small minority, that the Rule may be more open to abuse; and I do not deny that it is possible that in its operation there may be some cases in which some reform may be postponed, or some abuse may be suffered to continue longer than it otherwise would, in consequence of the operation of this Rule. But for such minorities no proposal as to the composition of the majority which has ever been made would avail. The protection for the small minority we conceive to be in the initiatory power proposed to be given to the Speaker. It is mainly in their interest that power is to be placed in his hands. At all events, no artificial composition of a majority—three-fourths or four-fifths, whatever it may be—will be competent to protect the interests of a small minority. My further objection is that such a plan would be altogether inconsistent with the Constitutional practice of the country. When once this power is to be brought into existence, it is a power which must be used or refused with responsibility, like any other power; and if that power is to be used only by a majority composed in some exceptional way, I maintain that there would be no one who would be responsible for its use or its refusal. Supposing that it is the opinion of the Government that some measure should be adopted without delay, and supposing that a proposal for closing the debate is not adopted by the requisite number, who will be responsible for the consequences of the delay? The Government and the majority will not be responsible for it, because they would have done all that is in their power. The minority who have refused the power cannot be made responsible, because they are not in a position to undertake it. Let me give just one instance. Take the Vote of £6,000,000 which was proposed by the late Government to Parliament. That was a measure which, in their opinion, the House should decide upon without delay; and suppose a protracted debate should have arisen upon it, and that we were not of opinion that the measure was necessary, and supposing the Government had made a proposal to close the debate, and had not been able to obtain the requisite majority—who would have been responsible for the consequences which might have ensued from the delay which might have taken place? The majority could not be held responsible. They had done all that it was in their power to do, and we were at that time certainly not in a position to undertake the responsibility. Take, again, a case that occurred last week, when the Government said that, unless certain Votes were passed within the week, the law could not be fulfilled. Supposing Obstruction had taken place, that these Votes had been refused, and if the provisions of the law had not been fulfilled, upon whom would the responsibility for such failure have rested? It could not have rested with us, who had done all that was in our power to observe the law. [Mr. WARTON: No, no!] I have no doubt the hon. and learned Member for Bridport will address the House upon this subject before long; therefore, perhaps he will allow me to finish my observations. I know the hon. and learned Member thinks the delay was caused by mismanagement of Business; but that is not the question. The question is, who would have been responsible if the provisions of the law had not been complied with? We had to deal with the situation in which the House found itself last week; and if the House had refused to grant the Votes we asked for, who would have been responsible? I think a more invidious power, placed in the hands of the Leader of the Opposition, than that proposed cannot well be conceived. It is the placing in his hands of an arbitrary power—I say arbitrary power, because it is a power which must be exercised without the controlling sense of responsibility for its exercise. I have no hesitation in saying, with what small experience I have been able to obtain as Leader of the Opposition, that it is a power which I should most reluctantly see placed in my hands. I would much rather the majority of the House boldly took the power in its own hands, and be responsible for the exercise of the power, as it is responsible for every other action it takes. I will only now ask, if the Opposition are going to vote against this Resolution, and if the House is not going to grant this power, what is it that they propose in its place? My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister referred to the appeal which the Speaker made to the House in the exercise of an act of authority last Session. The right hon. Gentleman told the House that, having acted, that act of his could not be one which could be indefinitely repeated, and the House must now take the matter in its own hands. What is the answer that the Opposition proposes to make to the appeal from the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair? I gather from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) that he considers that some improvement, some alteration in the Rules with regard to suspension, would be adequate. I say I am of opinion that that Rule, admirable as it is, necessary as it is, entirely fails to meet the point with which we have to deal. That is a necessary Rule relating to the discipline of the House, not to its procedure. It fails to meet what, in my opinion, are the cardinal points to which I have already referred. It fails to meet the point of the relation between the length of the debate and the importance of the subject debated, and it fails to provide an assertion of the principle upon which

I have already dwelt, that the time of the House is a property in the hands of the House itself. The Suspension Rule is a penal proceeding, most necessary, unfortunately, in the present state of the House, sometimes to be used with a most salutary effect; but it is not applicable in many cases in which the exercise of this power would be required. I do not know why an hon. Member should be punished by a penal proceeding for the exercise of a right which the House admits is vested in him, and he may be only exercising in a way which may not be agreeable to the prevailing sense of the House. I do not think, for instance, that the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) ought to be punished by suspension because he considers it necessary to discuss upon all occasions the operation of the French Treaty and the question of Fair Trade. I do not want to suspend the hon. Member, or deprive his constituents of his services; but, at the same time, I do not want to be bound hand and foot at his mercy to listen to his disquisitions on the subject of Fair Trade, whenever he likes to deliver them. It is a proceeding in the nature of an alteration of our procedure, and not a penal measure, which is required in his case. Again, the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) would sometimes consider there is no question so worthy of the consideration of the House as the position of Russia in Central Asia, and I have known that question interposed to the exclusion of very important and pressing Business. Yet I do not wish to see the hon. Member for Eye suspended. I only wish the House to have the power to say when the position of Russia in Central Asia has been sufficiently debated. Hon. Members from Ireland, again, are still more legitimately employed, when they consider it necessary—as I think they will admit—in season and out of season, and bring forward grievances of some of their contituents or of their countrymen. I admit it is natural and perfectly legitimate that they should consider these are questions which ought to have precedence over every other that the House can possibly entertain. I do not, however, think that hon. Members ought to be suspended because they desire that the House should debate nothing but Irish grievances. At the same time, it is absolutely necessary for the good management and the efficiency of the proceedings of the House that other subjects should from time to time be discussed; and the Rules now proposed would enable the House sometimes to escape from the discussion of Irish grievances. The hon. and learned Member for Bridport interrupted me just now. He may have an opportunity some day of calling the attention of the House to the question of patent medicines. And I do not wish to invoke the authority of the Chair to suspend him if he trespasses at unnecessary length on that important question; but still I do think that perhaps a whole night would be devoted more profitably to other matters than the discussion of the question of patent medicines; and I think, as to the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell), whose researches and knowledge appear to extend equally to every question, that the House may sometimes be enabled to bring a debate to a conclusion without having the advantage of the hon. Member's opinion upon it. But I should like to accomplish that object without having the hon. Member named from the Chair; and I think, under the operation of this Rule, it may be found, in some exceptional and rare intervals, that a debate could be brought to a conclusion before the hon. Member for Dungarvan speaks. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston says, with perfect justice, that this matter should have been taken up by the House, and not by the Government. Sir, it is a matter for the House, and not for any Party in the House. Why was this course found to be impossible? Twenty Committees have sat and inquired into this question, without any adequate result — almost without any result at all—and the labour of 20 Committees, thrown away and wasted, proves that there does not exist in the House itself that initiatory force which is necessary for carrying the requisite reform. It is not easy to see where that necessary force can arise, except in the Government, who may presumably be supposed to possess the confidence, at all events, of a majority of the House, and who have the means of directing the deliberations of the House, and of formulating and placing before the House more definite proposals than could be laid before it in any other circumstances. The House had a right, failing these repeated attempts to which I have referred, to expect of the responsible Advisers of the Crown that they should present to the House their proposals for remedying evils which are of undoubted existence; and when the responsible Ministers of the Crown have made their proposals, it has also the right to expect of them that they will use every means in their power to carry these proposals through to a successful issue. We would willingly, if we could, persuade the House by argument of the expediency of our proposals. We do not desire to thrust them on an unwilling minority; but it is impossible that on any considerable changes, such as these which are proposed, there should be unanimity, or anything approaching unanimity; and if the Government is in earnest upon this question, it is absolutely necessary that the Government should use those means for carrying the proposals into execution — the same means which it uses in regard to any other proposal which it has to make. The Government was bound to appeal to the confidence of its supporters, and to state clearly to the House and to the country that in these proposals its existence is inevitably bound up. I have admitted it is in the main and chiefly a question of the dignity, efficiency, and decency of the proceedings of the House itself. It is a question in which, undoubtedly, the House itself is first and primarily interested; but I will not deny—I willingly admit—it is also one in which the Govenment have an interest which they are not ashamed to avow. The Government are responsible to the House and to the country for the conduct of Business. They come before you to tell you that under the existing Rules of Procedure in this House they cannot undertake responsibility. If they cannot conduct the Business of the country, they are not fit to remain in Office. They have laid before you proposals which, in their opinion, will enable them, and other Governments after them, to conduct with dignity and efficiency the Business of the country, and by these proposals they are prepared to stand. If there are others who think they can, without these changes, conduct the necessary affairs of the country, and if they can persuade the House of their capability to do so, we shall cheerfully resign our functions; but, Sir, so long as we are responsible for the conduct of the necessary Business of the country, we must appeal to the House to give us those powers by which alone, as we think, our work can be effectually performed.

BARON HENRY DE WORMS: Sir, with reference to the statement of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India, that the Government intend to stand or fall by their proposals, it is somewhat anomalous that a Liberal Ministry should make a Cabinet question out of what is, in plain English, nothing more than a scheme for tampering with freedom of speech in the House of Commons. It is of no use veiling it in fine language, or attempting to throw dust in the eyes of the public any longer. I can only find an explanation for it in the fact that Her Majesty's Government, conscious of their own weakness, and aware that, owing to the amount of opposition evoked on one side and the half-hearted support they receive on the other, cannot, as they wish, pass 30 measures a Session, and that they therefore desire to introduce a measure which, by silencing a large body of the Members of this House and preventing discussion, will give them the power they at present lack. The noble Marquess, believing that it is a matter for the consideration of the whole House, argues that the consideration of the question ought not to be remitted to any more Select Committees. The noble Marquess reminded the House that, although 20 Committees had considered this question, they had not been able to come to any conclusion. Is not that a powerful argument that the proposition itself is not worthy of adoption? From the tone of the noble Marquess's speech, one would almost imagine that the Parliamentary life of this country was only beginning, and that he was inaugurating it. Surely the House of Commons has existed for many centuries, has gone on with a tolerable amount of success, and reached the position of the first Representative Assembly of the world, without this obnoxious gagging Rule. It is now left to a Liberal Government, with the largest majority any Government ever had, to propose a system by which, by a bare majority, the *clôture* can be forced upon the House. That is clearly a proposition which I cannot support, and which we, and those who agree with us, must combat by every means in our power. Reforms in the Procedure of the House may be necessary, but not the *clôture*, or, at any rate, not the *clôture* by a bare majority. If such a Resolution as that proposed by the Prime Minister passes, then it ought only to be put in force by such a majority of the House as will insure that that majority is composed of Members of both sides of the House; but the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman will enable any Minister—Liberal or Conservative—with the greatest facility, to impose silence on his antagonists, the Opposition, at any given moment of the debate. It is to be remembered, too, that an English Opposition is an integral part of the Parliamentary machine, if not of the Constitution itself. It is, as Sheridan has said, "Her Majesty's Opposition," whereas in foreign countries it is different, and the Rules applicable to their Legislative Assemblies cannot apply in our case. In those countries where the *clôture* obtains the Opposition is nothing more than a body of recognized, but totally irresponsible critics—a body, not homogeneous or united, but often split up by internal divisions into several inconsiderable sections. The Government of England is unique in this respect—it is essentially a Government by Party; and the adoption of the *clôture*, by annihilating Party, will destroy the true principle of Parliamentary government. Party may be said to be the embodiment of public opinion. Discussion in this House is, after all, the distillation, if I may use the expression, of the public opinion of the constituencies who send us here; and if discussion is to be burked in this House, I fail to see how Party can remain what it now really is—the embodiment of public opinion. In foreign countries, where the rights of the Opposition are least recognized, free government exists only in name. A debate in the House of Commons is a species of competitive examination, at which the merits or demerits of measures emanating from the Government of the day, or from the Opposition, are openly tested. It is the discussion of the wish and will of the people who send Members there; and the whole principle of Parliamentary government will cease to exist if, by the action of a bare majority, a section of the House are not allowed to debate the very questions they are sent there to discuss. In the countries where the *clôture* exists, Ministerial responsibility does not exist. The *clôture* exists in Austria and in Germany, and we know perfectly well that both in Austria and in Germany the independent action of Parliament is, so to speak, *nil*. At this very moment a Government is in power in Austria which has, for nearly three years, been governing by an absolute minority; while in Germany, the other day, Prince Bismarck defied the Chamber openly, and said he was not to be governed by the will of the Chamber. I do not wish to see such a state of things introduced here. The instant the *clôture* is adopted by this House, the Minister of the day becomes an autocrat—a singular consummation to be brought about by hon. Gentlemen on the Liberal Benches. Where is the adoption of these foreign principles to cease? I would remind hon. Members opposite that, in most countries where the *clôture* exists, there is also the institution know as the censorship of the Press. In Austria and Germany, for instance, it is the concomitant and corollary of the *clôture*. Does the Prime Minister propose to add the censorship of the Press to the *clôture*? ["Hear, hear!"] I maintain that there is an intimate connection between this *clôture* and this censorship, and even between the *clôture* and Governmental interference at elections as it exists on the Continent. When a great question is discussed in the Reichstag, a moment may arise when it is convenient that the question should be no longer debated. At that particular moment the *clôture* is voted and the debate ceases; but, at the same time, it may be inconvenient if the Press of the country, expressing more or less the views of the outside world, is enabled to give those criticisms and views which it thinks best suited to the course adopted. The censor of the Press, therefore, prevents that particular report from appearing in the newspapers of the day. Once this gagging system is adopted, once let the House of Commons be prevented from discussing all questions which come before it fairly and openly, then all security for liberty will be gone. The passing of a Resolution like this, which will impose silence on the whole House because of the obstruction of one individual Member, or of a few individual

Members, cannot be tolerated, and must be condemned, and I venture to raise a very earnest protest against it. In foreign countries Ministers hold Office at the pleasure of the Crown; in this country, at the pleasure of the people. The whole of our Constitutional system is so utterly different from that of the Legislative Assemblies where the *clôture* exists, that it is simply astounding that a Minister can be found to stand up and say that the operation of this method is simply a change of Procedure rendered necessary by obstructive measures, and that it is not—what it really is—a deep and terrible blow to the liberties of our free Constitution. When the Prime Minister quoted the case of the *clôture* in Austria he did not quote it quite accurately, but spoke of it as the *clôture* pure and simple. In the Austrian Reichsrath, however, after the debate is technically closed, a speaker is chosen by each side, who has a right to address the House after the *clôture* is voted. I should be sorry, however, to advocate the system even with that modification, and it is only to put the subject fairly before the House that I mention it. It is, I confess, astonishing to see the agitation from all parts of the country brought to bear on the House in favour of the *clôture*. When there was Obstruction last year, while it was a question of passing a Coercion Act, many hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway on the Ministerial side showed that they sympathized with the opponents of the measure, even in their Obstruction. Now all that is changed, and those hon. Gentlemen are clamouring for the *clôture* and abandoning their old friends, perhaps, because they are more behind the scenes than the rest of the House, and know the intentions on the part of the Government, which the noble Marquess has so clearly foreshadowed in his speech this night. It is indeed a sorry spectacle to see the Radical Party asking the House to vote away its own liberty; and amongst the so-called reforms which the future historian will have to record none will be more remarkable than this. It is also a most anomalous thing to find a Liberal and reforming Government seeking to destroy that great and distinguishing characteristic of the House of Commons—freedom of debate. Everything can be done by force, and the Government have a very pliable majority ready to act at any notice and for any cause. Probably in this great fight on behalf of the preservation of the Constitution the Opposition will be beaten; they will be obliged, as minorities always have to do, to submit to the tyranny of the majority. Even if that is so, there is one resort left. I would remind the House that in the Austrian Reichsrath the Czechs and the Poles, who had been outvoted on a certain important question, left that Assembly in a body. What if the Opposition take that course, and simply walk out of the House? I should like to know what will be the condition of Her Majesty's Ministers, if they are compelled to pass every measure, not after a fair discussion, but with a certain prospect of hon. Members on this—the Opposition—side of the House, leaving and allowing the Government majority to do what they think best for the country, without discussion or protest? It would simply destroy every principle of Parliamentary government, and there are contingencies less improbable even than that. If the Government insist on adopting the *clôture* by a bare majority, they will find themselves often placed in a position in which they will be more or less stultified in the eyes of the nation. Sir Erskine May, in his work, says that on the 12th of March, 1771, the minority divided the House 23 times in resisting the punishment of the printers of the debates; and Mr. Burke said of those proceedings that posterity would bless the pertinacity of that day. Mr. Burke, certainly a statesman of no mean order, thought that those 23 divisions, so far from having injured the Procedure of Parliament, did a considerable amount of good. I most emphatically condemn the bringing up by the Government of the Obstruction which existed last year as the evidence of something new and of a peculiar condition of things, for I have shown that something worse existed in 1771; and the Ministers of that day did not propose that the House should give up the freedom of debate. It is not necessary to go into the question of how many votes are to close a debate; these are details which I will leave to others with more experience; but I address myself to the broad principle; and I maintain that nothing can be more regrettable than that a system which has worked so well for so many centuries should now, without any special reason, be altered, simply in order to give the Government of the day the power of doing that which they would not be able to do without. The majority naturally have their way in a division; but the Government wish that the voice of the majority should be heard and felt before and during debate, completely upsetting the very principle of our whole Parliamentary Procedure. In all these proceedings the Ministry have shown that they are ashamed of the foreign importation, and they have named their proposal the "closure," instead of the *clôture*, in the hope that, in that form, it will be less distasteful to the English people. Are we to copy the institutions of the National Assemblies of the Continent, which are still in their infancy, whilst the representative institutions of this country have been in operation for centuries? I protest against such an innovation. England had her Constitution and Parliament when France was under the despotic sway of Louis IX., and the *états généraux* did not exist; when Austria was barely a State, when Prussia was under the iron rule of the Teutonic Knights; and now, after the lapse of centuries, a Liberal Minister asks the House of Commons to copy the Rules of Procedure of these comparatively new Legislative Bodies, and to copy them, not for the benefit of our own, but to its detriment. I ask if we, who have boasted so long of our freedom of speech and our freedom of writing, should now consent to fetter ourselves—nay, to gag ourselves, and to deprive ourselves of those privileges which we have enjoyed for centuries, and which, under ordinary circumstances, we might have hoped to enjoy for generations to come. I cannot think it is possible we should willingly do any such thing; and, therefore, I protest strongly against the proposal of the Government.

MR. BORLASE: I hope my hon. Friend the Member for Greenwich (Baron Henry de Worms) will forgive me if I do not begin by following the very valuable arguments which he has advanced. I wish to carry the House back a month, to that period of the debate when the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Cowen) told us that if any long period of time were to elapse between the periods of the debate, hon. Members would be apt in the interval to forget what had taken place on the previous occasion. There are two things which I think we shall not soon forget. The first was the most explicit speech in which the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government introduced these Resolutions to the House, and the other the weird piece of invective which fell from my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott), whom I am sorry not to see in his place. The hon. and learned Member began his speech by apologizing for moving an Amendment, being so young a Member of the House. I do not think, Sir, he intended us to suppose that he was "in law an infant, or in years a boy." It must have been that he intended to carry us back to that day when he and I, and many hon. Members on these Benches, walked up the floor of this House together and together took the Oath, inspired as we were at that time by high hopes, some of which have been realized, some of which remain to be realized, and would have been realized before now, but for that cause which my hon. and learned Friend, by his Amendment, seeks to prevent us from removing. Did he mean to carry us back to those feelings of high respect and confidence with which we then regarded the right hon. Gentlemen who sit on the Front Bench, a respect which has doubled, a confidence which remains now unimpaired in the hearts of one and all of us, save in that of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton? Did he mean to force upon us the old proverb, which the oftener it is repeated in this House the truer it seems to become—*Quantum mutatus ab illo Hectore?* But, in the absence of the hon. and learned Member, I not unwillingly turn away from following any further the subject, or the manner of his speech. I wish to refer particularly to two aspects of this question—first, to call the attention of the House to the opinion which is being so freely circulated in this country, both by hon. Members who sit on the Benches opposite, and also by their agents—namely, that in taking these measures to limit debate we are opposing the great Liberal principle of freedom of speech; and, secondly, to dwell on the real effect of the bare majority, which is supposed to make this question so extremely difficult. Referring to that latter question, in the first place, I will suppose the most arbitrary situation in which we could find ourselves in regard to the Rule. I will suppose, Sir, that your Successor, for it could not be yourself, were to be so mistaken in his estimate of the state of feeling in the House as to declare his opinion that it was the evident sense of the House that the debate should close, when, on a division, it should be found that in a House of 401 Members 201 were to vote with the Government, who would have moved the closure, and 200 against. Now, Sir, I contend that, if such a thing as this were to happen, in proportion to the narrowness of the majority which would be gained by the Government upon this first question, that "the Question be now put," would be the greatness of the minority in which they would find themselves when they came to deal with the second and Main Question. This, Sir, is very plain. They would have drawn together the whole, and more than the whole, of their supporters in order to gain that first majority, and they would have drawn them together under circumstances we can well recall from last Session. There would be almost certainly hon. Members waiting on those Benches opposite, longing to close the debate, ready at a moment's notice to vote with the Government when it proposed that the debate should close, yet waiting all the while to vote against the Government when the Main Question was put. Therefore, Sir, I contend, and I will say it again, that in proportion to the narrowness of the majority which the Government could gain upon the proposal that the "Question be now put," in proportion to that would be the largeness of the minority in which they would find themselves when they came to deal with the Main Question. Now, Sir, I come to the second part of my subject, the second objection, of which we hear more in the country in speeches of hon. Gentlemen than we do from speeches of hon. Gentlemen in this House—that is, that we Liberals are giving up our principle of Freedom of Speech. Sir, it is no such thing. It is perfectly true that freedom of speech is one of the most time-honoured, one of the most cherished principles of the Liberal Party. But that phrase, "Freedom of Speech," had and still has an historic meaning which this House knew well 250 years ago; and it does not mean freedom to choke ourselves by our own volubility here. It recalls to us the battle of immunity from external interference. It means that for which my countryman, Sir George Eliot, here contending, was imprisoned, and which by his death he gained for this House for ever. It means, Sir, that which you yourself, at the opening of every Parliament, demand at the Bar of "another place." But what, in Heaven's name, has that to do with the question before the House, that fallacy which is being bandied about by hon. Gentlemen opposite and their agents from one end of the country to the other? I do not accuse them of equivocation. It would not be Parliamentary to do it; but I must strongly contend that they are singularly forgetful of their English history. Sir, no one respects the right of minorities more than I do. No one, did he ever find himself displacing any hon. Member opposite in that place which, in my opinion, he so appropriately adorns, would revel in the legitimate use of the free blade of opposition more than I should myself. Sir, if questions were to be brought before this House such as were before it not long ago, of spending £25,000,000 in Central Asia, or of becoming tenants of Turkey for a Levantine island, or of annexing a new country in the centre of Africa, all I can say is, I should immediately take my seat at the feet of the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy), and beg him to become my tutor in the art in which he surpasses all besides, an art in which he has become so proficient that in one Session he has made a speech and a-half for every one of his constituents—I mean the art of block. But I trust that I should feel and know that there was a time to stop and a time to be stopped—a limit beyond which it was wanting in courtesy and in deference to this House to proceed. Now, Sir, before I sit down, may I say one word as to Obstruction generally? I take it that Obstruction does not mean that Members of this House do not know how to behave themselves, as many superficial people have been saying. It means something else. It means that there is something lying beyond what we are at present doing which Members opposite mean to postpone as long as they possibly can. It is not so very difficult to see what that is. There is an agrarian question pending which must very soon indeed come to the fore. That is what they want to postpone. It is no new phenomenon. Why was it that 19 centuries ago that most ancient Tory, Cato, used the weapon of continuous speech in the Senate House of Rome? It was because Cæsar's Land Bill was in question, and that was the last resource by which he could fight it. I can carry you down through the history of many other Assembles where similar phenomena have presented themselves; and when I look at the present Obstruction, and see that certain hon. Members are so very anxious that it should not be done away with by the most drastic and thorough measures, then I cannot help putting two and two together, and concluding that it is the old story over again — the privileged classes using the self-same means to stave off that process of absorption which they feel and know is coming upon them. Depend upon it, we shall not reach agrarian reform until the means of successful Obstruction have been cleared away. I contend, Sir, that so far from being arbitrary, these Rules are eminently just and right; so far from being ill-planned, they are skilfully devised to meet their object, though, perhaps, the 1st Rule is not particularly well worded—that, so far from taking from us freedom of debate, they will give us that of which many of us have been deprived. Without giving offence to anyone, I may say that hon. Members who rise to speak in this House are divided into two classes—those who speak because they have something to say, and those who speak because they have to say something. It is rather to give fair play to those who have something to say, than to curtail the power of those who have to say something, that these Rules are laid before the House. I shall give them my undivided and uncompromising support; and so far do I differ from the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) in believing that he has the country at his back in wishing to prevent their passage, that I am fully convinced that this land of England is utterly weary of a state of things in which the Public Business of the country cannot be transacted at all.

Colonel DAWNAY said, as a member of that minority whose independence was threatened by the proposed New Rule, he desired to say a very few words on this subject. The first thought that must strike everyone with regard to this Resolution was what a determined resistance it would have met with, and what indignant protests it would have called forth from the Liberal Party, had it been proposed by any Conservative. It was asserted by hon. Members opposite that if this measure was carried it would in no way impair the influence and efficiency of the Opposition in the performance of that first duty which they owed to the country and their constituents—the duty of criticizing the policy of the Government of the day. But he believed it was an undisputed axiom that, next to a strong Government, the most important factor in the constitution of Parliament was a strong Opposition, and how could there be any Opposition worthy of the name which was liable to be silenced whenever its criticisms became inconvenient? Again, if the apprehensions of many Members on both sides should prove to be well-founded; if at no distant period they should find themselves confronted with a partizan Speaker and an imperious Minister, with—he would not say a servile—but a well-organized majority at his back, why, in that case, a majority even of 1 would convert the Minister of the day into an absolute Dictator, free to carry any measures through the House with just as little discussion and opposition as he felt inclined. The Prime Minister desired the Opposition to surrender their independence; he asserted at the same time that if they did so no unfair advantage would be taken of their helpless condition. That might or might not be; but the Opposition preferred to maintain their independence rather than place it at the mercy of a majority. He did not suppose anyone would seriously contend that the Conservative Party, at all events during the existence of the present Parliament, had ever been guilty of wilful or factious Obstruction. On the contrary, the Prime Minister had admitted their loyal cooperation with the Government. An advanced Radical paper, the London *Echo*, said that on a memorable occasion when a powerful Ministry with an overwhelming majority at their back introduced Rules which, if passed, would have sacrificed one-half the rights of private Members, not a single suggestion for improving these Rules or for limiting their operation came from the Liberal Benches, but the Tories came to the rescue of the Government and the House. The Tories showed themselves the stoutest and, as the result proved, the most reasonable guardians of public liberty. The Tories thus rendered good service to the country—good service that deserved to be remembered in future years. That unwilling evidence of a bitter political opponent, he thought, afforded strong proof of the advantage of a free and independent Opposition, and the great danger of the placing so powerful a weapon as *clôture* by a bare majority in the hands of a dominant Party. But perhaps there might be reasons why the Government had brought forward these Rules at the present time. Perhaps they were not very anxious for free and independent criticism upon their policy, and had become aware that in and outside the House their power and influence were on the wane. The Birmingham caucus, of which the President of the Board of Trade had told them he had been a director, had done all in its power to intimidate independent Liberal Members, in order that they should support these Rules; but the country was turning against the Government. If the Government succeeded in carrying these Rules they hoped to be able to stifle all opposition and carry whatever measures they choose; if they failed they would have found an easy and effectual mode of transferring their failures and difficulties to others. But at a time when failure and disaster overshadowed the Government in all their undertakings, could the country afford to dispense with the counsels and assistance of the Opposition? He could not believe that any true Liberals would turn their backs upon their own traditions by surrendering that freedom of debate in Parliament on which the liberties of the English people depended. He believed that every Member of the House, to whatever Party he belonged, who still appreciated the old-fashioned virtue of independence, would unite in opposing strenuously this un-English and tyrannical measure.

Colonel CARINGTON said, he hoped that, taking into consideration the importance of the question before the House, the indulgence of the House would be extended to one who under less grave circumstances would have given a silent vote. The hon. Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott) had laid great stress upon the fact that the Rules of the House had been unaltered for 200 years. Generally speaking there was, no doubt, some truth in that statement; but he would venture to remind the House that the mode of carrying on debates had changed more in the last 200 weeks than it had in the previous 200 years. Formerly Members of the House were governed by sentiment; we did not, however, live in a sentimental age, and did not require sentimental Rules. What was really needed was not Rules that could be stretched or strained, but Rules that could not be broken or even bent. For the last three or four Sessions of Parliament some hon. Members had spoken with unparalleled frequency and fluency, and in so doing had taken up an amount of time which, he believed, in the opinion of the majority of the House, was totally in excess of the exigencies of the case; but in so doing hon. Members were totally and thoroughly within their right. Now, with the permission of the House, he should like respectfully to ask right hon. and hon. Gentlemen, whose length of service in the House, and whose knowledge of the Forms of the House made their opinion highly valuable, whether, if a Member had the right to prolong discussions to a length which was considered unwarrantable by the majority of the House, the time had not arrived when every vestige, every remnant, and every shadow of such a right should be removed once and for ever? Some hon. Members appeared to view with disapprobation the application of the will of the majority in the present instance. Did hon. Members forget that majorities were the life and soul of our political existence. Every Member sitting in this House sat because the majority of his constituents elected him to do so. The Party that sat on the right of the Speaker's Chair—whichever Party that might be—sat there in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the House. The Speaker himself and his illustrious Predecessors had all filled the Chair because that distinction was conferred upon them by the majority of the House of Commons. There was not an Act of Parliament on the Statute Book the origin of which could not be traced to Parliamentary majorities. A majority of 1 could defeat a Ministry; a majority of 1 could prevent the voting of a single shilling in Supply; and last, but not least, a majority of 1 might enable at the next General Election the hon. Member for Brighton, the Liberal Member for Brighton, further to serve his Party by succeeding the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, whom he had so strongly denounced, as Member for Birmingham. And yet, when majorities were applicable to all these great ends, they were told they must not use them to set their own House in order. Then, again, they were told that there was grave objection to the *clôture* because it was un-English. There was nothing new or surprising in that statement. Railways on their introduction were held to be un-English. The Ballot was denounced as un-English at a time when that mode of voting was in force in every English Club in England. Cyprus was un-English, and yet hon. Gentlemen opposite did not object to its annexation on that ground. India was un-English, and so was Ireland; but no one in their senses would endeavour on that account to wrest them from the British Crown. He begged to thank the House for the indulgence that had been extended to him. He had been but comparatively a short time in the House; but during the 14 years he had had the honour of serving there he had always been led to believe, partly by a strong inward conviction, but mainly through many a bright example on either side of the House, that the first duty of a Member of the House of Commons, whether he were the Leader of the House, or whether he were, as he was, its humblest Member, was to be zealous in maintaining the honour and dignity of Parliament; and, recognizing the paramount importance of that duty, he should support the First Lord of the Treasury with his vote, believing that the proposals of the right hon. Gentleman would restore full dignity to their debates.

Sir JOHN KENNAWAY said, he believed that there was a prevalent opinion in favour of a revision of their Rules of Procedure. Some speakers had attempted to show that the Conservative Party did not entertain that opinion; but their efforts had resulted in complete failure. How was it, he asked, that England had become what she was? When successive waves of revolution had passed over the rest of Europe, how was it that we had maintained peace and prosperity in our country? Should not the reason be sought in the fact that there had always existed a confidence in the honesty of the House of Commons and in its ability to deal with the innumerable requirements of the nation? Of late, however, the House had been losing its prestige, an impatient country having begun to lose faith in it. This was a matter in which Conservatives and Liberals were interested alike. His Party would proably, at some future time, occupy the position of the Party opposite, and be anxious to initiate legislation of a practical and useful order. Surely when that time should come they ought to be able to give effect to their legislative desires. The view of the case which he had endeavoured to present to the House being almost universally accepted, the Government now came forward with certain proposals. He held that their first step should have been to place upon the Table of the House Resolutions which practically would have been received with unanimity. If the Government had been content to put the other Rules forward first, they would have met with general approval, and reforms would have been inaugurated in a way that would have redounded to the credit of the Ministry. But so small and unambitious a scheme hardly comported with the tone which they assumed. Revolution, and not reform, had been the motto of the Prime Minister. He had placed the *clôture* in the front rank; and they were told by the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington)—at least, so he had understood it—that the Government would stand or fall by that Resolution. They were referred to other countries for examples of the *clôture*. He read last week of the *clôture* being applied twice in a single sitting on the vital question of religious instruction. That was the sort of treatment they might expect under similar circumstances. He did not, however, consider the *cloture*, under all circumstances and all limitations, a measure to be resisted altogether; but on that point he wished to reserve his decision for the present. The great point they had to see to was the preservation of the right of free speech and the rights of minorities; and he maintained that for the Government to get together 200

Members, and to use them for putting a stop to discussion was not to stop Obstruction, but to stifle fair and legitimate discussion. They were told that bare majorities decided great questions in that House, and that bare majorities decided questions at the polling booths. He maintained these were not at all analogous cases to the question of dealing with free speech. Questions decided in that House were questions relating to large Imperial or domestic concerns, with regard to which there had been free discussion. So again at the polling booth. It was a wholly different thing from putting the *clôture* in force against free speech. The Prime Minister gave various instances in support of the *clôture*. He said coercion took 29 days, and he thought 20 would have been enough. He said the Land Act took 58 days, and, in his opinion, that was twice too long. In his (Sir John Kennaway's) opinion, considering the principles involved, twice 58 days would not have been too much to discuss the Land Act. But the right hon. Gentleman failed to show that *clôture* was the only way of meeting the Obstruction to which he referred. He omitted the personal dealing with the individual Obstructive. The remainder of the New Rules would have affected the Obstruction and reduced the subjects within reasonable limits. *Clôture* was in force in America, and what had they witnessed about Congress during the last few weeks? They read in *The Times* of last Saturday that the House had been sitting for three weeks, and there was nothing whatever to show for it, and no prospect of any change. The fact was, free discussion was of the very essence of Parliamentary life. It had its disadvantages. It was not favourable to rapid legislation. But its disadvantages were compensated a thousand times over by the outlet it gave to discontent, which, if smothered, might lead to mischief. Under the *clôture* the honourable understanding which had prevailed between men of different opinions and different Parties in that House would be put an end to, and a feeling of suspicion and distrust would take its place. At present the conferences between the Speaker and the Members of the Government caused no comment or suspicion; but under the New Rule those conferences would be no longer possible. Every movement of the Prime Minister towards the Chair would be a movement of sinister importance. Every whisper would be supposed to be a suggestion that the Speaker should declare the evident sense of the House. He hoped it was not too late for the Government to look at this question from a somewhat broader basis, and realize that it was too wide a question to be dealt with on strict Party lines. The Prime Minister might be able, through pressure inside the House and by pressure from without—from those organizations of which they had heard so much—to carry this Rule; but the victory would be bought too dearly, if it was to be said of him, after his lifelong services to the State and the exercise of his great talents, that he degraded the character and destroyed the liberties of the British House of Commons.

MR. SHIELD said, he was grateful to the hon. Baronet the Member for East Devon (Sir John Kennaway) for one thing—he had not introduced the caucus into his argument. All the other hon. Gentlemen opposite had suggested that they were going to vote for the Resolution, not because they liked it, but because they were afraid of the caucus. He had a considerable diffidence in speaking of himself personally; but, without claiming in any way to be considered a *rara avis*, he assured the House that his vote would be given wholly free from the influence either of Birmingham or of his own constituency. The Amendment before the House declared that no Rules would be satisfactory which placed it in the power of a bare majority to close a debate. But he thought that the Amendment, as well as the arguments founded upon it, ignored the most important part of the Resolution itself—that which referred to the action of the Speaker. It was a vice under which all their adverse criticism laboured that they paid no regard to the Speaker's initiative, whereas he ventured to regard it as ninety-nine-hundredths of the whole thing. The real effective agency would come from the Chair. It might be undesirable to place such extensive authority in the hands of the Chair, but Gentlemen opposite were content to swallow the camel of the Speaker's initiative while they strained at the gnat of the majority. Then, too, they were told that Speakers and Chairmen would become deteriorated by the operation of that clause. All the evils to which the imaginations of hon. Members gave rise were based upon violent assumptions. There was the assumption of the despotic Minister whom the House had never seen. But the most violent assumption of all was that of the Successor to the present Speaker, who should so forget the inheritance of great traditions he had received as to sink to the degradation of becoming a confederate with a Minister in such a scheme against the State and enable him to work out his nefarious designs. He was convinced that the youngest man in the House would never live to see the day when that would happen. But the Rule directed "that the Speaker may, at his absolute discretion," close the debate after observing the evident sense of the House. Before that power could be abused the House must imagine a Speaker devoid not only of impartiality, but also of ordinary sagacity. Would not his judgment be arrived at under keen and practised eyes ready to detect any deviation from his duty? Whenever, in the exercise of that duty, a Speaker did declare the evident sense of the House to be that the debate should be closed, he ventured to say it would always be found that at least a two-thirds majority desired it, and therefore no danger could arise from the absence of that particular stipulation. There was, morever, one weighty argument which had never been met. If a bare majority sufficed to turn out a Ministry or to pass a Reform Bill, why should it not suffice also to ratify a foregone conclusion? What hon. Members were really opposing was something which was not to be found within the four corners of that Resolution. The right hon. Gentleman who opened the debate that evening talked about the noble Marquess at Nelson having let the cat out of the bag. That was a figure of speech he intended himself to have adopted. He intended to have said that hon. Members of the Conservative Party had let the cat out of the bag by showing that in opposing the Resolution they were resisting legislation. He was not saying anything which had not been abundantly avowed. It might be traced in all their speeches; and if the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), the cause of whose absence they all regretted, were in his place, he could call attention to a speech of his made a considerable time ago, when the noble Lord let the cat out of the bag. Now, he thoroughly misconceived the people of England if they would regard it as a blot upon the Government Resolutions that they were designed, intended, and competent to revive, he might say to re-create, the legislative efficiency of the House.

Mr. WARTON said, that it was easy for a Minister to throw down the gauntlet, as the Prime Minister had done; but it was hardly fair to make this a question upon which the Government would stand or fall. He should have thought that the Government would have put the matter on a different footing, and have connected it with their Irish or foreign policy. But they were threatened by an imperious Minister, who showed a despotic temper in every way, not only to Members on the Opposition, but upon his own side of the House. ["No!"] Well, if it was an open question, why was such pressure brought to bear on hon. Members to support the Resolutions? ["Oh, oh!"] It was all very well to protest against that statement; but confidences to the same effect had been made by Member after Member to those sitting on the Opposition side of the House, though, of course, the latter were bound not to reveal them. The Prime Minister acted according to what he might call Turkish ideas. He knew the right hon. Gentleman was no friend of the Turks, and yet he was treating the House to the Turkish alternative—the sack or the bowstring. With the bowstring he would strangle them; with the sack he would send them away. When that imperious Minister was recounting the history of the *clôture* in other countries he did not tell the House how it had acted in the country across the Channel. There was a whole string of the most important questions that ever came before the French Parliament in the time of the late Emperor which were carried by the *clôture.* Whether French subjects should be sent to Cayenne without any trial was carried by the *clôture* after only one Opposition speaker was allowed to be heard. So it was with respect to Nice, and to the important questions which led to the Austro-Italian War and the Expedition to Mexico. How did the *clôture* work under M. Rouher? Directly he got impatient he gave the signal to his followers with the back of his head. They had a M. Rouher here, and directly he got impatient he would give a signal; hon. Members would howl accordingly, and one day the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair would be under the impression that that was "the evident sense of the House." He knew the Speaker would not do anything wrong in the slightest degree; but he was not sure that the right hon. Gentleman's Successors would not, for one result of the *clôture* would be that they should have degraded Speakers. He was only speaking the mind of many hon. Members when he asked whether the Chairman of Committees was fit to preside over the Committees of that House? If they had as Speaker such a man as the Chairman of Committees was now, or as future Speakers might be, they would not trust their discretion at all. He regretted very much that anyone should have said that "bare," as used by the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott), was an un-Parliamentary word. It was a good old English word, and he was afraid that in this age we were losing old English words. What he feared was that this "bare majority" would in practice be shown in a great number of howls when they wished to come to a conclusion. He seldom trespassed on the House for more than 10 or 12 minutes, never for 20; but when the *clôture* came into operation he would speak much longer. When the *clôture* was passed the name of Parliament ought to be changed. The very etymology of the word showed that in the place where they were met it was meant they should speak their mind. But when they could no longer speak their mind, he left it to those who dealt in French phrases to say what the particular name should be, when it would be no longer a Parliament, but a place for registering the decisions of a Minister.

MR. H. H. FOWLER: Sir, the Resolution and Amendment raise two questions for our consideration—First, whether the House should in any way, or to any extent, limit the length of its debates and control the appropriation of its time; and, second, whether the method proposed by the Government for effecting such a limit is the best and wisest method that can be adopted. In asking whether it is desirable that the House should limit the duration of debate, it would, perhaps, be more accurate to ask whether every Member of the House should have the power of indefinitely prolonging debate, of delaying Public Business, and of practically paralyzing the legislative and administrative action of the House. That question, whether regarded abstractedly, or in the light of recent Parliamentary history, appears to me to admit but one reply. If, in a House of 658 Members every Member has a right to speak at any length on every question, the transaction of Business by such an Assembly becomes impossible, and free speech and free debate, in the sense in which we understand and value them, are degraded and nullified. The plea that such a right would never be exercised is an admission that there are somewhere or somehow controlling forces which regulate or prevent its exercise. In that case, the necessity for control is conceded, and the question at issue becomes one of extent and degree; but, unfortunately, the proceedings of the present Parliament negative the allegation that such an abuse is impossible. The 41½ hours' Sitting was a determined and persistent assertion of the right of individual Members to prolong debate. That debate was closed by the wise and courageous action of the Chair interposing to save the House from the impotence of its own Rules. That interposition called the attention of the House and of the country to a real necessity and a real danger, and it devolves upon the House to provide against its recurrence. The practice of the House, or rather its former practice, provided effectually for the closure of debate. The Leaders of the two Parties into which the House was formerly divided practically settled how long debates should last, and when debates should close; and Party discipline enforced a rigid observance of these arrangements. Adjournments of debates were assented to on the understanding that the debate should close at a certain time, and when that time came the debate was closed, no matter how numerous were the Members who desired to address the House. There was a conspicuous instance of that last Session. The question of the retention of Candahar was a grave question of Imperial policy, legitimately calling for the attention of both Houses of Parliament. The question was one on which public interest was aroused, and large numbers of Members entitled to speak, and capable of speaking with experience and authority, were anxious to oppose or support the policy of Her Majesty's Government. Now, Sir, what happened? In the interest of public convenience it was seen that two nights only could be spared for the debate; and although scores of Members were precluded from advocating their views the *clôture* was as distinctly applied as it would have been in the French Chamber, and the discussion terminated, and the division was taken at the close of the second night. Of course, you may call this "gagging" the House, interfering with the right of free speech, "deferring," according to my hon. and learned Friend the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) "to the imperious will of a tyrannical Minister," or, according to the expression of my hon. and gallant Friend the Member for West Sussex (Sir Walter B. Barttelot), "collaring the House all round." But, Sir, it was the common-sense action of common-sense Leaders combining to conduct the Business of this House in a common-sense way. Irrespective of these considerations and precedents, I justifiy the limit of debate in the interest of minorities. They are entitled to a free and full expression of their views; to a free and full expression of all shades of Parliamentary or public opinion; and in that expression a minority has its safest security and its strongest weapon. A debate to be effective must tell on this House and on public opinion. There can be no surer way of destroying its power than to allow it to degenerate into waste of public time and hostility to public good. I, Sir, for one, should be the last man to assent to or advocate any procedure which would prejudice the rights of minorities. The history of the political Party which sits on these Benches is the history of the struggles and triumphs of minorities. Those triumphs were won not by Obstruction, not by abuse of the Forms of the House, not by assailing the dignity and character of Parliament, but by fair discussion, fair argument, intelligently convincing public opinion and converting Parliamentary minorities into Parliamentary majorities. Minorities have a moral power which is weakened, if not defeated, by all unfair attempts to subvert or arrest the legitimate action of the majority, which for the time being Constitutionally represents the opinion of the country. There is, however, another interest which claims to be heard on this question—I mean the public interest. This House exists to work as well as to talk, to govern as well as to criticize, to legislate as well as to debate, to protect and extend rights and liberties and privileges of which it is the supreme guardian, and which will be seriously endangered if the House of Commons is lowered in public estimation or incapacitated for the discharge of its vast and varied powers. On these grounds, therefore, I support the limit of the length of debate; but the Main Question before the House is not so much as to the necessity for such limit, but as to the wisdom of the mode proposed by the Government. It would be foolish to ignore the difficulties which surround every mode of approaching this question, I do not disparage the character or efficiency of other Representative Assemblies when I claim for the House of Commons as the "Mother of Parliaments" characteristics so peculiarly its own as to render precedents drawn from other Assemblies inapplicable. I think we can gain their advantages in our own way, in a way that is in harmony with the history and traditions of this House. I could not assent to a proposal which would place in the hands of any majority, whether a bare majority, or a two-thirds majority, or a nine-tenths majority, the power of summarily deciding, without check or control, when a debate should close. The illustration that a majority can decide the fate of Ministries, can pass or reject laws, can control public policy, is not applicable in this case. The determination of a question after the question has been fully discussed is the function and the right of a majority; to decide such a question without consideration, or rather to decide that such a question shall be determined without consideration, is not the function of any majority. And I make no qualification as to its numerical extent. A majority of two-thirds has a greater tendency to exercise its power tyranically than a bare majority. The minorities which require protection are minorities of generally less than one-third. I very much doubt whether my right hon. Colleague (Mr. C. P. Villiers), during his long and gallant struggle on the floor of this House for the repeal of the Corn Laws—and my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright) will know whether I am right—ever had the support of a minority amounting to one-third. The recognition of a principle that a majority of two-third or three-fourth power could do that which a bare majority could not do would be the introduction of a principle entirely new in the practice of Parliament, and of a principle which would seriously menace the rights and privileges of what I may call ordinary minorities. Now, Sir, what the Government proposes, and what I support as being the strongest guarantee for the privileges of minorities, and the safest mode of expediting Public Business, is that the highest Officer of the House, called by a great statesman of the last century "The natural guardian and protector of the privileges of the House and all its Members" should, acting judicially, exercise a two-fold judicial function. First: He must form the opinion—and he alone must decide the tests and evidence by which he will arrive at that opinion—that it is the evident sense of the House, not of a majority of the House, as such, measured by any particular figure, but in the ordinary and well-understood expression of the words—and no man has any doubt in his own mind what these words mean—that it is the evident sense of the House that the debate should close. The suggestion that 201 Members as against 200 would constitute the evident sense of the House is a transparent absurdity which is not worth discussion. When the Speaker has formed his judicial opinion as to the evident sense of the House he is to be intrusted with another judicial discretion, to which I attach the greatest importance. He is not to be bound by the evident sense of the House—that might be in favour of a grave injustice; but he may, not he must, not he shall—he may, if, in his opinion, it is right to do so, inform the House of the opinion at which he has arrived. This, Sir, seems to me to be the true protection of a minority. The Speaker stands between the minority and the majority—and majorities become more tyrannical and more domineering as they become more powerful—but the Speaker, the protector of their privileges, guarding the rights of the minority, will not take the initiative which this Rule devolves upon him until he is judicially satisfied that it is right so to do; and then, and not till then, will the House be called upon to vote in the usual way to show that the necessary quorum is present, and to translate into a formal Order of the House what had been judicially declared from the Chair. This is a closure of debate widely different from, and vastly superior to, the *clôture*, which the Government are erroneously charged with endeavouring to introduce. The objection to this intervention of the Chair is that the Speaker may be a Party man, chosen on Party grounds, and disposed to employ the privileges and responsibilities of his high office for Party purposes. You, Sir, were selected to preside over this House by a unanimous vote; your Predecessor, Mr. Denison, was similarly chosen; but let me recall attention to the election of the Speaker who preceded Mr. Denison. If ever there was a Party struggle, if ever there was a Party vote in this House, it was in connection with that election. The Opposition, strong and united under the Leadership of Sir Robert Peel, proposed Mr. Goulburn; the Government proposed Mr. Shaw Lefevre. In the division there were only 22 Members absent; 620 were actually present in the House, and, including Pairs, 636 voted, and the Speaker was chosen by a narrow majority of 18. And this Speaker, selected on Party grounds, supported as a Party candidate, elected in a Party division, displayed in his occupancy of that Chair a dignity, ability, and impartiality which, according to the testimony of both sides, has rarely been equalled, and has never been surpassed. Lord Eversley's Speakership is the best reply to those who, like the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott), discern untold calamities and unspeakable degradation from a Party election of a Party Speaker. Party grounds, forsooth! On what grounds are the holders of our great judicial offices selected, our Lord Chancellors or Chief Justices? Is there a keener Party politician in this country than the great Lawyer and the great Judge, who, if the Conservatives returned to Power, would preside over the administration of justice? And is there anyone who will dare to say that Earl

Cairns would allow his judicial character to be warped by his political opinions? Our Judges, when they leave the arena of Party strife for the serener atmosphere of the Bench, lay aside their Party politics; and so, whoever is thought worthy to occupy the post of Speaker will do the same. The insinuation that the Speaker of this House would degrade his office and himself by Party unfairness is as improbable and absurd as the insinuation that the Judges would similarly degrade their offices. But, Sir, the hon. and learned Member for Brighton constructed a climax of which the descending steps were—an enlarged constituency will result in a deteriorated House of Commons; a deteriorated House of Commons will surrender its guidance and its liberties to an arbitrary Minister; an arbitrary Minister will select an unprincipled Speaker; and thus, Sir, the extension of the franchise effected by the Conservative Reform Act of 1867 is to find its consummation in the degradation of the Chair. This very much reminds me of the schoolboy syllogism—Greece was ruled by Themistocles, he was ruled by his wife, she was ruled by her little boy—*ergo*, the little boy ruled Greece. I deny the fact that the enlarged constituencies have deteriorated the character of this House. On behalf of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton himself, on behalf of the large number of hon. Members on both sides of the House who have been sent here by the suffrages of these enlarged constituencies, I deny that our conduct or our character is unworthy of those with whom we are associated. With all our blunders, we new Members are as anxious to do our duty, are as determined to uphold the dignity and traditions of this House as any hon. Member who has ever sat within its walls. But, Sir, if the strange anticipations of the hon. and learned Member were realized, does he not see that in that event this Resolution, and any Resolution affecting Procedure, would not be of the slightest importance? According to his theory, the dignity and independence of this House, the character of its Leaders and its Officers would have been utterly destroyed by outside forces; and, in the presence of that catastrophe, details of Procedure would be as worthless as they would be insignificant. As practical men we have to deal not with what is possible, but what is probable. In other spheres of life we regulate our actions by probabilities; and in passing these Rules, I ask the House to deal with what is probable, and in so doing to remember that there are two factors in the problem which not even the much-abused Birmingham Caucus can effect. This is not the occasion, and I am not the man, to defend the political life of Birmingham from the sneers which have been cast upon it. For many years past men who have attacked the Liberal Party and Liberal principles, especially when speaking from Liberal Benches, have always found in the politics, the Members, and the caricatures of Birmingham something wherewith

> "To point a moral or adorn a tale."

The municipal, the political, and the public life of Birmingham will survive all this sort of criticism. But I would ask the hon. and learned Member for Brighton, when next he charges the enlarged constituencies with degrading the character of Parliament, and pours his scorn on Birmingham, to remember that that constituency, composed of nearly 70,000 men, the great bulk of whom earn their daily bread by their daily toil, and who cannot be bought like cattle, have returned to this House two Members who, since they have been elected for Birmingham, have been called to the foremost places in the Councils of the Crown. But, apart from that digression, I was saying that there are two political influences which not even the Birmingham Caucus can effect, and those are public opinion and a free and independent Press. There is not a Member of this House who believes in the bogey of an unprincipled and tyrannical Speaker. There is not a Member who does not know that all majorities, no matter how strong and how determined, are ever acting in the presence of a public opinion which keenly watches all their actions, and which is as ready and as powerful to destroy majorities as it was to create them. In the present condition of public life in this country, in the present condition of the public Press, no majority can trample upon the legitimate rights of any minority. I can conceive of no better cry which a defeated minority could raise, I know no surer sign of the immediate and certain downfall of any majority, however strong, than the clearly-proved allegation that it had attempted to tamper with or to destroy that freedom of speech which is the breath, the essence, and the life of free government. I cordially support this Resolution and the general scheme of the Government, because I believe it will tend to conserve and promote the freedom, the dignity, and efficiency, and therefore the well-doing of the House of Commons, which for generations past has been, and which, I believe, for generations to come, will be, the oldest, the noblest, and the best of those Representative Assemblies which are at once the foundation and the bulwarks of Constitutional freedom and national progress.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, that with a great many of the words which had fallen from the speaker who had just sat down he felt much disposed to agree. But he was bound to say that he entirely disputed the correctness of his conclusions, for a great many of his arguments went directly in the teeth of the proposals of the Government. It was now, unhappily, long since those proposals had been first made to the House. But there was an advantage in the delay, for they had had a longer time to form their opinions. It was perfectly well known that the Society with which the President of the Board of Trade had been connected, but of which he was not now a member, had done all in its power to get up Petitions to the House in favour of the proposals. [MR. JOHN BRIGHT dissented.] The right hon. Gentleman shook his head; but the fact was so. That action on the part of that Society had annoyed and disgusted Great Britain. ["Oh, oh!"] Hon. Members might say "Oh, oh!" as much as they liked; but they could not alter the fact. The result of those Petitions had been absolute and utter failure. He could not help thinking that the reason why the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster shook his head was that many of the Petitions on the subject had only been presented that morning. But it was a remarkable fact that the Petitions in favour of the proposal only numbered 48, with 3,600 signatories; whereas there were 271 Petitions, signed by 22,000 persons, against it. He did not say that that went for much; but, at all events, it went to show that the action of the Birmingham Association had not produced much result. He wished to refer for one moment to the Prime Minister's speech in introducing the Resolutions. There were two notes of alarm in that speech which were quite worthy of serious consideration. First, he spoke of the dubious operation of the proposals which he was about to make, and said that he should bring them forward with studied moderation. Whether they were necessary or not was another matter; but anyone could judge whether they had been framed with studied moderation. They made the greatest change that had ever been made in the Procedure of the House; they absolutely altered the character of its debates. All he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) could say was that if they were conceived in a spirit of studious moderation, he should like to know what other proposals were before the right hon. Gentleman when these moderate measures were chosen. The second note of alarm was quite as significant. That was that there were other matters which would have to be left to the future consideration of other Parliaments. Therefore, it might be taken for granted that if the Prime Minister once got the Resolutions accepted, he would produce some new Rules and Regulations. But they were not left there. In the speech of the noble Marquess another point arose worthy of serious consideration. In the Recess the Prime Minister expressed a hope that the question would not be treated as a Party question. He said it was an Imperial question, a National question, above all Party questions. His own idea of a Party question was that it was one on which there would be a deadly contest, on which the life of the Government depended. But this was a question on which the House was to be taken into the counsels of the Government, and in which the Government was to be guided by the expression of its opinion. But they had been told that evening by the noble Marquess, who spoke with his usual frankness, that the Resolution was one upon which the Government took its stand, whether it should remain in Office or fall. He was glad that that announcement had been made. But he wished to know how the noble Marquess's speech could be reconciled with the statement of the Prime Minister that it was not to be treated as a Party question? How was the difference to be explained? He quite agreed that the House wanted a motive power. But he would have thought that the Prime Minister, after consultation with his Colleagues, would have brought the proposals before the House in his capacity of Leader of the House rather than of Leader of a powerful majority, in order to force them not only on his Supporters, but upon the whole House. He agreed with his hon. Friend who had spoken not long ago (Sir John Kennaway), that great reforms of Procedure were necessary. He would accept the words of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) that Parliamentary Procedure had become of late years something like a bye-word. He agreed with the Prime Minister that a critical stage had been reached, and that the limit of patience had been reached, and with the noble Marquess who asked how Business was to be carried on? He was perfectly willing and ready to support any reasonable and rational reform, and he hoped such a reform might be carried during the present Session. He hoped it was not even then too late for the Prime Minister to come down from the pedestal on which he had placed himself, and make some proposal for Rules which could be generally approved, and which they would all be bound to obey. What was the real cause of the mischief from which they were suffering? He would state that shortly. But, whatever the cause was, these were matters which ought to be considered very carefully, and which ought not to be forced upon an unwilling House. He had looked into the opinions formerly expressed on that subject of Members of the present Government. No one could have expressed himself more strongly in favour of his own views than the present Home Secretary. At the time he referred to they were discussing whether they should proceed with the Army and Navy Estimates without first going on with the Motions on going into Committee of Supply. That was a question which he thought might be approached with great advantage, and without departing from the ordinary Rules of the House. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, speaking in February, 1879—not very long ago—used this extraordinary language. He hoped the right hon. and learned Gentleman, if he spoke in that debate, would not depart from that language. The Home Secretary then said—"It is quite impossible that a question of this kind can be settled by a bare majority." But then the right hon. and learned Gentleman went on to say—"They could not depart from the ancient Rules of the House, except by general consent." ["Hear, hear!"] He saw the Home Secretary acknowledged the observation, and he hoped they should get his vote on the present occasion. If the Prime Minister had only brought forward Resolutions which could have commanded the general consent of the House, they would have been passed by that time, and the House would have been getting on with its usual Business. What was the cause of the present state of things? First, there had been of late years, unfortunately, a spirit of disloyalty to the Rules of the House, and the Rules had been persistently and wilfully perverted. He would take the definition of Obstruction, as given by the Prime Minister, "as the persistent opposition to measures otherwise than by argument," or as being "the want of deference by a few to the general judgment of the House." That, he maintained, was an absolute offence against the dignity and authority of the Chair. The late Government did attempt, not long ago, to introduce a Rule in order to check that by stating that if a Member offended in that way he ought to be punished. They had considerable difficulty in passing that Rule in the beginning of the Session of 1880. The noble Lord opposite was good enough on that occasion to give them his support, as did many of his Colleagues, who, however, differed as to the details, although they were all agreed as to the principle of the proposal. It was only after a very long debate that the then Government were able to get that Rule passed; and, although it was very much laughed at at the time, he was bound to say that the present Government had used it once or twice with very considerable effect, and he thought that without it the Coercion Bill could never have been passed. This particular cause of the grievance ought not, however, to be made an excuse for going beyond the necessities of the case, because it was absolutely clear that the *clôture* was no remedy for that, and that it must be dealt with by punishing the individuals. He saw with pleasure that there was a Rule proposed by the Prime Minister to strengthen the Rule carried two years ago by the late Chancellor of the Exchequer; but they must take care not to make the passing of those Rules an excuse for the *clôture*. He could not express that feeling in stronger language than was used by the Prime Minister, who, in the debate of February, 1880, said—

> "Let us observe and bear in mind that, whatever the *clôture* may be as a means of saving the time of a deliberative Assembly, it is, I think . . . . . inapplicable to the present discussion, because, as a penal measure, it would surely be altogether inappropriate. . . . . . To bring in the *clôture* for the purposes which this Resolution contemplates would be simply to enact that the House would punish itself, and the great interests with which it is charged, in consequence of the offence of a particular Member."—[3 *Hansard*, ccl. 1573.]

What were the other causes with which they had to deal? The Prime Minister had said with great truth that there had been a great increase of Business. Prince Bismarck once said that England had too many irons in the fire, and he was not quite certain whether the House of Commons did not suffer from the same complaint. There was another cause of the grievance from which they suffered—namely, the growing assumption of power by the House. The House was gradually assuming new functions, and was becoming more and more the practical Executive Government of this country. He did not say whether that were right or wrong; but it was the undoubted fact. This circumstance was clearly pointed out in an article written by Mr. Frederic Harrison, a gentleman who had very great weight among the working classes. Again, hon. Members attended in much greater numbers, and took part more frequently in the debates than they did 25 or 30 years ago. Two or three years ago the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. J. Cowen), in a remarkable speech, stated that the Members elected under the new Reform Act were not brought up in the same class as former Members, and were not bound by the same social ties, and that they came there without being cognizant of the position of the old House of Commons. For his own part, he rather welcomed the fact that they were there. But they would in future be there in greater numbers than ever, and they would not be bound by the old traditional Rules. All these were causes to be considered when the House came to decide what Rules should be applicable to the altered state of things. As the noble Marquess had stated, if every Member were to speak on every subject, however briefly, the Business of the House would be absolutely stopped. It was only by self-control and by bringing men by degrees to the habit of self-control that the Business could possibly be carried on. If they attempted to put in force a coercive measure of this kind they would fail. They would cause irritation, disturbance, and ill-feeling, and would render necessary in the future those further coercive measures which the Prime Minister foreshadowed. The canon which he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) would lay down for dealing with this question was that they must not make the necessary restraint of the few the measure of the liberty of the many, and they must not make the abuse of their Rules by a few an excuse for curbing the liberty of the many. If the Prime Minister were to follow the lines of the four precedents which he quoted in his opening speech the whole House would be with him, and he would carry the Rules without delay. It was because the right hon. Gentleman had sought other precedents elsewhere that hon. Members on that side of the House dissented from the Government proposals. The Prime Minister had laid stress on the fact that the *clôture*, although somewhat different in form, had been recommended by Lord Eversley. In point of fact, Lord Eversley stated that the precedents of America and France were not applicable to that House, and proposed—

> "That it shall be competent to any Member, before the Order of the Day for resuming an adjourned debate is read, to move that the debate be not further adjourned, and that if the House should agree no Member shall be allowed to rise after 2 o'clock in the morning, at which hour the Speaker shall put the question."

That was wholly different from the spirit of the present proposal, for it assumed that all questions must have a whole night's debate. This was a *clôture* for preventing questions ever being brought forward except in the most formal way, and he ventured to think that was entirely different from what Lord

Eversley proposed. Then the Prime Minister said that there had been 14 Committees sitting on this matter. The noble Marquess that afternoon had said there had been 20. Here was a remarkable fact, that, although the question had been so often brought before Committees, not one of them ever made a Report in favour of it. The Committee of 1848 said—

> "Your Committee, in weighing the value of this evidence, had to take into account how materially the Constitution made the transacting of business in the House of Commons differ from the two Legislative Assemblies from which we had evidence—namely, America and France."

Then the question dropped out of notice until it came before the Committee of 1878, when the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Dodson) proposed an Amendment to Mr. Knatchbull-Hugessen's proposition in favour of the *clôture* in these words—"The Committee is not prepared to recommend its present adoption by the House." For that Amendment there voted, among others, the present Secretary for India and the present Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and 11 others out of 15 who were present. Subsequently there was a Motion to leave out the word "present," when the President of the Board of Trade voted to retain the word, the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs voting *contra.* The question now was whether this was to be a *clôture* by a bare majority. The right hon. Gentleman had argued the question as a purely judicial question to be left to the decision of the Speaker; but he would ask every hon. Member to read the Resolution for himself, and see whether that was so. The House would go to a division. The majority would say that it was the evident sense of the House that the debate should close. It might be there was a majority of only 1, so that the effect would be that that one Member would be entitled to say it was the evident sense of the House that the debate should be closed. No one would prevent him from believing that the latter part of the clause constituted really the active principle. The vital power remained in the enacting words, and they were that a bare majority should close the debate. It was said that this was a proper power to give; but he would state the strong objections he felt against the *clôture.* He objected to it because it would enormously increase the power of the Minister of the day. The Speaker could only state what he believed to be the temper of the House, and a powerful Minister would endeavour to force his views upon the House. The noble Marquess had himself shown how this power was to be used. He would say they did not want to hear the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mc Iver) on his question of Fair Trade; they did not want to hear the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) on Russian Aggression; nor the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) on Patent Medicines. He would say the debate should close, and the judicial power of the Speaker would simply be to declare what was the sense of the House. The *clôture* would enormously diminish independence and the action of independent Members. No one would forget the sense of general relief that prevailed last Session the moment Urgency was taken off. If the right hon. Gentleman had then proposed any Rules of this kind they would have been scouted out of the House. It would not be at the beginning of the Session that the *clôture* would be enforced. It would be applied as they were approaching the end of the Session. When the Heads of Departments who had been shut out until after Easter endeavoured to introduce their Bills, then would come the demand of the Government that the Bills and Motions of private Members should be postponed in order to make way for their own measures. The result would be that at the end of the Session it would be found that a very dangerous Rule had been passed. The question of Supply was very serious. The noble Lord opposite had alluded to what had occurred last week, and to circumstances which he certainly thought very hard for the House of Commons. He had supposed that the Government, having brought forward the Army Estimates on Monday and the Navy Estimates on Thursday, and having got as many of the Votes as were necessary, might have been content; and it was the first time he had ever heard the complaint raised that on the first introduction of the Estimates Members were allowed to discuss grievances. But if the *clôture* had been in force last week, none of the Motions on going into Committee of Supply could by any possibility have been brought forward. He might go a step further. The noble Lord had said very truly that Friday, though nominally a Government night, practically belonged to the private Members, because Supply was put down in order to enable them to bring forward their grievances. If the Resolution of the Prime Minister were passed, the Government, wanting Supply at the end of the Session, would get rid of the Motions of private Members in order at once to get into Committee of Supply. The question had been asked of the right hon. Gentleman the other day, and the only answer that could possibly be given was that the *clôture* would apply only to the particular question before the House. Now, the Question put by the Speaker on going into Committee of Supply was "That I do now leave the Chair." On that Question a division would be taken, and the Member who might wish to bring forward his grievance would be debarred from doing so. The Question "That I do now leave the Chair," would, after the *clôture,* be ordered to be put from the Chair, and no further debate would be permissible. The fact was that on Fridays the Government, if hard pressed, had only to use the *clôture* twice to take away the customary rights of private Members. ["No, no!"] He believed he was correct. He would take the Orders of the Day and Notices for next Friday, the 24th instant. The first Order of the Day was, as usual, Supply, which would be announced, of course, by the Clerk at the Table, and the discussion would be upon a Motion as to the Irish Magistracy, to which one of the Irish Members proposed to call attention on going into Committee of Supply. The Speaker would put the Question in this form—"The original Motion was 'That I do now leave the Chair,' since which an Amendment has been moved to leave out all the words after the word 'That,' in order to insert these words." Then followed the words of the Resolution, and the Question put from the Chair would be—"That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question." If the *clôture* were carried what would happen? Many other Motions might be put down on going into Supply, but the Speaker would have to put the Question "That I do now leave the Chair." That Question would then become the Main Question —the particular question then before the House; and thus, with the *clôture* called for a second time, no further discussion, such as was now allowed, would be possible. Hon. Members could not suppose that a Government that once carried the *clôture* would be ashamed to move it a second time? If they thought that, they would find themselves much mistaken as to the temper of any Prime Minister. What he had sketched was likely enough to happen; for not only might Supply be desirable, but the Motions on going into Committee might be very inconvenient to the Government. In future the Government had only to use the *clôture* twice, and private Members would find it always impossible to bring on their Resolutions. A passage from De Tocqueville had been quoted the other day, and he might supplement it by a few words from Bentham—

> "In France the terrible decrees of urgency for closing the discussions may well be remembered with dread. They were formed for the subjugation of the minority, for the purpose of stifling argument which was dreaded."

Those words were written long ago, but the importance of their warning still remained. He might also read a short extract as to the operation of the *clôture* in America, where it flourished in full vigour, from the pen of a writer who had studied American politics, Mr. Jennings, the author of *Eighty Years of Republican Government*—

> "Thus the power of Congress is securely concentrated in the hands of the leaders of the dominant party of the hour, who may be actuated by personal ambition or some other unworthy motive, so as to render them altogether unsafe guides for the nation. The discussions of this conclave are carried on in secret, and the mockery of a deliberative assembly is made complete by the systematic refusal to allow of debate upon measures of the most momentous description.
>
> "They are decided upon in private caucus, for reasons which the public are not allowed to know; and when they are brought forward in the Legislature, by a form of the House of Representatives known as the 'previous question,' which the adherents of the governing party are almost always numerous enough to enforce, discussion is absolutely prevented. Sometimes no one is allowed to say a word. The minority is not admitted to the caucus, and in the House a gag is placed upon their mouths. When the Civil Rights Bill was passed over the President's veto in April, 1866, several independent Members begged hard for permission to discuss it, or, at least, to explain their reasons for the vote

they intended to give. It was refused, and there was a general cry in the House 'Give an hour!' But the leaders were inexorable, and the resolution was pressed to a division in less than 10 minutes after it had been sent to the Speaker."

Now, he did not think the House of Commons would like to have its proceedings conducted in that way; but if they passed the 1st Resolution of the Government they would be on the high-road to that system. He would give one more extract from the same book. The writer said—

> "But there is no redeeming circumstance in the measures which are taken by the dominant party to suppress discussion. They give rise at times to scenes which ought never to be witnessed in a legislative body. An illustration is of greater value than an argument, and I shall therefore give an account of a spectacle which I witnessed in the month of January, 1867. The occasion of this struggle was the introduction of a Bill from the Judiciary Committee, intended to do away with the effect of a decision in the Supreme Court as to the illegality of the Test Oath. The Bill provided that no person should be permitted to act as attorney or counsel in any court of the United States who had been guilty of treason or engaged in rebellion, or given aid and comfort to the participants in rebellion. In short, it was intended to prevent, by Act of Congress, any Southern man or Southern sympathizer who happened to be a lawyer from practising his profession—thus, as a Republican member afterwards said, depriving thousands of families of their bread. This measure a distinguished Republican, in behalf of the Committee, determined to force through the House the afternoon it was brought forward, without allowing a word of discussion upon it. Some of his own party, with a better sense of reason and justice, strongly condemned this course. He was implored by the Democratic members to yield one hour only for debate, but, confident in the power of his party, he declined. To two or three members he dealt out 'five minutes,' 'three minutes,' and to one gentleman 'two minutes,' and with this concession he deemed the rights of a deliberative assembly were complied with. That immense proportion of the people then represented in Congress who were opposed to this Bill were granted, through their representatives, about ten minutes to consider its provisions."

Another serious danger had been pointed out by the right hon. Gentleman some time ago, and also by the noble Lord that evening—namely, that Members would be driven to go outside of the House if they wished to enjoy freedom of discussion. He thought the Representatives of the people were bound to make their speeches in the House. Under such a rule as that, in times of great excitement throughout the country, they would find speeches made with great effect elsewhere by Representatives whose mouths were closed there. No one was more conscious of that than the right hon. Gentleman who proposed that Resolution, because, in his article in *The Nineteenth Century*, in 1879, he said—

> "The danger of supplying factious or unruly men with a plausible ground of hostile appeal to crowds or to constituencies in critical times is a far greater and more costly danger than is at any time likely to be brought upon it (the House of Commons) by its patience in cases really or popularly doubtful."

There was still one more danger to which he had to allude, and he did so with great deference—namely, the action which such a Rule might have, in the long run, on the Chair. In America they did not give that power to the Chairman of Committees of Supply at all. The proposed Rule went far beyond America in that respect. But with regard to the Speaker, he would rather not make any suggestion of his own, but he wished to read a few words to show what people outside of the House thought of the matter. They ought to know what the feeling entertained out-of-doors was on such a subject. Coming, as they did, from a representative man, Mr. Harrison's words in *The Nineteenth Century* were well worth reading. Mr. Harrison was much in favour of the *clôture*, and was perfectly prepared to face all the dangers and difficulties involved in it. In his article on *The Deadlock in the Commons*, he said—

> "With our present system of throwing responsibility on the Speaker we lose all the advantages of our old judicial, passive, absolutely impartial Chairman. . . . . The Speakership of the future is, therefore, one of the grand political offices, second in importance only to that of the Premier, for which parties will contend, and at which statesmen (like M. Grévy and M. Gambetta) will aspire. The very next Speaker will be elected after a furious party intrigue and struggle; and he must be a politician in whom the dominant party trusts. . . . . What will the next Speaker be? Farewell to the race of the Manners, Lefevres, and Denisons! We have passed to the era of the president militant and dominant, the strong man of a victorious party."

He had stated that the Resolution practically amounted to that of a bare majority. The hon. Member for Cambridge (Mr. Shield) had made some very strong remarks as to the difference between a majority of two-thirds and a bare majority, and he said that the one was more dangerous, perhaps, than the other. The noble Lord had asked some questions about the majority of two-thirds or three-quarters. One of his arguments against a two-thirds majority was that, so far as a small minority went, two-thirds were more likely to be harsh and cruel than a bare majority, or, at all events, there would be no protection as far as that was concerned. But then, the noble Lord said, it would be impossible to close a debate if a large minority objected. If that was so, why try it? If it was to be really powerless, why try it? If it was to be effective and operative it was dangerous. He did not see how that dilemma could be got out of. As to who would be responsible if a Government failed to obtain such a Vote as that of the £6,000,000 proposed by the late Government, the Prime Minister said the Government would have done what they could, and, therefore, would not be responsible, and the noble Marquess had said that the Opposition could not be made responsible; but if the noble Marquess, supposing him to be bound by what the Prime Minister had said, would look at the Resolution, he would find it was the Speaker who would be responsible, as he would be the judge of the evident sense of the House. As bearing upon the question of a large or a small minority, he would ask what would have become of some former struggles if the *clôture* had been in force? What would have been the fate of Mr. Berkeley with his Ballot Motions, and of Mr. Villiers with his advocacy of Free Trade? If we embarked on this dangerous course we did not know where we should stop. No statesman could foresee what the passing of the Resolution would lead to. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) had said that he thought the *clôture* would never be enforced except by general consent—that he trusted and believed that such would be the case. It was much better to keep safeguards and securities of which you were in possession; and in opposition to the right hon. Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen) he would say to the House—

> "Reserve thy state,
> And in thy best consideration check
> This hideous rashness."

He might be asked what course would the Opposition now pursue? The answer was clear—that the House ought to proceed with the other Resolutions. If the other Rules had been in operation the 42 hours' Sitting could not have happened; it would have been stopped on the Motions for Adjournment. As to all other matters the other Rules provide all the safeguards that were wanted. Why should the Prime Minister force this Rule, knowing how much it was disliked by so many of his own followers? [Mr. GLADSTONE dissented.] The Prime Minister shook his head, but the speeches of the hon. Member for Bedford (Mr. Whitbread), the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), and the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), made so lately as 1880, would satisfy him how distasteful this particular proposal was. All the other Rules would be passed willingly; and he felt bound to remind the Government that the Committee of 1848 said that the Government of the day could themselves contribute essentially to the easy conduct of Business in four different ways, none of which had been followed this Session. They were the careful preparation of measures, their early introduction, a judicious distribution of Business between the two Houses, and the order and method with which measures were conducted. None of those ways had been followed during the present Session by the Government. The House had fought long and with success for freedom of debate against the personal influence of the Crown. It had now before it a larger struggle for freedom of debate against the personal interest of any powerful Minister of the Crown. The Speaker had claimed from the Crown on their behalf their ancient rights, and among them freedom of speech in debate, and, what was not less valuable, that the most favourable construction should be placed upon their proceedings. These claims had been granted by Her Majesty as by Her Predecessors. If they passed this Resolution they would be in great danger from the Ministry of the day that the most favourable construction would not be placed upon their proceedings. When legitimate debate was raised it would be met by the cry of Obstruction, the *clôture* would be applied, and discussion would be stopped. Under cover of putting an end to Parliamentary Obstruction Parliamentary Opposition would be destroyed. The Prime Minister of the day would become impatient of what former Ministers had regarded as the ordinary course of Business; and he would speak to the House in terms such as these—

> "By day and night he wrongs me; every hour
> He flashes into one gross crime or other
> That sets us all at odds; I'll not endure it."

And when the Prime Minister had the power he would not endure it. The very anxiety and eagerness with which this Resolution was pressed, against the wishes, he believed, of the right hon. Gentleman's own followers, was an evil augury of the temper in which it would be used if it were once passed. But he would venture to predict that it never would be passed, certainly not in its present form. The noble Lord had been good enough to inform the House that if it were not passed the Government would go to the country. He did not know whether the Prime Minister would endorse that statement; but he should like to know how he could reconcile it with the hope he expressed that this should not be treated as a Party question, and that they would have a fair and impartial debate? All he (Sir R. Assheton Cross) could say, if this Resolution were to be pressed, and to be passed over the heads of those opposed to it, and if it were to be carried out in the way he had suggested; was this—that they would find ere long that the constituencies would not suffer their liberties to be taken away, and the Prime Minister would again learn, as he had bitterly learnt before, that England loved not the exercise of arbitrary power.

Mr. BRYCE said, he was one of those who agreed with hon. Members opposite that it would be well their speeches should be limited as to time; and he, therefore, did not intend to detain the House for more than a few minutes. He wished, however, to say a few words in regard to the experiences of America, which had been referred to by the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Sir R. Assheton Cross). A few months ago he (Mr. Bryce) was in America, and he had made minute inquiries into this particular matter, especially in connection with the proceedings of Legislative Assemblies of America, which were institutions mainly founded upon our own, and very closely resembling it. The picture given by the right hon. Gentleman to the House as to the working of the system for closing a debate in the United States Assemblies was altogether incorrect. It was not called the *cloture*, but "the Previous Question." The right hon. Gentleman had given the data from which he made his statements; but, speaking from experience, he (Mr. Bryce) was able to say that the conclusions drawn by the right hon. Gentleman were the very reverse of the real state of the case. When in America he (Mr. Byrce) took an opportunity, at Washington, of making very careful inquiry, and he was informed that the way in which "the Previous Question" was worked was this. He believed that it existed in the Legislative Assembly of nearly every State of the Union; but those Legislative Assemblies scarcely formed a parallel to the House of Commons. It existed also in the House of Representatives at Washington. It was within the power of any Member at any moment to move "the Previous Question," and there was no such limit or safeguard to it as was proposed to be given by the Resolution now before the House, which intrusted the initiative to the Speaker. The only restriction upon the employment of "the Previous Question" was that there must be a quorum present in the House, and that quorum must consist of one-half of the total number of Members. It must, however, be remembered that the Members of the Washington House of Representatives were much more regular in their attendance than Members of the House of Commons. He made it his duty to ascertain, from as large a number of persons as possible, how the system of "the Previous Question" worked. He made inquiries of some 20 or 30 Members of the House of Representatives of both political Parties; and every one assured him—both the Republicans who were in the majority, and the Democrats who were in a minority—that it not only worked well, but that they could not get on without it. Two gentlemen, both of whom were extremely weighty witnesses, and whose names would be known to most hon. Members who had been in the United States, spoke in high praise of the system. Mr. Macpherson, the principal Clerk of the House of Representatives, told him that his experience extended over 30 years, during 14 of which he had served as principal Clerk, and Mr. Macpherson stated that he could not recollect a single instance in which the power of moving "the Previous Question" had been abused. Mr. Macpherson would not pretend to say that it had never been abused; but he declared that he could not remember a single instance of abuse; and he added that the power was essential to the proper working of the American Representative system. Similar testimony was given by Mr. Randall, Speaker of the last House of Representatives. Mr. Macpherson was a Republican, and Mr. Randall a Democrat; and both agreed in asserting that it would be quite impossible to conduct the deliberations of the Assembly without the power of moving "the Previous Question." And it constantly happened that when the power was asked for it was rejected, notwithstanding that the Leaders of the Party applied for it. Their supporters differed from them and defeated them. In other cases, the Leaders of the Opposition had been anxious to close a debate; but the Government refused to grant them the power, in the belief that the particular question under consideration had not been sufficiently discussed. He ventured to think that the experience of America was of considerable value in a matter of this kind, because Party organization was much greater and closer than in this country, and Party discipline was a great deal stronger; and therefore, *à fortiori*, an argument drawn from the experience of America was an argument favourable to the adoption of the same system in the House of Commons. If the system was not abused in the United States there were strong grounds for believing that it would not be abused in the House of Commons. He had only a word or two to add in reply to one of the arguments frequently used against the Resolution of the Prime Minister—that it would seriously interfere with and diminish the advantages and opportunities of private Members. Speaking as a private Member, and as one who valued, as everyone in that House must, the rights and privileges of private Members, and especially recognizing that it was their function and duty to bring forward many measures which Her Majesty's Ministers, as a Government, were not able to deal with, he, and many other hon. Members on that side of the House, valued the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, because they believed that it would restore to private Members the rights of which they were now deprived. At the present moment the *clôture* really did exist against more than one-half of the Members of the House. It existed in this way. Whenever a measure was brought forward and there was a majority on one side or the other in favour of it, as soon as Obstruction set in, the opponents of the measure began to speak against time, and the mouths of those who were in favour of it were instantly closed. It became impossible for them to take any further part in the debate, because they knew that by doing so they were only playing into the hands of their antagonists by delaying a division. In this way many hon. Members were prevented from speaking who might have many valuable criticisms and arguments to make, and important information and facts to state, which might seriously influence the discussion and the course of the Government. They were, however, absolutely debarred from bringing forward the information in their possession, because they were anxious not to delay the progress of the measure for a single moment. It was for this reason, and because he believed that the passing of this Resolution would restore the freedom of speech which did not now exist in one part of the House, that he sincerely trusted the House would carry it. If he felt any regret at any part of the Resolution, it was that it had not been made somewhat stronger, and that it was surrounded by certain safeguards which he, for one, looked upon as unfortunate. He thought it would have been better—speaking with great deference to the opinion of those who had more experience than himself—if the initiative of the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair had not been required, and if the matter had been left entirely and absolutely to the responsibility of the Government. The question of responsibility had been touched upon with great force by the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) in the early part of the evening; and he (Mr. Bryce) was strongly of opinion that the Government should not have the power of shielding themselves under the authority of the Chair. They had much to learn from America in this respect. In that country the Office of Speaker had now become a partizan Office, and the best observers there agreed in protesting against it. They were all of opinion that the position occupied by the Speaker in this country afforded far greater security for the fair and proper conduct of the Business of the Legislature than that which was held by the Speaker in the United States. He could not help feeling that the proposal to give the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair the initiative, and to require him to call upon the House to vote upon the question as to whether a debate should be closed, was, no matter how small the extent might be, an infringement of the perfectly impartial character of the Speaker's Office; and he was afraid that to some extent it might tend to lower the dignity and impartiality which had hitherto attached to it. He therefore hoped that some means would be found whereby the Resolution could be slightly altered in the direction of giving the Speaker, not the initiative, but rather the appeal. That would be much better than throwing upon the right hon. Gentleman the responsibility of discerning the "evident sense of the House," and then requiring the opinion of the House to be expressed by a division. The proper course, in his opinion, was to leave the responsibility of moving that the sense of the House should be obtained, either to the Government or to an independent Member, and to give to the Speaker a power of interposing his veto if he thought that the time for such a course had not arrived. He believed that the Resolution would in that case be quite as effective for its purpose, and at the same time the impartiality of the Office of Speaker would be more perfectly secured. The right hon. Gentleman who last addressed the House (Sir R. Assheton Cross) said the functions of Parliament would largely be curtailed by the adoption of the Resolution, and he warned the House against the danger of increasing the power of the Executive and impairing the power of Parliament. He (Mr. Bryce) ventured to read the Constitutional history of the country in a different sense from the right hon. Gentleman. He could not say, speaking from experience of the past few years, that the House had exercised any of the functions of the Government. All that it had done had been to impede the power of the Government. They had not expedited the work of legislation, and the danger they were running was not that of increasing the power of the Executive, but of so crippling and clogging it, that all legislation would be brought to a standstill. In the end Parliament itself would become discredited, and Constitutional Government would be reduced to a state of paralysis. They were told that if they passed the Resolution the power of closing a debate might be abused. All Forms of the House were liable to abuse except the power which had been intrusted to the Chair, and which, within his knowledge, had never been abused. But they must run the risk of abuse in order that they might secure the enjoyment of greater benefits and advantages. After the experience of the last few years they must all of them feel that the time had now come for dealing with Obstruction; and the best of all safeguards that could be attached to the use of the power of closing a debate was that safeguard which consisted in a sense of fairness on the part of the House itself, and the belief that it would impair its own functions if it ever allowed a Minister of the Crown or a majority to become tyrannical. Personally, he was satisfied that the country would always be ready to visit its with displeasure any Minister or majority who sought, by the use of arbitrary and tyrannical power, to overbear the free expression of the opinion of the House.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER said, he was much surprised that no Gentleman had risen from the Treasury Bench to reply to the able and evidently unanswerable speech of his right hon. Friend the Member for South-West Lancashire (Sir R. Assheton Cross). Considering the high and distinguished position which the right hon. Gentleman occupied in the Cabinet of the late Government, and the considerable position which he filled in previous Parliaments, it was scarcely courteous to the right hon. Gentleman and to the great Party of which he was an honoured Member that no Minister should have risen from the Treasury Bench to reply to him. He (Mr. R. N. Fowler) was glad of the opportunity now afforded to him of making a humble but earnest protest against the proposal now made by Her Majesty's Government to gag the House of Commons. He used the word "gag" because he preferred that good old English term to the *clôture.* It seemed to him that the object of the Resolution was to gag debate in the House of Commons. What reason was given for it? The system which now prevailed had gone on for a long series of years, and he believed that it had generally worked well. That system he believed to be this—When a debate had gone on for a sufficient time, an arrangement was made between the two Front Benches, by which it was understood that on a given evening the debate should be brought to a close. That was a convenient arrangement to both sides of the House. He need only refer to the debate which was brought to an end last week—the debate upon the Motion of the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister in reference to the House of Lords. It certainly seemed to some hon. Members on that side of the House that at the time the division was taken the discussion had been by no means exhausted. On the last night of the debate four or five very able speeches were delivered—one by his hon. Friend the Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis); one by his right hon. Friend the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther); another by his hon. Friend the Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Chaplin), and several others, among them being a very able speech he had not the pleasure of hearing by an Irish Member, who possessed great information upon the subject. It seemed to many hon. Members on that side of the House that these were too many good speeches to be massed together in the course of one evening's debate; but, by the advice of the right hon. Gentleman who led the Opposition, it was agreed that the debate should be brought to a close. He could not understand why the system which had so long prevailed of bringing debates to an end by the general consent of the House should not go on in the future as it had gone on in the past. The reason given for the Resolution was that the present system had been abused by a certain section of the House. It was said that certain hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Benches below the Gangway had spoken at a length and with a frequency which had become offensive to other Members of the House. He was not there to justify the course which had been taken by hon. Members below the Gangway during the protracted debates upon the Coercion Bill at the commencement of last Session. In common with his hon. Friends on that side of the House, he had followed the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition in giving a steady support to Her Majesty's Government. At the same time, he certainly thought that the course taken by hon. Members below the Gangway might find strong grounds for justification in certain extracts which had been read in the course of the present debate from the writings of the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman had deliberately laid down the principle that when a measure ought to be decidedly opposed, there were occasions on which minorities were justified in using all the Forms of the House to oppose the passing of it. Hon. Members below the Gangway, no doubt, felt that the Coercion Bill was a measure which justified recourse being had to the doctrine of the right hon. Gentleman. But, be that as it might, right hon. Gentlemen opposite were of opinion that the Forms of the House had been abused by the Irish Members; and they made that a reason for introducing these proposals for gagging the House of Commons, for the Resolution was not in reality directed against hon. Members below the Gangway on the Opposition side of the House. Her Majesty's Government and hon. Gentlemen opposite, although looking upon hon. Members below the Gangway as erring sheep, still regarded them as Members of the Liberal fold. ["No!"] Hon. Members might say "No, no!" He (Mr. R. N. Fowler) was not attempting to say what they thought; but when the country refused to continue its confidence in Lord Beaconsfield, and the right hon. Gentleman opposite came into Office, it was stated in the publications of the day that the right hon. Gentleman had a majority of 178, and that number certainly included the Irish Members. If hon. Members below the Gangway had no longer any confidence in the right hon. Gentleman, he (Mr. R. N. Fowler) was very glad of it; but, at the same time, he was only speaking his own view of the feeling of hon. Gentlemen opposite—namely, that they looked upon hon. Members below the Gangway as erring sheep who would before long return to the Liberal fold. The real object of the Resolution, therefore, was not to gag them, but to gag the Members of the great Conservative Party, who sat upon the Opposition Benches. But he fearlessly asserted that during the present Parliament the Forms of the House had never been abused by the Conservative Party. Hon. Gentlemen opposite would, he thought, admit that there never was a man who led the Conservative Party in a more conciliatory and generous spirit than his right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition (Sir Stafford Northcote). Whatever might be said of factious opposition, no one would dream of charging factious opposition to his right hon. Friend, and he claimed for the Conservative Party at large that whenever they conscientiously could they had given to Her Majesty's Government a generous support; and whenever they were opposed to the Government, as they frequently were, upon conscientious grounds, the opposition they gave to them was candid and straightforward. That being the case, he did not see why a Resolution should be introduced, the avowed object of which was to shut the mouths and gag the Party sitting on that side of the House. He knew that that object was denied by the Head of the Government; but his right hon. Friend below him (Sir R. Assheton Cross) certainly in his speech seemed to imply something of the sort, and he need only refer to the organs of the Liberal Party, such as *The Spectator* and *The Daily News*, to show that in their opinion the Government were to be supported, because the great object of the Resolution was to shut the mouths of the Conservative Party. Under these circumstances he did not think anyone could wonder that they should on the last occasion, perhaps, that might ever present itself to them — the last opportunity they might ever have of freely expressing their opinions in that House—that they should lift up their voices in protest against what they felt to be a degradation to themselves and a degradation to their constituents. There was one other point to which he wished to call the attention of the House. It was said that the debates in the House of Commons extended to an undue length. But when they compared the debates which now took place with those which took place 60 years ago it must not be forgotten that, under the present constitution of the House, it was impossible to expect that the debates would be as short as they were formerly. The Members for such constituencies as Old Sarum and Gatton were returned to the House of Commons by two or three electors, and their constituents were utterly indifferent as to whether their Representatives took part in the debates or not. That was not the case now-a-days. Every hon. Member, no matter upon what side of the House he sat, represented some great constituency; and he did not think it would be denied that the constituencies, as they had been constituted of late years, did not like to send to the House Members who would be content with simply walking into the Division Lobby and voting as he was directed by the Whip of his Party. They preferred to send Members who took an intelligent interest in public affairs, who addressed the House when necessary, and who placed both their own views and those of the constituents they represented before the House. Therefore, he did not think that, constituted as the House of Commons was, and constituted as it would be if the scheme which had been foreshadowed by the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Trevelyan) and other hon. Members on the Liberal side of the House ever came to be passed, and they had an extension of the suffrage in counties, followed, no doubt, as it would be by a scheme for equal electoral districts, there was any possibility of the number of Members who would be expected by the constituencies to address the House being diminished. On the contrary, the number, increasing year by year as it was under the existing arrangements, would increase still more largely in years to come, and thus make the complaint of hon. Gentlemen opposite as to the time consumed in the debates still greater than it was at this moment. The House had been told from the Benches opposite that the Resolution provided a safeguard, because it placed the initiative in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman in the Chair. Now, he should have the fullest confidence in the manner in which the power intrusted to the Chair would be exercised so long as the present Speaker occupied and adorned it. He should have the fullest confidence that there would be no abuse so long as the right hon. Gentleman continued to preside over the deliberations of the House. But the time must come, sooner or later

—and he was sure that hon. Members on that side of the House, especially if this Resolution were passed, fervently hoped that the day would be far distant—when the right hon. Gentleman must retire to his well-earned repose. What would be the case then? The high position which the right hon. Gentleman now so worthily and impartially filled would become a political Office. The present Speaker would be succeeded by someone appointed by the dominant Party of the day—

> "Someone instructed in a patriot school;
> The organ of a party and a party tool,"

placed in the Chair to serve the interests of the dominant faction. This would be a very great evil. Of late years it had been the custom to look upon the Speaker as not being identified with any political Party; and on several occasions when the reins of power had changed—for instance, in 1841 and in 1874—the new Prime Minister had very properly felt that he ought to retain the Speaker in the Chair. It was felt that that high Office was not a political one, and both Sir Robert Peel and Lord Beaconsfield acknowledged the principle, when Sir Robert Peel supported the re-election of Lord Eversley, and Lord Beaconsfield very wisely proposed the re-election of the right hon. Gentleman now in the Chair. But if they were to have the system altered in the way in which it would be altered if the present Resolution were adopted, the Speakership, instead of being an Office held by one who in that high position stood apart from politics, would become a political Office, and the inevitable result would be that at the commencement of every new Parliament there would be a contest for the Speakership. He thought that that in itself would be a very great evil. There could be no greater evil than to allow the Speakership to become a political Office; and upon that ground, if for no other, he most strongly deprecated the proposal which the Prime Minister had submitted to the House. No doubt many hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House thought that hon. Members on that side of the House could be gagged and ought to be gagged. But the Conservative Party had always endeavoured, as far as they could conscientiously, to support Her Majesty's Government upon non-contentious questions. They had supported them whenever it was desirable that they should obtain Supply, and upon all questions that did not involve Party differences. Nevertheless, Her Majesty's Government did not propose to treat them as Gentlemen, but as a set of men who were to be gagged by every means in the power of the Ministry. If 200 Members desired to use their power to the utmost, if they insisted on speaking upon every question that came before the House, if they attempted by every means in their power to waste the time of the House, he very much doubted, although the Government might introduce this system of the *clôture* or of the gag—whichever they liked to call it—whether it would conduce to the dignity of the House or the progress of Public Business. On these grounds, thanking the House for the indulgence with which it had listened to him, he should, on every occasion, give an earnest and strenuous opposition to the proposal of Her Majesty's Government.

SIR JOHN LUBBOCK said, that in regard to the abstract question, if they were only to consider the actual meaning of the words proposed by the hon. Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott), he should find himself unable to disagree with them. But they must look further than the words of the hon. Member. The hon. Member for Brighton asked them to declare—

> "That no Rules of Procedure will be satisfactory to this House which confer the power of closing a Debate upon a majority of Members;"

and he had explained that he meant on a mere majority. He thought there could be few hon. Members who would not be disposed to agree that some measure of reform in that direction was very desirable, if not altogether necessary. But he must confess that it did appear to him that, as the Resolution was proposed, it went somewhat beyond the necessities of the case. They must consider not only the meaning of the words of the hon. Member for Brighton, but the effect of adopting them; and that would be, practically, to negative altogether the 1st Resolution proposed by the right hon. Gentleman at the head of Her Majesty's Government. Although it seemed to him that the *clôture* should only be enforced when there was a decided majority in its favour, with such a majority it would be an improvement, even if it had not become a necessity; and if the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister could hold out any hope that he was prepared to reconsider, to a certain extent, the wording of the latter part of the Resolution—if, indeed, he did not deprive them of any hope that he would do so—he should not be prepared to support the hon. Member for Brighton. They had heard in the course of the evening of many cases in which debates had been unduly prolonged, but not of one case in which the prolongation was due to the action of the Party opposite as a whole. But it was considered that the time might come when hon. Members opposite might factiously oppose the Business of the House, and when it might become absolutely necessary to adopt some such Rule as that which was now proposed—that was to say, the *clôture* by a bare majority, which, however, only came into play in a House of 400 Members, or thereabouts. He had looked through *Hansard* of last year, and, though there were many divisions in which more than 400 Members took part, he only found three cases in which, when a division of more than 400 Members took place, the discussion had lasted more than one night. One was the debate on the Address; another the debate on the second reading of the Bill for the Protection of Person and Property in Ireland; and the third was the debate on the second reading of the Land Bill. Every fair-minded person would admit that those were three cases in which the question at issue was of very great importance, and on which a protracted debate was not only justifiable, but to be expected. But even if, in the course of a Session, there might be two or three instances in which the Government would gain a little time by the power of closing a debate by a bare majority, there would be 10 times as many in which a two-thirds majority would really be more useful for them than the Rule as it now stood. Some alteration in the latter portion of the Resolution seemed, indeed, logically necessary to carry out the intention indicated in the earlier portion. The Resolution authorized the Speaker to intervene, if it should appear to be the "evident sense" of the House that the debate should be brought to a close and the Question be put. Surely everyone admitted that the evident sense of the House must mean something like a general concurrence. If they meant to say that a debate was to be closed by a bare majority, and especially a majority carried by Government pressure, such a conclusion would not represent the evident feeling of the House. They had been assured, over and over again, by supporters of the Rule that no one wished to close debates by a mere majority. Then, would it not be more satisfactory to say so? Let them know what the Rule really was to be. If they did not limit the power, they might depend upon it the time would come when bare majorities would silence discussion. What would be the position of Mr. Speaker in years to come if, on some occasion when the Government thought any discussion would tend to weaken them, he was requested to close the discussion, and assured that there was a majority, say, of 20 or 30? It would be very difficult for him to refuse to use his power. Surely the House ought distinctly to say what was meant. If a bare majority was to close a discussion, let them say so; but let them not disguise the fact that they were altogether altering the character of debates in that House. To give the power proposed, if they did not mean it to be used, was to give an unscrupulous Minister a great advantage over one more fair towards his opponents, and would make it difficult eventually for any Minister not to use the power. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister gave various cases in which important questions had been settled by small majorities; but then it was always after a free discussion. This very fact seemed to be rather an argument against the *clôture*, for the minority would have been much less likely to submit if any check had been placed on the discussion. Moreover, the right hon. Gentleman proceeded to ridicule the assumption that a mere majority would fairly be characterized as the evident sense of the House. He denied that it was intended

> "Simply to commit to the majority of the House the decision of this matter in the manner in which the decision of other matters is committed to it."

He pointed to the fact that the Speaker must intervene, and that he must only intervene when he perceived that it was the "evident sense of the House" that he should do so. But what was the evident sense? The right hon. Gentleman says—"It is not for me to give an authoritative construction to these words." But if the words were so ambiguous that the right hon. Gentleman could not say authoritatively what they meant, was it not desirable that the House itself should do so? In the mind of the right hon. Gentleman the "evident sense of the House" clearly meant something more than a bare majority. Well, then, it could scarcely mean much less than two-thirds. It would seem, then, that the Speaker was not to put the Resolution unless he thought there were about two-thirds in favour of it; and yet, if he was mistaken, and if, after all, there was only a majority of 1, still the Motion was to be regarded as carried. But while the right hon. Gentleman denied that under his Resolution it was intended that the *clôture* should be put in force by a bare majority, it did not appear that his views were very decided in that respect. Different parts of his speech did not appear to be very consistent with one another in this respect, for while the right hon. Gentleman dwelt on safeguards and the evident sense of the House, on the other hand he frequently spoke of his Resolution as if the question were to be determined by a bare majority. Indeed, he characterized a majority of two-thirds or three-fourths as the work of ingenious brains. But such proposals would be simplicity itself compared with those of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman did not propose a bare majority. Surely the results of the Rule as it stood would be most inconsistent. Twenty Members could only be silenced by 100, and 40 would neutralize as many as 199. Surely such results were quite indefensible and inconsistent. If the minority was 20, the right hon. Gentleman's Rule required a majority, not of two-thirds, but of 5 to 1. If it was 40, he required 2½ to 1. If the minority were either 33 or 100, then he himself proposed the majority of two-thirds. Up, therefore, to a House of 300 Members, the right hon. Gentleman suggested a Rule at least as stringent, and sometimes more stringent, than that which other Members ventured to suggest. But as soon as he arrived at the magic number of 399 he was satisfied with a bare majority. Now, he could understand being strongly in favour either of a bare majority or of a proportional majority; but he confessed he felt it difficult to understand being strongly in favour sometimes of a bare majority, sometimes of 2 to 1, sometimes of 3 to 1, sometimes of 4 to 1, and sometimes even of 5 to 1. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of artificial majorities; but he must remind the House that only last year he himself, in reference to the question of Urgency, proposed that the Motion should be carried, "if it be resolved in the affirmative by a majority of not less than 3 to 1." No one, he thought, could deny that any question affecting the Rules of the House belonged to a class on which it was pre-eminently desirable that whatever was done, should be done, as far as possible, with the general concurrence of the House. He thought that even the most extreme Home Rulers opposite would admit that some change in the Rules of Parliamentary Procedure had become absolutely necessary by the course they had adopted. ["No, no!"] And, although they cried "No!" he believed in their hearts they could not feel aggrieved at any alteration which did not go beyond the necessities of the case. He believed, also, that hon. Members opposite might be induced to concur in the 1st Rule proposed by the Prime Minister, if it required some such majority as he ventured to suggest. Now, it was surely evident that a moderate Rule, carried with the assent and support of hon. Members opposite, would be more effective than one much more stringent which was forced upon them. Moreover, Her Majesty's Government must not measure the opinion of Liberal Members by the support they might receive, if they made their Rule a question of confidence. There were many Liberals who might not choose actually to vote against the right hon. Gentleman, who yet, in reality, must prefer a more moderate proposal. But if the right hon. Gentleman consented to modify his Rule, and then carried the House heartily with him, everyone would feel bound to carry it out in a loyal spirit; whereas, if he forced his views on a reluctant House, though he might obtain his Rule, it would certainly be far less efficient. The right hon. Gentleman referred specially to the two long debates of last year; and, indeed, they were almost the only instances he did quote as examples of cases in which his 1st Rule would apply; but, as he himself said, on both those occasions the *clôture* would have been voted, not by a majority of two-thirds, but of 9 or even 19 to 1. Now, they were told that the *clôture* was in force in various foreign Assemblies. In the case of France M. Guizot's opinion had been quoted; and it was no doubt true that M. Guizot did say that, in his opinion, it had, on the whole, worked well. But his language was by no means so decided as might be inferred from the manner in which it had been quoted. He admitted that the minority complained of the manner in which the debate was closed. He was asked whether the power had not been abused, and he replied—"I think it has not been used unjustly and improperly generally." To say that a power was not abused "generally" was surely an admission that it was abused often. In his opinion, therefore, M. Guizot's evidence strengthened the opposition to the proposed Rule in its present form. But even if it had worked well in France up to the time when M. Guizot spoke subsequent experience showed that he was mistaken; and no one could deny that the Rule had in that country been used in a manner which they would greatly disapprove. But if M. Guizot's opinion, as regarded its operation in his own country, proved to be entirely erroneous, it was rather extraordinary to quote it as an authority with reference to ours. Now, he would ask, how had the *clôture*, by a bare majority, worked in France? Was it not the case that under the Empire Count Walewski had to resign the Presidency because he was not found sufficiently subservient to the Minister when the Government wished to close a discussion? It was not only unimportant speakers who were silenced. M. Thiers himself never could get an opportunity of discussing the Mexican Expedition. Would anyone deny that if the Opposition had been able to debate the question of the Hohenzollern candidature the Franco-German War might never have taken place? But M. Thiers and M. Gambetta were silenced, until it was too late, and the Empire was brought to ruin. The Paris Correspondent of *The Times*, describing the action of the *clôture* some days ago, said that, practically, all formalities in moving the *clôture* were dispensed with when there was an autocratic President in the Chair. It became a regular habit with the Government majority to shout for the *clôture* as soon as they understood that the Minister desired to silence the Opposition. If hon. Members were not satisfied with that evidence, he would quote from another paper—a most able and consistent, but candid supporter of the right hon. Gentleman—he meant *The Daily News*—the Paris Correspondent of which said—

> "He could not call to mind many instances in which the power of majorities to gag minorities had been abused to any appreciable extent. When the Comte de Morny was Speaker, the *clôture* was only one of many forms of tyranny, and there was seldom occasion to resort to it under the 'Moral Order' at Versailles. M. Buffet was sometimes accused of exercising the authority of the Chair to stifle a debate. It could scarcely be denied that M. Gambetta, when impatient, would now and then 'lift' the majority, which obeyed his word with a precipitation suggestive of unfairness."

This was the account of the working of the *clôture* as given by *The Daily News*. It might, no doubt, be the case that their fears as to the working of the proposed Rule were unfounded; the fairness and good feeling of English Gentlemen might prevent any tyrannical abuse; but, if so, there was nothing to be gained by not adopting a wiser and milder Rule. The noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India stated that this was a question of confidence; but he must remind the House that the noble Lord was practically asking for a Vote of Confidence, not only for his own, but for all future Governments. No words of his could adequately express the admiration he felt for the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister, or his sense of the splendid services he had rendered to the country. The right hon. Gentleman, in his eloquent and pathetic peroration, referred to the probability that this Rule would be used by others rather than himself. His life, he said, was rather in the past than in the future. It would be a sad day for them when the right hon. Gentleman resigned his Leadership of the Liberal Party. The vigour and eloquence of his speech made them indeed hope that that day might be far distant. But the argument of the right hon. Gentleman, though a conclusive answer to those, if any such there were, who thought that in proposing these Rules he was actuated by feelings of personal ambition—the very argument, he said, of the right hon. Gentleman rendered them the more anxious to induce him to consent to a modification of the Rule. If, indeed, the right hon. Gentleman had proposed his Rules as a Sessional Order, the case would have been very different. For his own part, he was quite ready to grant the right hon. Gentleman himself all the power this Rule would give him. As long as they were so fortunate as to retain him for their Leader, he should have no fear for the result; nor, again, should he hesitate for a moment as long as the present Speaker presided over their deliberations. He trusted the present state of things might long continue; but in making a Standing Order it was incumbent upon them to look far ahead. They had been told that the right hon. Gentleman was determined to make this question one of confidence. The reason he objected to the Rule as it stood was not from any want of confidence in the present Ministry, but—they would, he was sure, forgive him for saying so—from want of confidence in right hon. Gentlemen opposite. He trusted that the Liberal Party might long retain its present majority; but it was too much to hope that they would do so for ever. He should like the supporters of this Rule to consider, in such a case, when they were, perhaps, about to be hurried into an unjustifiable war, which it might be hoped a free discussion would prevent, what their feelings would be if this Rule were turned against them and discussion were stifled. The supporters of the *clôture* thought of the measures the Liberal Party wished to see carried; they felt the increased power it would give to a Government which enjoyed and deserved their confidence, and they did not sufficiently reflect what a terrible engine of oppression they were preparing for themselves, when next they were in a minority. If for a moment he found himself holding an opinion shared, indeed, by many Members of the Liberal Party, though doubtless by a minority, still he could not but remember that the present opinion was quite new. He, on the contrary, held to the opinion which was that of the Liberal Party but a few months ago, and which he believed, before very long, would be theirs again. Much, then, as he regretted to find himself at issue with the majority of his political friends, he could not but feel that in urging the right hon. Gentleman to consent to some modification of his 1st Rule, he was endeavouring to uphold that principle of free discussion which was the birthright of the House of Commons, and used to be the proud boast of the Liberal Party.

Motion made, and Question, "That the Debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr. Beresford Hope,*)—put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *Thursday.*

SUPPLY.—REPORT.

Resolutions [17th March] *reported.*

MR. HEALY asked the Attorney General for Ireland whether, in view of the fact that the time for which Major Bond had been appointed to his office in Ireland was nearly up, the Government had come to any determination with regard to discontinuing his services?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, he was unable to concur in the suggestion of the hon. Member for Wexford. The matter had not been discussed, and, so far as he was aware, there was no intention on the part of Her Majesty's Government to discontinue the services of Major Bond.

Resolutions *agreed to.*

BILLS OF SALE ACT (1878) AMENDMENT BILL.—[BILL 8.]

(*Mr. Monk, Mr. Serjeant Simon, Mr. Lewis Fry, Mr. R. N. Fowler.*)

COMMITTEE. [*Progress 16th March.*]

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 8 (Execution of bills of sale).

MR. WARTON said, he hoped the Committee would not for one moment consider that in proposing a slight delay for the consideration of this Bill he had any other motive than to see right and justice done. He had considered the measure very carefully, and arrived at certain conclusions with regard to it; and in the course of the few days that had elapsed since the Bill was last before the Committee he had received a very singular confirmation of his views.

The President of the Law Society of the United Kingdom had sent him a paper containing a number of objections to the Bill; and he found that not only were all the points which he had urged taken up, but that the document went even further than he had gone. There was one point suggested by the Law Society to which he referred that he wished to urge upon the Attorney General. It had reference to solicitors employed at the execution of a bill of sale; and the document stated that "counsel considered that if such clause be retained the words 'for this purpose' should be added at the end." He would not take up the time of the Committee by moving the words as an Amendment on that occasion, inasmuch as it was impossible to follow the very peculiar wording of the clause; but he asked the hon. and learned Attorney General to bring up words on Report limiting the clause in the manner suggested.

Mr. LEWIS FRY said, since the Bill was in Committee on Thursday last, he had received a communication from the Incorporated Law Society, which represented the branch of the Legal Profession specially concerned in this clause. The Committee would remember that, as the Bill formerly stood, it was the duty of the solicitor to state in the attestation of the bill of sale that he had read it over and explained it to the person about to sign it. But when the clause was last before the Committee the wording was materially altered, and the duty was thereby imposed on the solicitor of "carefully explaining the nature and effect" of the bill of sale to the assignor. He asked hon. Members to observe the great distinction between the two forms of words. The non-performance of the duty of explaining the nature of the instrument would, under the original clause, render the solicitor liable to proceedings for professional misconduct; but the clause as it now stood rendered him liable to criminal proceedings for non-performance of the duty imposed upon him. It might possibly appear to some hon. Members that the suggestion of the Incorporated Law Society that the alteration would give rise to frivolous prosecutions was without foundation. It was, however, deserving of great consideration. He was now too late to move any alteration or addition to the clause; but, at the proper time, he proposed to move a substantive clause, which would provide that criminal proceedings under this clause should not take place without the sanction of the Attorney General. Solicitors would consider themselves safe in the hands of the Attorney General; but if the Committee refused to alter the Bill in such a manner as he had spoken of, he should feel it his duty, on Report, to move that the whole clause should be omitted.

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 9 (Local registration of contents of bills of sale).

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 1, to leave out "the prescribed time" and insert "three clear days after registration in the principal registry."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Mr. MONK said, he had no objection to the alteration.

Amendment *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *agreed to.*

Clause 10 (Bill of sale under 50*l.* to be void).

Mr. WHITLEY, in proposing, in page 3, line 13, to leave out "fifty" and insert "twenty," said, this, no doubt, was a very important alteration; it was an alteration he moved in the Committee upstairs; but he was beaten there. Since then he had received representations from a great number of people on the subject, and he felt justified in renewing his proposal. The President of the Board of Trade said the other day that the Bill went too far, or it did not go far enough. No one felt more strongly than he did the conduct of the extortioner; but, at the same time, as a matter of principle, he did not see why the poor man should not have the same power of borrowing as the rich man. The object of the Bill, no doubt, was to stop, if possible, usury; but he thought the Bill would do a great deal of harm, and not good, to the poorer classes. Instead of lending upon bills of sale, men would fly to other expedients. They would, for instance, find some means of hiring the furniture of the poor people, and no registration would be required, while they would have complete control over the property. The usurers would be driven to adopt some such expedient to carry on their trade. The Bill would increase the difficulties under which the poorer classes laboured, and would place them more than ever under the control of the usurer. In this belief he proposed the Amendment which stood in his name, and he hoped the Committee would see its way to adopt it.

Amendment proposed, in page 3, line 13, leave out "fifty" and insert "twenty." —(*Mr. Whitley.*)

Question proposed, "That the word proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, he quite agreed that this was an important matter which the Committee was now called upon to determine. What was proposed was an alteration which ought not to be hastily accepted. The matter came before the Committee which sat last year; it was very fully considered, and there were some matters affecting the evidence given before the Committee to which he wished to call attention. He would admit that he was waging war against a class of men—the usurers. Not only from the evidence given to the Committee, but from a general knowledge, he regarded these men as absolute enemies of the poor men—they were perfect pests of society. Unfortunately, they chiefly directed their efforts at those who could not protect themselves, but who would be protected by the legislation now proposed. For one moment he would call the attention of the Committee to the extent that bills of sale had come into existence of late years. In the year 1877 the total number of bills of sale registered was 13,220; but in 1880 it had increased to 51,000. Now, in 1877, when there was a total of 13,000, there were 4,125 bills of sale for less than £50; but in 1880, when there was a total of 51,000, there were 36,000, or nearly three-fourths of the whole, which were for sums less than £50. The meaning of that was this—that of late years there had been a class of persons living by false pretences. There were persons who represented themselves to be widows or charitable persons anxious to lend money to needy persons. They found it was more to their own interest to lend in small sums, because they could get more out of the initial charges, and, indeed, charge in proportion a higher interest. Of late years the trade had taken a new start. It was all at the expense of the poor man, for it was given in evidence before the Committee that the bills were drawn very carefully—drawn in such a form that sometimes there were 20 conditions of re-entry. It almost invariably happened that when a poor man gave a bill of sale his home was broken up and his goods seized. His hon. Friend (Mr. Whitley) had fairly stated his view that the poor man should be as well able to borrow as the rich man; but he (the Attorney General) thought it better for poor men to suffer any inconvenience than to go into the hands of the money-lenders. A man had better pawn a portion of his goods—he had better have execution for the debt he had honestly incurred, for it was certain if he once began to borrow from usurers the time would come when there would be a seizure of his goods on some small pretence, and for a much larger sum than was really due. Every kind of charge in the shape of costs was added, and he who borrowed small sums, under the circumstances, was certain to find himself ruined in the end. His hon. Friend admitted the principle that protection should be given. He did not wish to trouble the Committee with figures; but they would find there was a vast number of bills of sale given for between £20 and £50. He was afraid that if they adopted the low figure of £20 the money-lenders would be prompted to lend a little more than £20. He was surprised his hon. Friend did not approve of the limit at £50, because when such a sum or higher was concerned, they did get something like commercial transactions. It was very proper there should be some protection given to the poor man; but it was for the Committee to inquire where the line was to be drawn. He knew that Members of the Committee had received remonstrances as to why a poor man should not borrow; but he was confident that most of those remonstrances came from persons interested, and they were the lenders and not the borrowers. The borrowers did not tell them they wanted protection; and a large number of the Committee were of opinion that what ought to be done was not to give them protection, but to prevent them borrowing altogether

—the opinion of the Committee was that few had better suffer inconvenience than many of them should be ruined. Whilst he could not ask the Committee to follow his judgment in every respect, he did think they would be doing good, whilst they would inconvenience a few, if they struck home at the money-lenders, and virtually bring, as they would by this Bill, their trade to a close. He hoped the hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill would take the sense of the Committee by dividing upon the Amendment.

Mr. WARTON said, it was a pleasure in the House of Commons to sometimes get out of the range of political controversy. He gave the Attorney General every credit for the sincerity of his opinions in this matter; but it was a curious thing that the limit of £20 was the very limit that the Incorporated Law Society approved of. The hon. and learned Attorney General spoke about remonstrances having come from interested parties alone—namely, from the money-lenders; but that was not the fact, because after dispassionate consideration the Incorporated Law Society approved of the suggestion of the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley). The Attorney General had referred to the evidence given before the Committee; but he (Mr. Warton) protested strongly against the system prevailing in the House, of always accepting *en bloc* the recommendations of any Committee whatever. If the New Rules of the First Lord of the Treasury were ever adopted, and they had such things as Grand Committees, all independent judgment in the House would be completely strangled. He did not feel it necessary to be bound by the decision of any Committee whatever; and he begged to remind the Attorney General of some part of the evidence he had not mentioned at all. The evidence showed there was a large number of people carrying on a small trade, who, by the fact that they were able to get small loans of £15 or £20, were able to go on from week to week, and in this way to get over their difficulties. It was shown that to small butchers and bakers small loans were very valuable; and he trusted the Committee would give its approval to the suggestion of his hon. Friend the Member for Liverpool. He did not ask the Committee to be guided by anything he had to say; he did not ask them to be guided by anything his experienced Friend (Mr. Whitley) had said; but he did ask them to respect the opinion of the Incorporated Law Society.

Mr. MONK said, he agreed with what had fallen from the Attorney General, and wished to say that, with the exception of the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley), the Committee upstairs were unanimous in coming to the decision that £50 should be the figure below which bills of sale should not be given. In reply to what had fallen from the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) he would say that even small butchers and bakers could not afford to pay 50 and 60 per cent for the loans they got from money-lenders. Only yesterday he had a letter from a small tradesman, in which the writer complained bitterly that they had not put some limit in the Bill; and he said money-lenders ought not to be allowed to exact more than 30 or 40 per cent, inasmuch as pawnbrokers were only allowed 20 per cent. He regretted that, in the opinion of the Committee appointed by the House to consider the matter such limitation did not appear feasible. The Committee examined money-lenders themselves, and those witnesses said that it would be to the advantage of the poorer classes of people who wanted to borrow money not to be allowed to raise money on bills of sale. He must take the sense of the Committee on the limit of £50.

Mr. FINDLATER said, he quite sympathized with the Attorney General in his desire to protect people from usurers; but, having this object in view, they must not go too far in the measures they adopted. They must take care not to interfere unduly with legitimate transactions between wholesale houses and small traders. A bill of sale given by a small dealer to a wholesale house in order to enable him to carry on his trade should be valid. In many instances such a document would be given for the balance of an account at the ordinary interest of 5 per cent. He felt that, unless some steps were taken to render the provisions of the Bill much less stringent, these legitimate transactions might be very materially interfered with. Believing, as a matter of course, that as this law was introduced into England it would also be introduced into Ireland, he had put himself into communication with wholesale houses in that country, who concurred in his view; and, as a result, he did not wish this provision to pass without entering his protest against it. He did not object to the amount mentioned, and he only referred to the point at this stage for the reason that later on he intended to oppose the clause altogether.

Mr. BARRAN said, the hon. Member who had preceded him need have no fear that the wholesale trade of England would be influenced by this clause being passed. No respectable wholesale house would take a bill of sale under the circumstances mentioned; therefore, he thought the hon. Member might set his mind at rest on the matter.

Mr. WHITLEY said, he was not advocating the cause of the usurers. What he wished to point out was this—and the hon. Member for Gloucester (Mr. Monk) had drawn particular attention to it—he (Mr. Whitley) was not aware, and he did not think the Committee were aware, that while they were trying to protect the poor man they might be doing him a great injury.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. H. G. ALLEN said, he wished to add an Amendment in page 3, line 13, after the word "void," to the effect that the sum actually paid to the grantor should be set forth in every bill of sale. It seemed to him that it was only right and proper that the grantor should be informed on this head, and that it should be fully set forth what he was actually going to receive.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 13, after "void," insert "and the sum actually paid to the grantor without any deduction for bonus, discount, or interest, shall be truly set forth in every bill of sale, otherwise the same shall be void."—(*Mr. Henry Allen.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. MONK said, he had some doubts as to whether the object the hon. Member had in view would be carried out by the addition of these words. There was nothing said in the Amendment as to solicitor's costs. The hon. Member mentioned "bonus, discount, or interest;" but a charge might very properly be made under the head of solicitor's costs, so that the object of the Amendment could easily be evaded. It would be a new precedent altogether to set forth the exact sum advanced; and he doubted whether the Amendment ought to be accepted. Unless the hon. and learned Attorney General thought these words should be accepted, he (Mr. Monk) should certainly be disinclined to agree with them.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, his hon. Friend threw some responsibility on him in this matter. He would remind hon. Gentlemen who were Members of the Select Committee that the subject had been fully considered upstairs, the desire being to carry out the views expressed by the hon. Member (Mr. H. Allen). A great many practical difficulties, however, had presented themselves, one being that, in a great many instances, bills of sale were not given for sums advanced, but for debts for goods received. If the Committee wished to adopt the principle advocated by the hon. Member, they could not accept this Amendment, as it might be that in a bill of sale transaction no sum had been paid to the vendor. This view, also, should be presented to the Committee. If the sum actually paid was not set forth, the bill of sale was to be void. Very good; a bill might be rendered void by a *bonâ fide* mistake. A man might say—"You have stated in the bill of sale that you advanced £21, whereas you only gave me £20; therefore, the amount is not truly cited, and the bill of sale is void." He (the Attorney General) agreed with the principle the hon. Member had in view, as also did the Select Committee; but, after careful consideration, they had come to the conclusion that, as it would be so difficult to draw up a clause to cover all these matters, it would not be practicable to do what the hon. Gentleman suggested.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY said, he doubted whether the Committee should insert a provision of this kind in the Bill. The Amendment suggested one of the most easy ways in which the 10th clause—if it was to be passed at all—might be evaded; and he could not help thinking that either on Report, or at some subsequent stage, the Attorney General or the hon. Member for Gloucester would be able to propose some method by which the object of the hon. Member could be achieved without adopting such an Amendment as this.

Mr. LEWIS FRY said, he wished to point out that the object the hon. Member had in view was practically carried out by Clause 7.

Mr. H. G. ALLEN said, the Committee had examined some most experienced County Court Judges on this question. Mr. Daniel and Mr. Mottram had laid great stress upon having the sum actually paid, distinct from commission, interest, or expenses stated in the bill of sale. The hon. Member for Bristol (Mr. L. Fry) would be quite correct, he thought, as to a statement made in another clause, provided they interpreted the words as meaning that the "consideration" should be without deduction. He was not clear that it would be correct to say that the consideration was not fairly stated, for it might be still a true consideration, though there might be fraudulent deductions made from the payment. He did not feel inclined to withdraw the Amendment.

Question put, and *negatived.*

Clause *agreed to.*

Clause 11 (Bill of sale void as against trustee in bankruptcy).

Mr. WARTON said, he believed this clause was one of the most important in the Bill; and before he moved the Amendment of which he had given Notice he should like, if it was not wearying the Committee, to give them again the opinion of the Incorporated Law Society, which opinion went far beyond his own and far beyond his Amendment. The Society had said they were of opinion that it was not right that the validity of a bill of sale should depend upon whether or not the grantor committed an act of bankruptcy after its registration. No prudent person would lend money. ["Divide!"] He understood the feeling of the Committee. It seemed clear that they were really in their hearts opposed to bills of sale altogether. Then, why not say so, and make this a Bill for the abolition of bills of sale altogether? No prudent man would think of lending money on a bill of sale if such a clause as this remained in the Bill. The Incorporated Law Society were altogether opposed to the clause; but he was aware that in the House of Commons they must often have compromises, and he did not expect he could carry an Amendment to strike out the clause. He would give his reason why he thought the period of four months should be adopted in preference to 12. In the Act of 1862, c. 32 & 33 *Vict.*, which, with another measure they were familiar with, formed the Bankruptcy Act, the period of four months was what he might call a sacred period. They would find, on referring to the Act, that within four months of the presentation of the Petition the bankrupt must not remove any part of his property. He must not falsify, destroy, or mutilate any of his books within four months of his bankruptcy; he must not make any false entry in any of his books or documents within four months of his bankruptcy; he must not make any alteration or omission in any document within four months of his bankruptcy; he must not obtain property on credit within four months of his bankruptcy. Sub-sections 5, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14, out of the 11 clauses of the Act, referred to things which the bankrupt must not do within four months of his bankruptcy. But, when he came to the last sub-section, his argument became very much stronger. The 15th sub-section was to the effect that, if within four months next before the presentation of the bankruptcy petition or the commencement of litigation, a person disposed of any property obtained on credit, and not paid for, he committed a misdemeanour. If the clause stood in the Bill as at present framed, they would be in this curious position—that they allowed a person to pawn or dispose of all property obtained in the way of trade up to within four months of his bankruptcy; but refused to allow him to dispose of his own property within 12 months of his bankruptcy. He (Mr. Warton) maintained that the prohibition in the Bill now before the Committee should be added to the nine or 10 prohibitions of the Act he had referred to, all of which were limited to within four months of the bankruptcy.

Amendment proposed,

In page 3, line 14, to leave out the word "twelve," in order to insert the word "four."—(*Mr. Warton.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'twelve' stand part of the Clause."

Mr. H. H. FOWLER said, he could not attach the weight the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) did to the opinion of the Council of the Incorporated Law Society. That Council had entirely misapprehended the object of the clause. They had given it as their opinion that it was not right that the validity of a bill of sale should depend on whether or not the grantor had committed an act of bankruptcy after its registration. This Act did not propose to deal with that question at all. What the Act did propose to do was to go back to a limited extent only to what was the state of the law prior to 1878. When the hon. and learned Member said that no prudent money-lender would advance money on the security of a bill of sale subject to this contingency, he forgot that every bill of sale, prior to 1878, was subject to this contingency without any limit of four, six, or 12 months. In 1878, what he was bound to call that foolish and disastrous Act was passed, which repealed "the Order and Disposition" Clause of the Bankruptcy Law, and which every witness before the Select Committee said was the cause of the enormous increase of bills of sale —from 11,000 to 15,000. Every money-lender examined told the Committee the value they attached to the abolition of this clause, and made no concealment of their delight, because it deprived the honest creditors who had trusted the trader with goods of that security which legitimately belonged to them, and placed the whole of the property of the debtor in the hands of the preferential creditor, who held the bill of sale. He should be glad to see the law again as it was before 1878; and if there should be a Bankruptcy Act this Session, he would call attention again to this question. The Committee were, however, now dealing with bills of sale, and they found that, by the Act of 1878, great wrong and great injustice had been done; and what the Committee were asked was, to say that a bill of sale, given within 12 months of bankruptcy, should not be valid, so far as related to goods in the possession of the bankrupt at the time of his bankruptcy. It was a principle of justice that a man's goods should belong to all his creditors; and he hoped the Attorney General would adhere to the clause as the Committee had left it. He should prefer no limit of 12 months; but that was the least limit that ought to be fixed.

MR. WHITLEY said, he agreed in the remarks of the hon. Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler); but he thought the hon. Member forgot that the alteration in the law was owing to pressure by the mercantile community. Representing, as he did, a great commercial community—Liverpool—he attached considerable importance to this clause. In 1878 it was the commercial bodies of the country that caused the change in the law, because they found that a man who had house property or freehold property could borrow to the last penny on his property; but a man with £20,000 or £30,000 worth of property, if it consisted of personal property, could not do so. Many large manufacturers throughout the country had spent £20,000 or £30,000 in erecting machinery and warehouses; and they borrowed on bills of sale, which were advertised, and of which, therefore, all the creditors had knowledge. It was in the interest of the commercial bodies that the alteration was made; and he thought that unless the Committee were prepared to go so far as to say that no man should borrow on personal property, they must do away with bills of sale altogether; but believing that bills of sale, which enabled men to spend large sums of money on their works, were entitled to protection if the creditors had notice, if the clause was to be passed at all, he thought it ought to follow the lines of the Bankruptcy Act, and that was why he proposed four months. The Committee might say men should not borrow at all; and to say that after 12 months the security should disappear was virtually to decide that mercantile men should not borrow upon their property. It was not in the interest of the money-lenders, but in the interest of the commercial community, that he took this view; and if there was to be any alteration, the Committee ought to follow the Bankruptcy Act and make the limit four months.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) said, that for every bill of sale of a commercial nature there were 10 that were in no way connected with commerce. A man who knew he was insolvent, and could not continue in his position and meet his necessities, would give a bill of sale to one particular person who advanced him a sum of money, and that particular person would take all his goods as against all the other creditors. These bills of sale were given in anticipation and in contemplation of insolvency; and when the bankruptcy occurred the real meritorious creditor got nothing at all, the one person taking everything. What the Committee had to determine was the period when a man was likely to give a bill of sale in anticipation of bankruptcy; that might be not within 12 months, but within four months, when he got close up to his bankruptcy. His own view was that a 12 months' limit would be a sufficient security for the meritorious creditor, and that by that means he would be protected against being cheated by the money-lender, who now took all.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY said, by this Bill it was proposed to repeal the "Order and Disposition" Clause of the Act of 1878, and to go back to a state of things which the hon. Member for Wolverhampton desired. If this period of uncertain ownership was to be created at all, he thought it should be shortened.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir Henry James) said, the Bill did not propose to repeal the Act of 1878, except so far as regarded inconsistencies.

Mr. MONK wished to state that the Chambers of Commerce were in favour of the longer term, and would remind the hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) that in a previous division on this subject he had voted with the hon. Member for Wolverhampton, when there was a majority of 2 to 1 in favour of a long term.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY said, that at that time a Select Committee had not approved of even a qualified repeal of the 20th clause of the Act of 1878.

Question put.

The Committee *divided*:—Ayes 63; Noes 13: Majority 50. — (Div. List, No. 53.)

Clause *agreed to.*

Remaining clauses *agreed to.*

Mr. MELLOR, in moving, in page 2, after Clause 6, to insert the following Clause:—

(Bill of sale with power to seize except in certain events to be void.)

"A bill of sale by way of mortgage shall be void if the mortgagee is thereby empowered to seize the goods assigned for any other than the following causes:—

(1.) If the mortgagor shall make default in payment of the sum or sums of money thereby received at the time therein provided for payment;

(2.) If the mortgagor shall become a bankrupt or suffer the said goods or any of them to be distrained for rents, rates, or taxes;

(3.) If the mortgagor shall fraudulently remove or suffer the said goods, or any of them, to be removed from the premises;

(4.) If the mortgagor shall not, without reasonable excuse, upon demand in writing by the mortgagee, deliver to him his last receipts for rent, rates, and taxes;"

said, the object of this Amendment was to prevent money-lenders from entering upon the property or goods of the debtor without any default. At present the bills of sale by money-lenders were simply traps for the unwary, and were so drawn that it was very difficult to discover their meaning. With regard to such bills of sale, which were in common use, he defied anyone to find out in what event the money-lender could not enter and take the goods. Many money-lenders advertised under the names of fictitious banks; and sometimes they advertised in this form—"A widow, with capital to spare, will be happy to lend on easy terms. Strict secrecy. Five per cent." In an evening paper published in Nottingham he had counted, on one occasion, 13 of these money-lending advertisements Having entrapped a man into his office, the money-lender proceeded in this way—He produced a bill of sale containing a large number of clauses, which it was impossible for the borrower to read or understand in the time allowed; and in most cases the lender charged a bonus of at least £50 upon an advance of £100. The re-payment was fixed to be made by monthly instalments, and there were a variety of charges—for the inspection of the goods, for drawing up the bill of sale, and for various other matters. All were added to the amount secured by the bill of sale; and after the bill had been running about a month, even without any default on the part of the borrower, however insignificant, the lender could enter upon his premises and sweep off the whole of his goods, putting into his own pocket not only the £100 advanced, but the £50 bonus and all the expenses charged. His object was to put a stop to such a state of things; and he ventured to suggest that this clause would be effectual, because it provided that the money-lender should only have power to enter in four particular cases. The first was in the event of the borrower making default in payment; next, if he suffered the goods, or any of them, to be distrained for rent, rates, or taxes; thirdly, if he fraudulently removed or suffered the goods to be removed from the premises; and, lastly, if the borrower did not, without reasonable excuse, upon demand in writing by the lender, deliver to him his last receipt for rent, rates, or taxes. The reason for adding receipts for rates to those of rent was that the goods of a man were not protected by a bill of sale from a distress either for rent or rates or taxes. according to the clauses of this Bill. The object of the 3rd sub-section of the clause was to secure that a money-lender should not take advantage of the removal of a chair or a table or some small article from a building, and make it an excuse for entering and seizing the whole; and, therefore, it was provided that he should not enter unless the goods were removed fraudulently. The last section provided that the lender should have the right to see the last receipts for rent, rates, and taxes, because if they were not paid the security which the bill of sale was intended to cover would be materially affected. He submitted to the Committee that these were reasonable provisions, and he begged to move that the clause be read a second time.

Amendment proposed, in page 2, after Clause 6, insert the following Clause :—

(Bill of Sale with power to seize except in certain events to be void.)

"A bill of sale by way of mortgage shall be void if the mortgagee is thereby empowered to seize the goods assigned for any other than the following causes :—

(1.) If the mortgagor shall make default in payment of the sum or sums of money thereby received at the time therein provided for payment;

(2.) If the mortgagor shall become a bankrupt or suffer the said goods or any of them to be distrained for rents, rates, or taxes;

(3.) If the mortgagor shall fraudulently remove, or suffer the said goods, or any of them, to be removed from the premises;

(4.) If the mortgagor shall not, without reasonable excuse, upon demand in writing by the mortgagee, deliver to him his last receipts for rent, rates, and taxes."—(*Mr. Mellor.*)

Question proposed, "That the said Clause be there inserted."

MR. MONK said, he thought there was very great force in all that had been stated by his hon. and learned Friend; and without taking up the time of the Committee he would say at once that he was ready to accept the clause.

MR. WARTON would suggest that the 1st sub-section should be amended by making it read "time or times," instead of "time."

MR. MELLOR said, he had no objection.

Proposed Clause amended by inserting, in 1st sub-section, after "time," the words, "or times."

Question proposed, "That the Clause as amended, be added to the Bill."

MR. STUART-WORTLEY suggested that, as the clause had now been read a second time, it would be better, for the sake of uniformity, to substitute some other term for the term "mortgagor." In the other clauses of the Bill the borrower was called "grantor."

MR. MONK agreed with the hon. Member for Sheffield (Mr. Stuart-Wortley) that the word "grantor" would be a better term than "mortgagor," and in the second line of the 1st subsection the word "received" ought to be altered into "secured."

Proposed Amendments made.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Sir HENRY JAMES) proposed that the words, "by way of mortgage," in the first line of the clause, be omitted. They would only lead to confusion.

Further Amendment made.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause, as amended, *added* to the Bill.

MR. LEWIS FRY moved, after Clause 8, to insert the following Clause :—

"No prosecution for any dereliction of duty by a solicitor under section eight shall be instituted without the fiat of Her Majesty's Attorney General."

He moved this clause at the request of the Council of the Incorporated Law Society, to whose Report reference had already been made, and who were certainly entitled to be heard on a question of this nature. They were of opinion that without some such clause members of their Profession might be exposed to threats of extortion and to frivolous prosecutions by unprincipled persons; and it would certainly be hard to impose a statutory obligation upon solicitors, and then to render them liable to prosecution upon flimsy pretences.

He hoped that the Attorney General would see his way to accept the clause.

Amendment proposed, after Clause 8, insert the following Clause :—

"No prosecution for any dereliction of duty by a solicitor under section eight shall be instituted without the fiat of Her Majesty's Attorney General."—(*Mr. Lewis Fry.*)

Question, "That the said Clause be there inserted," put, and *agreed to.*

Mr. H. G. ALLEN said, that if he was in Order he would move the omission of Clause 9, for the purpose of inserting clauses requiring a copy of the bill of sale, with inventory, &c., to be presented to the Registrar of the County Court, and that the bill of sale should be filed and an abstract sent to the Registrar of the Queen's Bench Division. The learned Attorney General informed him, however, that he could not move the omission of the clause at that stage, because it had already been agreed to.

The CHAIRMAN said, the hon. Member could not move the clauses he had placed on the Paper in substitution of a clause already agreed to; but he might move them as additional clauses.

Mr. H. G. ALLEN said, that, under those circumstances, he would bring up the clauses on the Report.

Mr. H. H. FOWLER begged to move the clause which stood in his name, and which provided that where a Company registered under the Companies Act was wound up within 12 months after the execution of a bill of sale, the bill, as against the liquidator, should be void in respect of any personal chattels subsequently acquired by the Company. A great many businesses in this country were now carried on by means of Companies, with limited liability, under the Joint Stock Companies Act, and there was a good deal to be said in favour of the clause, because these Limited Companies had all their capital paid up, and their only available assets were the goods in their possession.

New Clause—

(Bill of sale to be void as to personal chattels in certain cases.)

"Where a Company registered under 'The Companies Act, 1862,' is wound up either compulsorily or voluntarily within twelve months after the execution by such Company of a bill of sale, such bill of sale shall, as against the liquidator or liquidators of such Company, be void in respect of any personal chattels which at or after the date of the commencement of such winding up are in the possession, or apparent possession, or the order and disposition of such Company,"—(*Mr. H. H. Fowler,*)

—*brought up*, and read the first time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Clause be read a second time."

Mr. MONK said, he had no objection to the insertion of the clause.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY asked if the object of the clause was not already effected by Clause 14?

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Clause *agreed to*, and *added* to the Bill.

Bill *reported;* as amended, to be considered upon *Monday* next.

GENERAL POLICE AND IMPROVEMENT (SCOTLAND) BILL.—[Bill 77.]

(*Dr. Cameron, Mr. Barclay, Colonel Alexander.*)

COMMITTEE.

Bill *considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Clause 1 (Short title).

Mr. WHITLEY said, he understood that the principal object of this Bill was to give the right of voting in regard to municipal matters to women. He wished to know if that was the only object of the Bill?

Dr. CAMERON stated that women who were householders had a right conferred upon them, by an Act passed last Session, to vote at municipal elections in Royal and Parliamentary burghs in Scotland; and the object of the present Bill was to give them the same right in police burghs.

Clause *agreed to.*

Remaining clauses *agreed to.*

Bill *reported*, without Amendment; to be read the third time *To-morrow.*

WAYS AND MEANS.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 2) BILL.

Resolutions [March 17] *reported*, and *agreed to* :—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Playfair, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Lord Frederick Cavendish.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time.

House adjourned at Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Tuesday, 21st March, 1882.

MINUTES.]—Public Bill—*Committee—Report*—Pilotage Provisional Order (Tees) * (33).

MARRIAGE OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE LEOPOLD, DUKE OF ALBANY.

MESSAGE FROM THE QUEEN.

Delivered by The Earl Granville, and read by The Lord Chancellor, as follows:

Her Majesty relies upon the cordial interest which the House of Lords have expressed in the approaching marriage of Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, to Princess Helen of Waldeck and Pyrmont:

The proofs which the Queen has never failed to receive of their loyalty to Her Throne and of their attachment to Her Person and Family, lead Her to believe that they will upon this happy occasion make such a provision for Prince Leopold as may be suitable to the dignity of the Crown.

Earl GRANVILLE: My Lords, I beg to give Notice that on Thursday I shall move that Her Majesty's gracious Message be taken into consideration by this House.

The Marquess of SALISBURY: Before the Orders of the Day?

Earl GRANVILLE: Yes; before the Orders of the Day.

House adjourned at a quarter past Five o'clock, to Thursday next, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Tuesday, 21st March, 1882.

MINUTES.]—Select Committee—*First Report*—Commons (Stivichall Common and Crosby Garrett Common). [No. 126.]

Private Bills (*by Order*)—*Second Reading*—Falmouth Borough Extension *; Hull Extension and Improvement *; Milford Haven Lighting and Water Supply *; Rothwell Gas *; Swansea, Oystermouth, and Mumbles Railway, *put off;* Tottenham and Edmonton Gas *.

Public Bills — *Ordered* — *First Reading* — Metropolis Management and Building Acts Amendment * [107].

Second Reading—Parish Churches [99]; Consolidated Fund (No. 2) *.

Third Reading—General Police and Improvement (Scotland) * [77], and *passed.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

SWANSEA, OYSTERMOUTH, AND MUMBLES RAILWAY BILL (*by Order*).

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Dodds.*)

Mr. HUSSEY VIVIAN begged to move, as an Amendment, that the Bill be read a second time upon that day six months. It was a Bill which sought, by incorporating the Railway Clauses Act of 1845, to convert an old tramway, which ran for five or six miles within three or four feet of a much-used turnpike road, into a first-class locomotive line. The questions raised by the Bill had twice been before the Court of Chancery, and once before a Committee of the House of Commons in 1878. The owners of the line at that time put locomotives on to the line—locomotives which purported to be noiseless, but which were not so, and several accidents occurred. The County Roads Board took action in the Court of Chancery against the owners, and obtained an injunction to restrain the use of these engines. In 1880 the owners of the line, a limited Company, came to Parliament for powers to convert it into a railroad. The case of the promoters was fully investigated by a Committee upstairs; and without calling upon the opponents to give evidence, the Committee came to the conclusion that they would reject the Bill. In 1881—last year—the County Roads Board took action again. He might say that the promoters of the line continued to work locomotives upon it. In consequence, the County Roads Board, in 1881, being in charge of the road, proceeded by action again in the Court of Chancery, and the Court of Chancery laid down certain conditions of a stringent character. The conditions provided in what manner the locomotives were to be used. They certainly permitted the use of locomotives; but an arrangement was made by which the locomotives were to be of such a character that they would really do no harm to the traffic upon the turnpike road. The fire-boxes were to be closed in; the ash-pans were to be closed in also, and the Court of Chancery laid down the speed at which these locomotives were to run. They were not to go at a greater speed than four miles an hour within the town, and 10 miles an hour along the line of road outside the town. That system had been worked from May last, nearly a year, to the satisfaction of everyone, and a large number of people had been carried upon this tramway—he thought something like 400,000. There was no desire on the part of the public that any change should be made in the present mode of working the line. The Corporation of Swansea were Petitioners against the Bill, the Harbour Trustees of Swansea also petitioned against it, and the County Roads Board had again lodged a Petition against it. If the present Bill passed, by the incorporation of the Railway Clauses Act of 1845, the owners of the line would have the power of converting it into a first-class railway running for five miles within a few feet of a turnpike road. Well, beyond that, the Bill took power to obtain possession of 10 acres of land. The line ran immediately adjoining a common, which was much used by the public, and which overlooked the Bay of Swansea. The promoters of the Bill had not in any way scheduled any land which they desired to take; but they simply proposed in the Bill to take power to buy 10 acres of land, under the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act, which would enable them to obtain land by agreement with various easements. But as this was common land it became very difficult to know how the power of purchasing the land, and whether from the lord of the manor or not, would be used; and therefore the exercise of these powers by the Company would impose upon the commoners a very serious lawsuit before they would be able to determine in whose possession this land really was. At present it was in possession of the public, and the public had the benefit of this common land. The Corporation of Swansea and the local authorities were desirous that the public should continue to have the benefit of this common land. If the Railway Clauses Act were incorporated in the Bill a further mischief would occur. The Board of Trade would very soon, he thought, be compelled to enforce the fencing in of this railroad, which ran for five miles along one of the most beautiful bays in the United Kingdom; and if that were done there would be a paling or fence erected, probably 15 or 20 feet in height, which would shut out the public both from the use of the common, from all access to the bay, and, in point of fact, from all view of it. He thought these were broad and public grounds why, on the present occasion, he should do that which he had never done before in the whole course of his Parliamentary career—namely, oppose this Private Bill upon the second reading. As he had stated, the question had been twice before the Court of Chancery and once before a Committee of the House of Commons, and on each occasion the decision had been against it. Upon these grounds he ventured to oppose the Bill upon the second reading, so as to prevent the great expense to which the public must be put in opposing it in Committee. The County Roads Board had already been put to a very serious expense in opposing the Company. The Corporation, the Harbour Trustees, and other public bodies, besides various private individuals who were interested in preserving the common land and to continue to use the road they had always used without having their lives endangered, had also been put to expense. He thought these were grounds which would warrant the House in taking what he admitted to be a very strong course—rejecting a Private Bill on the second reading. There was, however, another point, and it was this. The promoters of the Bill had opposed the *locus standi* of all their opponents, or, at any rate, of a large number of them, on the ground that they were merely seeking to incorporate the Railway Clauses Act in an existing Act of Parliament. The contention of the promoters was that the Petitioners against the Bill had no *locus standi* at all upon such a question. It therefore amounted to this—that the public, and the representatives of the public, were to sit quietly by and see all this mischief done, and all the evils incurred, which he had already detailed to the House, and they were to take no steps to prevent it. He felt himself justified, therefore, in appealing to the House to reject the Bill upon the second reading. If the owners of the tramway desired any further powers than they already possessed, let them come to Parliament again with a Bill stating in a straightforward manner what powers they really desired, and then they might be fairly met; but to attempt to obtain these powers by a side-wind, by merely incorporating an old Act of Parliament in this way, was a course which ought not to be permitted by the House; and, under these circumstances, he asked the House to reject the Bill.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "now," and at the end of the Question to add the words "upon this day six months."—(*Mr. Hussey Vivian.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. DILLWYN said, he thought that he ought to say a few words in regard to the Bill, as he had the honour to be the Representative of the Borough of Swansea in that House, and it was necessary that he should explain why he intended to support the Motion which had just been submitted by his hon. Friend the Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian), notwithstanding the fact that his (Mr. Dillwyn's) name appeared upon the back of the Bill. Now, he took it that whenever a Member was asked to put his name on the back of a Bill, it was merely an official act, which amounted to a guarantee of the good faith and *bona fides* of the Gentlemen who brought it in. The Gentlemen who brought in this Bill were most respectable; and if the measure were in itself a good measure, he could have no hesitation in guaranteeing the good faith of those who brought it in. And that was what he took to be indicated by his having put his name upon the back of the Bill. He now desired to say a word or two in regard to the merits of the case. He had listened very attentively to the statement which had been made by his hon. Friend. He (Mr. Dillwyn) was in no way personally interested in the matter, as he lived two or three miles higher up; but he was bound to say that the Bill, if it were passed by Parliament, would be a great invasion of the public rights. He had known this line for more than 60 years. In the first instance it was a horse tramway; but that was at a time when no such thing as the power of steam had been dreamt of, and there were no locomotives passing along it. It was a mere tramway line, as described by his hon Friend the Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian). Of late the use of steam power had been sanctioned upon it; but the locomotives were worked under very stringent conditions. The present Bill, however, proposed to convert the line into a *bonâ fide* railway. The dimensions of the line had been by degrees growing larger and larger, until it was now running literally neck and neck with the public road. It was only separated from the high road by a very short distance; and he could not but conceive that the use of steam upon it, without any controlling conditions, would be highly dangerous to the public. The line, as it at present stood, was worked admirably and satisfactorily; but, nevertheless, well as it was worked, the use of steam upon it even now involved some danger and some obstruction to the public who desired to have access to the sea shore. If it became a large railroad, it would certainly create a serious obstruction to the public over the whole of Swansea Bay, because at present this was the direction in which the people of Swansea and Mumbles approached the shore, and the privileges now enjoyed by the public would be seriously curtailed. There were other grounds of opposition to the Bill, into which he would not enter, because they had already been stated by his hon. Friend. He had simply thought it right to explain what he knew in regard to the merits of the case, as the Representative of the district in which the line was situated; and he felt bound to oppose the second reading of the Bill. He did so simply upon public grounds, believing that he could not conscientiously support it in the interests of those he represented.

MR. TOTTENHAM remarked that, having been a Member of the Committee upstairs to whom the Bill was referred in 1880, he desired to say a few words. His attention had been drawn to the similarity between the objectionable features of the present Bill and that which was before the Committee in 1880. The main object of the measure appeared to be to convert an existing tramway into a first-class railway, running alongside, and practically on the high road. It was opposed by almost every person connected with the district in 1880—by the county authorities, and by various Railway Companies, by the landowners, by the harbour authorities, and apparently by everybody who had any interest in the district. He thought that, as a general rule, Bills of this kind ought to be referred to a Committee upstairs, and that it was a bad principle to throw them out on the second reading without sending them upstairs; but he was bound to say that the Bill of 1880 contained most objectionable features, and as similar objectionable provisions were included in the present Bill, he thought the House ought not to allow it to receive a second reading.

MR. MONTAGUE GUEST said, he was not acquainted with the proposals contained in this particular Bill; but he found that the hon. Member for Swansea (Mr. Dillwyn), notwithstanding the fact that his name was upon the back of it, intended to oppose it, and he thought that very few Members of the House would be found to support it. He only wished to say that the public in the West of England had suffered from the very same kind of thing. He was acquainted with a case where a railway ran for three miles alongside a turnpike road, and he had often experienced the greatest inconvenience in consequence. It was exceedingly dangerous for anyone to be riding or driving along the high road, as a train might come up quite unexpectedly, and occasion the greatest danger and inconvenience to persons in charge of young and fresh horses. He hoped the House would agree to the proposal of the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian), and reject the Bill, with a view to securing the safety and convenience of the general public.

MR. ROBERTSON wished to say a word or two before the House came to a decision. He had very carefully read the Bill and the provisions which it contained, and he did not think that any of those provisions bore out the observations which had been made in regard to them. He did not think that the incorporation of the Lands Clauses Act and the Railway Clauses Act of 1845 necessarily involved all the mischievous effect which the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian) alleged the Bill would have. He thought that the effect which the incorporation of those clauses would produce was a matter which might fairly be left to the consideration of a Committee upstairs. In regard to the special case dealt with by the Bill, there was one fact which he thought ought to be brought under the attention of the House—namely, that this was not a case of a tramway or railway which sought to come to a public high road, but the case of a tramway which existed previously to the formation of the road. In point of fact it was the case of a tramway running alongside of a road, which road had been made and houses built upon it solely because the tramway existed there. It was not the case of a new railroad being constructed upon a piece of land where there already existed a road. The original Tramway Act was passed about 75 years ago, and the tramway, after having met with various accidents in the course of its history, at length became a very useful public highway, carrying, as the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian) told them, about 400,000 passengers last year between the towns of Swansea and Oystermouth. It was very important, in regard to the public interests, that the persons who owned this railway should now obtain the sanction of Parliament, not to the making of a new line, but to the improvement of the existing line; and they found that it was impossible for them, under their present Act, to deal with the question of rates and other matters without obtaining the incorporation of these two Public Acts. The object of the Bill was not to make a new locomotive railway. The railway was a locomotive railway already, and it carried the public along this line by locomotive power. [MR. HUSSEY VIVIAN: Yes; noiselessly.] The Company were empowered to use noiseless locomotives; but he believed that, nevertheless, they did make a good deal of noise. He thought it would be very unwise for the House, upon a mere *ex parte* statement, to reject a Bill which he believed capable of being made of great public utility to the whole of this district. He had known the place for a good many years, and he had travelled by this very tramway. The mere fact that it carried 400,000 persons in the course of the year out of that not very nice place—Swansea—to Oystermouth on the coast was a proof of the advantage it conferred upon the public. [Mr. Dillwyn: Oh!] Perhaps his hon. Friend, who lived some distance out of Swansea, might think that it was a very nice place; but those who lived in the town and were subjected to the fumes sent forth from its chimneys certainly wished to have a cheap and ready means of being carried away to Oystermouth and other parts of the coast. The provisions of the present Bill were not the same as those of the Bill of last year. Last year the Company sought for compulsory powers to take land, and they were opposed chiefly by the Duke of Beaufort, because they asked for compulsory powers over his land. They sought for no compulsory powers this year; but all they asked for was that they might have the power of purchasing land by agreement. In regard to the common land which had been spoken of, it had existed there ever since the tramway or railway was formed, and the Company sought for no new powers with regard to it by the present Bill. It was only by the consent of the owners that they could take any land at all; and he did not think it was an unreasonable thing for a Company to ask to be allowed to purchase additional land, when it was intended to devote it to the convenience of the public. He begged to support the Motion for the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. BRYCE said, he wished, in reply to the remarks which had been made by the hon. Member for Shrewsbury (Mr. Robertson) in regard to the common land, to point out to the House the way in which this Bill would interfere with the enjoyment of this common land by the inhabitants of Swansea. The common was situated between the existing road used by the Tramway Company and the line of the London and North-Western Railway Company. Of course, it could not be got at by way of the London and North-Western Railway, because that railway was fenced off; but it could be got at from the public road by crossing the existing tramway. But if the present Bill was passed, the tramway would be turned into a railway; and they all knew that sooner or later the Board of Trade would insist upon the line being fenced in as a regular railway. In that case the common would become unapproachable, and the inhabitants of Swansea would lose the enjoyment of this valuable tract of common land. On these gronnds he hoped the House would reject the Bill.

Mr. W. HOLMS said, that having been a Member of the Committee which inquired into the question of using steam power on tramways, they came to the conclusion that such a line as this, which was one of a number of tramway schemes submitted to them, and was the case of an ordinary locomotive running upon a line for several miles alongside a turnpike road, was objectionable, and that in such a case the use of an ordinary locomotive would be dangerous to the public. The Committee did not object to a noiseless locomotive travelling along the road at a moderate speed, with its fire-box so sheltered that the horses on the road were not likely to take fright. If the Company only proposed to ask for such powers he had no doubt that the House would grant them; but in this case the Company wanted something more—they wanted to run ordinary locomotives on this line. He believed that would be dangerous to the public; and, therefore, he should oppose the second reading of the Bill.

Mr. STANLEY LEIGHTON said, he could not help thinking that the propriety of preserving the common for the people was only brought forward as a sort of makeweight. The real point was the objection which carriage-folk had to the use of locomotives near roads. Now, he felt very strongly indeed that until they had steam power on every main road in England they would never have proper communication between the towns and country districts. Under these circumstances, he should oppose the unusual course which had been taken by the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian) in moving the rejection of the Bill on the second reading.

Mr. O'SHEA said, he had no acquaintance with this particular tramway; but in France he had seen a similar tramway running through the streets of Rouen, and it was worked without any danger or inconvenience to the public. No accident had occurred either to horses or to children. He had been on the Committee last year which considered the question of the use of steam in connection with tramways, and the professional witnesses who were examined gave strong evidence in regard to its utility and safety. Since then he had, as he had already stated, seen one of these tramway locomotives running along the streets, and he was not aware that any accident had ever occurred.

Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA said, the remarks of his hon. Friend the Member for Clare County (Mr. O'Shea) had reference to something quite distinct from the question now before the House. It was not a question of establishing a tramway similar to the tramways in Rouen—with which he (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) was quite familiar; but the object of the Bill was to obtain the sanction of Parliament to the conversion of an old tramway road into a railroad with the use of ordinary locomotives upon it. He could conceive nothing more objectionable than such a conversion. An hon. Member who had spoken in defence of the Bill (Mr. Robertson) said that the public highway had come to the tramway. That was quite correct; but the public highway did not come to a railway, and what the promoters of the Bill now sought was to convert this tramway into a railway. The consequence would then be that they would have a common high road carried alongside, not of a tramway, but of a tramroad converted into a railway with ordinary steam locomotives running over it. He could conceive nothing more objectionable than to allow, by a side-wind—for this was in reality a Parliamentary side-wind—a tramway to be made into a railroad between two important districts, and to carry it alongside a public high road. Personally, he knew nothing of this district; but it was for the public interests that every hon. Member should carefully consider every proposal of this nature that was submitted to the House. It would be most objectionable in principle to allow, under cover of a Private Bill, the incorporation of Public Acts which would effect a great radical change in the character of the property affected by it. If this tramway was in the position of a tract of country in regard to which it was desired, for the first time, to construct a railroad, all interests being compensated, and there being no public danger, he would have nothing to say in opposition to the introduction of an independent Railway Bill; but the present case was very different in every respect, and he hoped the House would reject the Bill.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 55; Noes 161: Majority 106.—(Div. List, No. 54.)

Words *added.*

Main Question, as amended, put, and *agreed to.*

Second Reading *put off* for six months.

QUESTIONS.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT.

Mr. REDMOND asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to numerous complaints made by the relatives and friends of the suspects in Kilmainham as to the difficulty of obtaining admittance to visit them; whether it is a fact that, owing to the deficient number of warders, it frequently happens that only one visit can take place in that prison at one time; and, whether he will take care that the number of officials be so increased that, when necessary, at least three or four visits can take place simultaneously in the prison?

Mr. SEXTON wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman, at the same time, whether he was aware that each visit occupied nearly 20 minutes, and that not a fourth of the "suspects" could receive daily visits?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: I must ask the hon. Member for Sligo to give Notice of his Question. As regards the Question of the hon. Member for New Ross, it is not the fact that at Kilmainham only one visit can take place at a time. Four warders are employed especially for visits, and prisoners may be seen in the infirmary at the same time.

Mr. REDMOND said, that, in consequence of the answer of the right hon. Gentleman, he begged to give Notice that he would ask him, in two or three days time, to reconsider the matter and inquire into it. He could state, from his personal knowledge, that visitors were kept waiting a considerable time. [" Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is aware that, in giving Notice of a Question, he cannot enter into matters of debate.

Mr. REDMOND said, he felt so strongly on this matter that, in order to put himself in Order, he would conclude with a Motion for the adjournment of the House. [" Oh, oh!"] He had no desire whatever to inflict this Motion upon the House; but the right hon. Gentleman was misinformed on this matter as upon others. He (Mr. Redmond) could state positively that he had himself been kept waiting as long as an hour, and had then to go away from Kilmainham without paying the visit he went there to pay. This was because there were not sufficient warders in Kilmainham to enable more than two visitors to go in at the same time. In Kilmainham complaints had been made to him by some of the warders that they were short-handed ever since the Coercion Act had been in force; they had complained to him that their work had been doubled; and, as far as the prisoners were concerned, very few of them were able to receive visits during the day at all. That was a matter which touched them very materially. There were men in Kilmainham Gaol whose homes were hundreds of miles away—men whose relatives could only afford to make the journey once during the full term of their imprisonment, and, in consequence of that delay, were obliged sometimes to spend two or three days in Dublin before they could see their friends, and sometimes they had to leave without seeing them at all. He made that statement on the authority of the officials of the prison, who had stated that they were short-handed and their work was doubled, and that they had received no extra remuneration of any kind. He did not think he was called upon to make any apology for intruding his Motion at that time of the evening in a matter that affected very closely the welfare of a number of Irishmen. Every poor man in the clutches of the right hon. Gentleman was deprived of the visits of his friends, because in many cases he had removed them as far as he could from home. Then they had this economy, he supposed, which made provision for only two or three visits taking place. He spoke of these matters from personal knowledge, and let the right hon. Gentleman now stand up and assure him that he would have further inquiry made into this matter. Let him state that if the officials were short-handed in Kilmainham, or in any of the other prisons, he would see that the prisoners were not allowed to suffer anything in consequence. He begged to move the adjournment of the House.

Mr. SEXTON, in seconding the Motion, said, he was actuated in doing so by the desire to refer to a letter he had received in reference to the Limerick Prison. The right hon. Gentleman had told them repeatedly that complaints should be made to the Prisons Board; but he could assure the House that such complaints had been made again and again, and that they had been treated with silent disregard. The writer of the letter was a prisoner in Kilmainham. He stated that the arrangements for visits were very inadequate. Four hours a day were allowed for visits, and a quarter of an hour for each visit. There were men in the prison from Clare, Kerry, Limerick, Tipperary, Cork, and Waterford; and friends of those in the immediate neighbourhood got tickets at an earlier date than those far away, who were constantly disappointed, though the others, in many instances, gave way in their favour. The number of visitors averaged 44 or 45 a day; but only about four visits could take place. He wished to point out to the right hon. Gentleman that that was virtually a repeal of the rule of the Lord Lieutenant, which laid down that each prisoner should receive one visit per day. The writer of the letter from which he had quoted went on to say that there were two objectionable closets situated near the end of the cell, one of which occasionally overflowed. He had called the attention of the Governor, the doctor, and the Prisons Board to it; but the nuisance had not been remedied. He had recently spoken to the doctor again, and his reply was that the whole of the sanitary arrangements were about to be remodelled. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken as to the manner in which complaints should be made. He might say that yesterday he had written to the Chief Secretary in reference to the subject of visits, and he supposed the letter was treated as were the other complaints.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Redmond.*)

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that if the hon. Member had sent him a copy of the letter he would have instituted an inquiry into the matter.

Mr. SEXTON said, that a copy of the letter was sent to the right hon. Gentleman by the writer.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he had not seen any such letter. [*Cries of* "Stopped!"] Perhaps the hon. Member would now send him a copy of the letter. He would have an inquiry made into the truth of the statements. With regard to the speech of the hon. Member for New Ross, he desired to say likewise that if the hon. Member would send him particulars of the day on which he was detained he would institute inquiries and see if there were any reasons for the detention. Without being acquainted with dates and particulars he could not give answers to complaints. There must be some limit with regard to the liberty of prisoners to receive visits. In every possible way reasonable visits ought to be allowed. If the hon. Member would send him particulars of his complaints now, that would give him an opportunity of testing how far visits to "suspects" were available. Had the particulars been sent a few days ago the Question might now be answered without delay.

Mr. HEALY remarked that, in reply to some Questions from him, the Prime Minister recently made a similar demand for particulars. They did not feel that there was the slightest use in sending the right hon. Gentleman any letters of particulars, for this reason. The right hon. Gentleman would merely send those letters to the incriminated parties—the prison officials—and the incriminated parties would, as a matter of course, deny everything that had been alleged, and this stereotyped reply would be laid before the House as the conclusion of this matter. If the right hon. Gentleman would undertake to select an independent person—so indifferent was he as to who the person was, provided he was independent and removed out of the sphere of the prison officials, that he had no objection even to the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton)—and request him to go to any of the prisons in Ireland and inquire into the grievances of the prisoners, they would be content. They would then send to the right hon. Gentleman oceans of correspondence. To provide for the visiting of each "suspect" every day was a mere matter of mechanical arrangement. The answer of the right hon. Gentleman was—"We must only make the best arrangements we can." That was not a proper answer. Proper arrangements should be made for the carrying out of the rules which the right hon. Gentleman laid on the Table of the House. A quarter of an hour was surely short enough for a man in prison to be allowed to see and speak with his wife or his friends without restricting it. There were, perhaps, 100 men in Limerick Prison. The Governor of that prison was a man whose conduct was notoriously bad, against whom many complaints had been made, and who, owing to some of those complaints, had been transferred from certain prisons. He provided only one cell for visits, which prevented most of the prisoners receiving their friends for the miserable quarter of an hour that the rules allowed. Suppose complaints were sent in reference to that prison to the right hon. Gentleman, he would forward them to Governor Eager, who would deny every one of them, and the right hon. Gentleman would read his denials to the House. If the Government so conducted themselves towards Englishmen, their life as a Government would not be worth a minute's purchase. But because the right hon. Gentleman knew his majority did not depend on the Irish Members, little attention was paid to their complaints. Their only object and hope in bringing forward these complaints was to try and shame him before the country and before Europe into something like a compliance with his own rules.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY wished the right hon. Gentleman to state plainly whether he would make suitable arrangements for the carrying out of his own rules, so that every prisoner might receive a visit each day? Asking to have these arrangements made was not putting forward any unreasonable request.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER could only say that the rules were put to the House regulating the visits. Whether other arrangements for the prisoners could be made he could not say; but if he found that visits could be multiplied in a manner consistent with the character and good management of the prison, he would endeavour to see that it should be carried out. He would try and discover what other arrangements could be devised for enabling prisoners to receive visits from their friends; and if he found they could be multiplied he would do so.

MR. BIGGAR said, that, although certain rules were laid down for visiting, those rules could not be effectually carried out by the machinery which now existed in the prisons. The right hon. Gentleman said he wished to bring his rules into effective operation; but it seemed to him that the House gave him power to form his own opinion, and to supply the means of carrying his rules into operation. There was not the slightest use in laying rules upon the Table of the House if the right hon. Gentleman was to have the power of considering whether he would put them in reasonable and fair operation. The Chief Secretary for Ireland heard the complaints of the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond) as if he were cross-examining an expert witness at the Old Bailey; and the right hon. Gentleman seemed to raise a doubt as to whether the statements of the hon. Member were true. He did not think that was a proper way in which such complaints should be treated by a responsible Minister of the Crown. In past times they were told if they had any complaints to make against the treatment of prisoners those complaints should be made to the prison authorities. But now he said a complaint to the authorities should be sent through a Member of Parliament, who could send it to the right hon. Gentleman, who could then form his own conclusion upon it. Was that, he asked, a legitimate and proper mode of carrying out the duties of the right hon. Gentleman's Office? They knew, as an hon. Member opposite told them the other night, that the right hon. Gentleman was ignorant. ["Order!"] But there was no reason why he should be ignorant of the Correspondence that came into his Office, for he ought to be acquainted with all his official duties.

MR. MITCHELL HENRY: What I said was that people who had heard the right hon. Gentleman's speech at Tullamore probably said, as they went home —"He is very ignorant; but he means well." On that ground they would excuse many things that he did. I believe the right hon. Gentleman knows a great deal more than he chooses to tell us.

MR. REDMOND, in asking leave to withdraw his Motion, said, the Chief Secretary for Ireland had stated that he would look into this matter and see if he could not do something to make his rules work better—that he would do what he could to have those rules carried out, so that every prisoner, as far as possible, and so far as was consistent with the discipline and the good management of the prison, should be able to avail himself of the rules, which provided that each prisoner should be visited as often as possible. He would not raise the question again for some time. He would wait and see if the right hon. Gentleman would facilitate those visits; but if, after Easter, they found he had not been able to do anything in that direction, he and his Friends on that side of the House would do all they could to force the matter upon the attention of the House.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—PROMOTION.

MAJOR O'BEIRNE asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If promotion in the lower grades of the Royal Irish Constabulary is regulated by selection exclusively without any regard to seniority, and if it is a fact that such promotion is entirely in the gift of sub-inspectors and county inspectors, without the right of appeal, in such cases, where a sub-constable considers he has been unjustly passed over for promotion, and is it left to the discretion of the county inspectors and sub-inspectors of each county to fix their own standard of age for promotion, and up to what age are sub-constables deemed eligible for promotion to the higher grades; and, whether he will place upon the Table of the House a Return of the sub-constables, promoted to the rank of acting constables and head constables respectively, within the last twelve months, stating their period of service, conduct, and the different religious denominations to which they respectively belong, and the number of sub-constables unpromoted from 12 to 20 years' service, specifying the different religious denominations to which they belong, and likewise the religious denomination of each sub-inspector and county inspector under whom they have served?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, it was not the fact that promotion was exercised in the manner referred to in the Question. The Return which the hon. Member asked for would be laid on the Table of the House.

Subsequently—

Mr. W. J. CORBET asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he can state the number of first-class head constables of the Royal Irish Constabulary who have been promoted to the rank of sub-inspector since the 16th of January last; and, whether the vacancies created have been filled by the promotion of the senior second-class head constables to be first-class from the same date; and, if not, if he would state why?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, no promotion from the rank of head constable to that of Sub-Inspector had been made since the 16th of January last. Six promotions were made on that day. The vacancies caused thereby could not be filled up at once; but several promotions had been made since the 1st instant.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—OUT-DOOR RELIEF TO FAMILIES OF PRISONERS CONFINED UNDER THE ACT.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether, on 7th ultimo, Auditor McHugh surcharged the Chairman of Macroom Union £2 8*s.* for alleged "exorbitant" outdoor relief to a suspect's family; whether, as they were previously in respectable circumstances, he could state upon what principle the auditor decided £1 a-week an exorbitant sum to maintain a family upon; whether there is any, and what, limit to the guardians' power to grant outdoor relief in money to poor persons (not farmers); and, whether the auditor's power of surcharge is absolute, and, in case of refusal by the guardians to pay the surcharge, what means can be taken to compel them?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the surcharge in question was imposed because the auditor considered it an exorbitant amount of relief given to a suspect's family. The relieving officer considered 8*s.* a-week sufficient; and although that was the average now paid in similar cases, the Guardians persisted in giving £1 a-week. The Guardians' power of giving relief was subject to the auditor's power of surcharging them.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—CASE OF SUB-CONSTABLE WALSH.

Mr. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he could state why was ex-sub-constable Walsh not paid his expenses for attendance as a witness at the Cork Winter Assizes, from the 5th December to the 21st December (when the assizes were adjourned), and from the 3rd January to 16th January, notwithstanding that his certificate of attendance was signed by the Crown Solicitor for the first period; if he will state why Walsh was ordered from Cork on 10th February, at his own expense, to Kanturk, where he was informed of his discharge, when he might have been informed of his discharge in Cork, and save the expense of such transfer, having been at the time stationed at Zuckey Street Station, Cork; and, whether any instructions will be given to make good what the man was out of pocket?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, the Crown Solicitor informed him that he distinctly refused to give Walsh a certificate, inasmuch as he was not examined for the Crown. He could not say whether he signed the certificate for attendance prior to the trial. If he did so, it was on the erroneous supposition that the Sub-Constable was a witness on behalf of the Crown.

Mr. HEALY: Is it quite unusual to pay the expenses of witnesses who attend to give evidence, otherwise than on the part of the Crown?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER: That is a legal question that I cannot answer.

STATE OF IRELAND—SEIZURE OF THE "IRISH WORLD" NEWSPAPER.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Under what Act of Parliament the Lord Lieutenant has issued a warrant for the seizure of the "Irish World," in the post; and, whether there is any objection to lay upon the Table a Copy of the warrant?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON), in reply, said, that he must refer the hon. Member to the answer which he had already given to a similar Question.

PEACE PRESERVATION ACTS (IRELAND) 1848 TO 1882 — NUMBER OF PRISONERS AT ANY ONE PERIOD.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he will state the greatest total number of persons confined at any one time under Acts for the Suspension of Habeas Corpus in Ireland, in the years from 1848 to 1882?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that the Returns were only made up to 1866, and that the greatest number from 1848 to 1866 was 669.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881 — ARREST OF MR. THOMAS MAHONEY.

MR. HEALY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, If he would have any objection to lay upon the Table Copies of the warrant under which Mr. Thomas Mahoney, Clerk of Union Castlecomer, was arrested on 15th December 1881; of the warrant given by the sub-inspector in Castlecomer to the constable who had charge of Mr. Mahoney from Ballyragget to Naas; of explanation why he was refused admission into Naas Gaol on his arrival there in charge of the Constabulary on the 16th December; of authority of the Constabulary authorities in Naas for detaining him in the police barrack there during the night of the 16th December, instead of being lodged in Naas Gaol, as directed by warrant under which he was arrested; of Correspondence which took place between the Local Government Board and Mr. Mahoney on the subject of his arrest; of Correspondence between the Board of Guardians of Castlecomer Union and the Local Government Board, including resolutions in Mr. Mahoney's favour on the subject of his arrest; of Resolution of the Board of Guardians of the Athy Union of the 21st December last on the subject of his arrest; of Mr. Mahoney's Letter of the 28th December, written to the Chief Secretary from Naas Prison; and, of the order for his release, dated 4th January 1882?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, that all the information required by the Statute was laid before the House in this case, and he saw no sufficient reason for presenting any further information.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—TRAINING COLLEGES.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether his attention has been called to a Letter from the School Board for London, dated 27th January last, addressed to the Education Department, complaining of the difficulties under which Board School pupil teachers labour in seeking admission to training colleges, and asking for relief; and, whether he is prepared to propose any alteration which may secure full opportunities of training, with protection for the rights of conscience, to pupil teachers who have passed satisfactorily the scholarship examination, but who are excluded from college by the action of the college authorities, and by their regulations?

MR. MUNDELLA: The letter of the London School Board is still under the consideration of the Department, together with the whole question of Training Colleges. The best way of securing the relief to which the hon. Member refers is by increasing the accommodation in the Undenominational Colleges. The deficiency is mainly, if not exclusively, confined to the female Colleges; and I am happy to be able to state that there are proposals now before the Department which will go far towards supplying it. I have had communications from the principals of the Undenominational Colleges for male teachers, to the effect that they have already considerable difficulty in placing their students at their completion of their term, and that they are not desirous of increasing their number in training, as the supply is already in excess of the demand.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—ARREST OF MR. EDMUND BURKE, MR. WILLIAM HYNES, AND MR. THOMAS M'MAHON.

MR. O'SHEA asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether Mr. Edmund Burke, Mr. William Hynes, and Mr. Thomas

McMahon, who were arrested on the 9th instant at Miltownmalbay, county Clare, or any of them, were amongst those shopkeepers who were lately threatened by Mr. Clifford Lloyd, Superior Resident Magistrate, with imprisonment if they refused to sell goods, within three days and thenceforward, to a certain person named by him; whether, in making that threat, Mr. Clifford Lloyd accused any, and, if so, which, of the abovenamed suspects of intimidating others from selling to the person in question; and, if he could state what is the number of the inhabitants of Miltownmalbay according to the last census; and, what is the number of suspects from that place at present in gaol?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, there had been a conspiracy in Miltown-Malbay to ruin a lady, and deprive her of the very necessaries of life. The resident magistrate considered that he had reasonable grounds for suspecting that two persons, named Hynes and M'Mahon, were engaged in that conspiracy; and he sent for them, and warned them that if they did not at once cease their illegal practices the law would be put in operation against them. The number of "suspects" at present confined from Miltown-Malbay was 21, and the population, according to the last Census, was 1,362. The House was aware that an unoffending old man in the service of the lady in question was shot in cold blood at his fireside.

Mr. O'SHEA asked whether Messrs. Hynes, Burke, and M'Mahon were suspected of having anything to do with the murder of the old man; because he thought it was unfair that the circumstances should be alluded to in an answer respecting them?

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he was not aware of any suspicion against the parties mentioned in connection with the murder of the old man in question.

NEW ZEALAND—DESTRUCTION OF GROWING CROPS OF THE MAORIES BY THE POLICE.

Mr. LABOUCHERE asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether he has received information that the New Zealand constabulary has lately been employed to destroy the growing crops of the Maories; and, if so, whether he intends to take any official notice of these acts?

Mr. COURTNEY, in reply, said, that the Colonial Office had no official information on the subject; but he found, from private sources, that something of the kind was done in respect of about 40 acres of Maori crops. Of course, the action of the Constabulary of New Zealand was under the direction of the New Zealand Government, which was responsible to the New Zealand Parliament.

LIGHTHOUSE SYSTEM OF THE UNITED KINGDOM—METHOD OF ADVERTISING FOR REQUIREMENTS.

Mr. SEXTON (for Mr. Dawson) asked the President of the Board of Trade, If it is the case that advertisements for the requirements of the English lighthouse service are not published in the Irish papers, whereas those for the Irish service are advertised in the English and Scotch papers; and, if contractors from Ireland who contract for work for England are required by the Trinity House to have manufactories in that Country, whilst no such condition for work for Ireland is imposed on English contractors?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said, he was informed that the Irish Board did not advertise their ordinary requirements in the English and Scotch papers; but that when they were inviting tenders for the annual supply of coal and oil, and for the construction of a lightship, they did advertise in the Scotch and English as well as in the Irish papers. The English Board did not advertise in the Scotch, English, or Irish papers as such; but they advertised in the papers most likely to meet the requirements, such as *The Engineer*, *Builder's Review*, &c., which circulated throughout the United Kingdom. As regarded the second Question, he was informed that in no case in Ireland or England had such a condition been imposed.

STATE OF IRELAND—REPORTED OUTRAGES ON SUNDAY.

Mr. MACARTNEY asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether there is any truth in the reports of serious outrages in Ireland on Sunday—namely, the shooting at a gentleman and his family while going to church, and the wounding of a sub-inspector?

MR. W. E. FORSTER, in reply, said, it was true the sub-inspector was wounded; but he hoped not seriously.

MR. MACARTNEY asked, if a man had been murdered in Dublin also?

MR. W. E. FORSTER said, a man had been found murdered in the streets of Dublin.

SCIENCE AND ART DEPARTMENT—DR. AVELING AND MRS. BESANT.

SIR HENRY TYLER asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether Dr. Edward A. Aveling and Mrs. Besant are still employed in connection with the Science and Art Department of the Government?

MR. MUNDELLA: The Committee of the Science Classes held in the Hall of Science, Old Street, have again returned Dr. Aveling's name as one of their teachers. As he is qualified to teach according to the Rules of the Department, no exception has been taken to his employment. The Committee, who had also proposed to employ Mrs. Besant as a teacher, afterwards withdrew her name.

SIR HENRY TYLER gave Notice that he would, on Thursday, ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a series of articles recently published in the "National Reformer," of which the Junior Member for Northampton and Mrs. Besant are the editors, under the heading of "The Christ of Dr. Aveling," and over the signature of W. J. Birch, and in particular to a passage in the "National Reformer" of March 5th, 1882; and, whether he will refer to the Public Prosecutor the question of preferring an indictment for blasphemy against the editors of the "National Reformer?" The hon. Member said, he would hand the extracts to the Clerk at the Table, as they were too horrible to read to the House.

SUPPLY—THE ARMY ESTIMATES.

COLONEL ALEXANDER asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, with a view to an adequate discussion of the Army Estimates, as promised by the Secretary of State for War, he will, on going into Supply on Monday April 17th, secure that Mr. Speaker should leave the Chair without putting any Question, as provided in proposed Resolution No. 12?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have no power of securing that Mr. Speaker should leave the Chair without putting any Question on a Monday Supply day, unless the House shall previously have adopted a Resolution to that effect. I am sure, however, the House will desire to have the use of that day—the 17th of April—for the purpose of discussing the Army Estimates; and I may observe that it has not been the practice of hon. Gentlemen on that particular day, immediately after the Easter Recess, to put down preliminary Motions. The House generally has been allowed to get into Committee of Supply at once.

MARRIAGE OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE LEOPOLD, DUKE OF ALBANY.

MESSAGE FROM HER MAJESTY.

Message from Her Majesty *brought up*, and read by Mr. Speaker (all the Members being uncovered), as followeth:—

VICTORIA R.,

Her Majesty relies upon the cordial interest which Her faithful Commons have expressed in the approaching Marriage of Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, to Princess Helen of Waldeck and Pyrmont.

The proofs which the Queen has never failed to receive of their loyalty to Her Throne, and of their attachment to Her person and Family, lead Her to believe that they will, upon this happy occasion, make such a provision for Prince Leopold as may be suitable to the dignity of the Crown.

V.R.

MR. GLADSTONE: I wish to give Notice that, on Thursday, I shall move that Her Majesty's gracious Message be taken into consideration.

MR. LEWIS: I beg to ask you, Sir, as a matter of Order, whether it is not customary, when Her Majesty's Message is being read, out of respect to Her Majesty, that Members take their hats off?

MR. SPEAKER: When a Message from the Crown is read, it is usual for the House to receive it uncovered.

MR. LEWIS: I have to take notice, Sir, that a Cabinet Minister sat with his hat on when Her Majesty's gracious Message was being read to the House.

COLONEL NOLAN: I have to state that in the last Parliament I have repeatedly seen Ministers—Members of the late Government—sitting with their hats on when Her Majesty's Message was being read.

Mr. H. B. SAMUELSON: As recently as Friday, the 10th of March, during the reading of the Message from the Queen, I took particular notice that the right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary of State for the Home Department (Sir R. Assheton Cross) and the right hon. Baronet the late Secretary for the Colonies (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) both sat with their hats on. I wrote it down at the time, because I knew there had been some controversy on the question.

Mr. LABOUCHERE: I beg to give Notice that when the right hon. Gentleman moves the Resolution in regard to Her Majesty's gracious Message I shall oppose that Motion.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: With regard to the question raised just now by the hon. Member for Frome, it may be well, in order to prevent confusion, that I should ask you, Mr. Speaker, this question—namely, Whether the rule for uncovering on a Message being read from the Crown does not apply only to Messages under the Sign Manual, read by the Speaker from the Chair—[Mr. Gladstone: Hear, hear!]—and not to the ordinary answer brought up on an Address from this House, which is read at the Bar?

Mr. SPEAKER: The distinction made by the right hon. Gentleman is correct. Any Message direct from the Crown, and read to the House from the Chair, is always received by Members of this House uncovered, and an entry to that effect is made in the Votes. That observation does not apply to an answer from the Sovereign to an Address from this House.

MOTIONS.

PARLIAMENTARY REFORM.

RESOLUTIONS.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD, in rising to call attention to the representation of the people, and to move—

> "1. That, in the opinion of this House, it would be desirable, so soon as the state of public business shall permit, to establish Uniformity of Franchise, throughout the whole of the United Kingdom, by a Franchise similar in principle to that established in the English boroughs:
>
> "2. That it would be desirable so to redistribute political power as to obtain a more equitable representation of the opinion of the electoral body,"

said, that these were similar, though not identical, Resolutions to those brought forward by his hon. Friend the Member for the Border Burghs (Mr. Trevelyan) in 1879. The verbal changes which he had made did not seem to depart from the meaning of the former proposal, whilst they appeared to express with greater accuracy the sense of the important minority which supported his hon. Friend on that occasion. He had been careful to adhere, as closely as possible, to the lines of his hon. Friend's proposal for three reasons. In the first place, he desired to secure the fullest possible amount of that important body of assent which was given to his hon. Friend; and, secondly, he wished to stand towards Amendments of every kind in the same unequivocal position. The Amendment placed on the Paper by the hon. Member for County Kerry (Mr. Blennerhassett) might very well not be submitted to the House, because there was not a word in these Resolutions which was in any way contradictory of the proposal in that Amendment, or which disentitled him from claiming his hon. Friend's support. His hon. Friend the Member for Ashton-under-Lyne (Mr. Hugh Mason) had exercised forbearance in not proposing an Amendment concerning the addition of female suffrage, a proposal in regard to which he was one of the hon. Gentleman's supporters. But he was glad the hon. Member recognized that the question of women's suffrage was of such importance that it should be discussed on a separate occasion, and that the present Resolutions might be considered without prejudice to the claims of which he was the Parliamenntary champion. His third reason for adhering closely to the terms of the proposal of his hon. Friend the Member for the Border Burghs was because, remembering with what persevering eloquence and ever-increasing success he carried forward this great question, it was his anxious desire that the triumphant acceptance by the House of these Resolutions, which he confidently anticipated in the division which would be taken, should be in the least possible degree his own success, and that the honours of victory should rest with his hon. Friend and with those who had supported him before he (Mr. Arnold) had a seat in the House. He would remind the House that in March, 1879, the latest occasion upon which the question of Parliamentary Reform was under discussion, the Motion of his hon. Friend was rejected by a considerable majority, and a Resolution was adopted, without a division, in these terms—

> "That this House is of opinion that it is inexpedient to reopen the question of Parliamentary Reform."

It was in accordance with the opinion of the country, and, looking to the results of the General Election of 1880, in accordance with the duty of the House, that that decision should be reversed as speedily as possible, and without waiting until the question—to use a metaphor of Mr. Disraeli's—"shed its last skin," and became, by Royal announcement of legislation, transformed from a Parliamentary question into a Ministerial question. He was far from complaining that the Government had relegated the question to a future Session. To have dealt with it in the present year would have been premature, because measures of this sort could not be submitted to Parliament without being a menace to the life of the existing Parliament; and he felt confident that the electors of the country did not desire a Dissolution unless the Prime Minister should find himself unable to go forward with the programme of legislation which the country had enthusiastically accepted at his hands. Now, his hon. Friend the Member for Kerry proposed to do in an obscure apartment of the House what he proposed to accomplish by the inquest of Parliament with the Government of the country, which had the confidence of the great majority of the Members of the House and of a still greater majority of the people. That was the only difference between his hon. Friend and himself. His hon. Friend proposed an inquiry by a Select Committee, whilst these Resolutions required that there should be an inquiry by that Executive Committee which was made up of the Government, duly informed by the utterances of the Members in debate. He saw no possible advantage in an inquiry such as his hon. Friend suggested; it would be, in his opinion, injurious and productive of dissatisfaction. It seemed to him that the authority of Select Committees would be impaired by employing them to report upon matters which involved the most responsible functions of Government. But, holding that opinion, he was bound to say that, in his view, it was expedient and beneficial that in a matter so vital to the country the Government should learn from Members of the House what, in their judgment, were the best plans and methods of Parliamentary Reform. There were few Members of the Government whose influence would carry greater weight upon this matter than the Postmaster General; and there were few Members of the House who would not agree with him when he said in November last, addressing his constituents at Hackney, that nothing could be a greater misfortune than if, on such a subject, a Government should have to frame a measure without knowing what were the wishes of the people with reference to it. He thought his hon. Friend the Member for Kerry would admit that such information was not to be obtained by the device of a Select Committee. This was not a matter to be decided upon the evidence of experts; it needed the open inquiry of Parliament. The Report of a Select Committee would derive weight only from the names and the character and the talents of those composing it; but they could contribute nothing to that Committee which they could not give to the House by taking part in this debate. He agreed so entirely with the Postmaster General that, except from feelings of personal insufficiency, he had no hesitation in bringing forward these Resolutions, with a view to promote discussion upon them for the information of those who would have, in due time, to introduce legislative proposals upon the subject. What was wanted was not the Report of a Select Committee, but the Report of the Government in the shape of legislative proposals. He would make an effort to treat the matter without any betrayal of Party spirit; but looking at the stage which the question had reached, and having regard to the attitude which he had felt it his duty to assume, it would be disrespectful to the House if he did not state some of the views which he himself held upon the methods of carrying into effect these Resolutions. If legislation proceeded upon theoretical lines this matter would be divided into two great parts; and the enactment of a measure extending the franchise to the counties, and giving, in fact, uniformity of franchise over the whole of the United Kingdom, would precede a measure providing for an equitable re-distribution of political power. But the enactment of this uniformity of franchise was not quite so simple a matter as some hon. Members supposed. The extension of the borough franchise to the counties was a large part, but certainly not the most contentious part, of this great matter. He hoped the Government would next year introduce a Bill for the establishment of uniformity of franchise by making universal that borough franchise which recognized a citizen in his house or in his lodging, and abolishing every other franchise except that of the graduates of Universities. He knew that was not a mode of procedure which was favoured by hon. Gentlemen opposite, or that met the views of some of his own political connection, and that it might possibly raise obstacles in this as well as the other House of Parliament. He hoped, however, that the Government, if they did not take that course, would not fail in the succeeding year to submit the whole matter, including an adequate scheme of re-distribution, for the acceptance of Parliament. When this matter was in the hands of his hon. Friend the Member for the Border Burghs, the question was always spoken of as "the county franchise." While the extension of the home franchise as it existed, or would exist, in boroughs to the counties was generally regarded as an accepted question among Members, especially of the Liberal Party, he dared say the House would permit him very briefly to review the probable results of that extension in the somewhat new light of the Census of 1881. The proportion of electors to population in England and Wales was about one in 10. In the Parliamentary boroughs there were 2,098,892 inhabited houses, but of electors only 1,591,451, showing an excess of more than 25 per cent of inhabited houses above the number of voters. Fifteen per cent of that excess was accounted for by the fact that there was that proportion of women householders. Having regard to the existence of the lodger franchise and the disproportion between the number of electors and inhabited houses, they saw what grave defects there must be in our law of registration; but he would not refer to that further. In the counties, excluding represented cities and boroughs, there were 2,724,952 inhabited houses. On the register of the counties there were 932,860 electors; and allowing the same proportion of deduction that obtained in boroughs they could not be far wrong in assuming, if this proposal of uniformity of franchise were carried out, that in England and Wales it would add 1,334,000 electors to the register. So restricted was the franchise in Ireland that it appeared probable, if the moderate proposal contained in his Resolution were adopted, that the increase of electors in that country would amount to 500,000, which was nearly double the number of the existing electorate. In Scotland the change would probably add 150,000 voters, making in all an addition of about 2,000,000 to the electors of the United Kingdom. The Act of 1867 added about 1,200,000 voters to the register. This proposal, if adopted, would bring up the total number of electors in the United Kingdom to about 5,077,000, or about one in seven of the population. At present every freeholder of the value of 40*s.* was qualified to vote for a county, and so, in like manner, was the holder of a copyhold or a leasehold, either for the life of one person or for a period of not less than 60 years, of the annual value of £5. Then there was a certain number of boroughs in which there were freemen voters, and 11 cities and seven boroughs which were in themselves counties corporate, where non-resident freeholders exercised the borough franchise. The total of such voters could, however, only be a very few thousand. The abolition of those franchises, which he should contend was a matter of essential importance in any satisfactory scheme of Parliamentary Reform, would not cause a very great diminution in the total number of voters in the Kingdom. Taking the freehold franchise at 10 per cent of the number of county electors, that would only cause a reduction of 102,943 electors in the United Kingdom. At one time the franchise in the counties was restricted to owners of 40*s.* freeholds. The abuse of that freehold franchise was well known to hon. Members; but that was not the principal ground upon which he should urge the abolition of the freehold franchise. If the home franchise—the residental franchise—in counties was not made practically the only existing franchise, the extension would produce discontent. The borough franchise would in that case be very much more restricted than the county franchise; because in the boroughs there would be a franchise limited by residence, and in the counties a franchise representing both residence and property. Therefore, the grievance would only be removed from the counties to the boroughs; and unless the abolition of the freeholders, the freemen, and the lease and copy holders was undertaken, the cost and confusion would be greater than it was at present, and there would be one franchise in the boroughs and another in the counties. There could be no equality of suffrage throughout the Kingdom if a house on one side of a street happened to be in a county and enfranchised not only the occupier, but perhaps a score of persons holding each a charge of 40*s.*, while the same house if in a borough would, so far as the borough was concerned, confer the franchise only on the rated occupier. Unless Parliament desired that property in boroughs should have no representation, and that property in counties should have a representation wholly different, the freehold franchise must be either abolished or extended. His contention was that the retention of this franchise would be contrary to the just principles of Parliamentary representation. Parliament showed no tenderness whatever for the 40*s.* freeholders in the case of Ireland when their franchise appeared to threaten Protestant ascendency, and it was ruthlessly abolished in the reign of George IV. He hoped that whenever a new Reform Bill was introduced the simplicity of the provision in regard to Ireland would be copied in Great Britain. From his point of view the abolition of those franchises was essential not only to an equitable re-distribution of political power, but in order to abolish those hard-and-fast lines of electoral division which he considered one of the greatest political evils in this country. The keynote of his first Resolution was uniformity of franchise, which could be only attained by the abolition of every other franchise except the residential franchise as it existed in boroughs, and saving only the franchise of graduates of Universities. Mr. Disraeli always maintained that what was desirable was a representation, not of the majority of the people, but of interests. He (Mr. Arnold) was utterly opposed to that principle, and maintained that what was desired was that the opinions of the majority of the people should be represented in the House, with the security that the opinions of the majority should prevail in legislation. Mr. Disraeli denounced the view that the voice of the numerical majority should prevail; but he (Mr. Arnold) contended that not only was that desirable, but that it was the only rational and only established principle of legislation. He could not conceive a greater revolution than would occur if Mr. Disraeli's dictum was carried out to practical shape. Were they to have hon. Members for the North-Western and the South-Eastern Railways? Were they to provide special representation for the brewers and distillers, for the intoxicating liquor interest, and for the clerical interest? That proposal, when examined, was seen to be a phantasy. Everyone knew what it meant. Mr. Disraeli was devoted to the maintenance of the supremacy of the landed interest in regard to their control of elections in the counties. The owners of land had no claim to special representation in Parliament which could not be pressed with equal, or indeed with greater, force on behalf of other categories of proprietors. Nay, more, inasmuch as it was impossible to dissever the interest of any person from the soil, and inasmuch as the soil of the country was the only natural monopoly in the country, it might reasonably be contended that the claim of the landed interest to a separate representation was not so strong a claim economically as could be made out in favour of the restricted, the not absolute monoply, which was represented by the railway proprietors, the intoxicating liquor interest, the clerical interest, or by any other interest. He imagined that the main objection to the proposal contained in his first Resolution would be, as it always had been before, that it would bring about the domination of the least educated class in the Parliamentary elections of this country. In this country they had had experience of government by a class such as no other country in the world had had, and what had been the result? He was speaking without rancour when he said that government by a class in this country had brought about a state of things in which one-third of Ireland was in the hands of fewer than 300 people, in which 50,000,000 acres of the United Kingdom were in the hands of fewer than 10,000 people, and in which the railways of this country had been loaded with a charge of £100,000,000 sterling in excess of the comparative cost of Continental railways. When this question had been before the House in other years fears had been expressed upon the subject of class legislation, which he should make a passing effort to allay; and especially it had been said that there would be danger in enfranchising the peasant classes, having reference to their connection with the administration of the Poor Law. He should like to ask whether fears of that sort ever conjured up a more objectionable measure than that which was once proposed by the hon. and learned Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Stanhope) for the advance of loans to owners of entailed estates for erection of cottages upon their property? The administration of the Poor Law was most scandalous when it was in the hands of a wealthy and a narrow class, and the teaching of political economy was most disregarded in the administration of the law when its administration was entirely controlled by the landed gentry. It was said of the class that it was now proposed to enfranchise that they were unfriendly to political economy. It was very often forgotten in that House, and forgotten not only by undistinguished but by distinguished Members, that there was an infallible test by which it might be determined whether any proposed measure did or did not violate the law, for there was but one law, of political economy. The question was simply this —Did the measure, or did it not, tend to the creation of wealth? Let them try the test with reference to the class of people whom it was proposed to enfranchise by this Resolution. Last year the Government introduced into their Land Bill one clause—and he contended but one clause only—which violated the law of political economy, If they told a people that, be they ever so thriftless, ever so imprudent and improvident, the State would assist them and their families, however numerous, into new homes in a new land, they were flagrantly violating the single and supreme law of political economy. It was, however, the Representatives of the poorest of the poor who opposed that violation and reduced the Emigration Clause to nothingness, and then, as always, it was the Representatives of wealth who were pressing the Government to adopt Socialistic legislation. Both in the service of the Poor Law Board and as a Member of Parliament he might claim to have seen and to know as much of the working classes and the poor of this country as the average of right hon. and hon. Members of that House; and he said that, so far from the poor of this country being unfriendly to political economy, they had generally been the friends of political economy, not from any inherent virtue of their own, but because they were peculiarly interested in maintaining the laws which tended to the creation of wealth. In the last century, when class rule prevailed, the House of Commons was party to shameless abuse of State patronage in all Departments; to purchase in the Army; to a regular system of placing infants upon the pay-sheets of the Navy years before they entered the Service; to a traffic by Church dignitaries in leases of lands for their own advantage; and, according to Mr. Disraeli, in a speech on June 20, 1848, hon. Members of that time who supported the Government, were not ashamed openly to receive at the Gangway of that House a sessional *douceur* of £500 for their support. The Poor Law, which had been called the plague spot upon our laws, was not a law of democratic origin; and he maintained that the way to improve that law, and the way to get rid of the economic sins of that law, was by enfranchising the widest classes of the population of the country. The end they had all in view was the same—the best government of the people. It had been said, to his surprise, that this extension of the franchise would endanger the doctrine of Free Trade; but he contended that the main security of the doctrine of Free Trade in this country at the present time was the determination of the working classes to maintain for themselves the great advantage and blessing of untaxed food. His Resolutions were further objected to because it was said they would establish the rule of a class; but this was certainly a measure for the disestablishment of class government in this country, and the only way to escape government by a class was to enfranchise the nation. They had long been ruled by a class, and it had cost as much, if not more, than if they had been invaded by foreign Armies. Leaders of the Conservative Party had told them, from time to time, that the franchise in boroughs represented people, and that the franchise in counties represented property. Surely the opinion of that Party must be weakened by recent proposals upon that point. It was true that the county franchise did represent property when there was no ballot, and when the tenant farmers voted in accordance with the behests of their landlords; but the county franchise now seemed to him rather to represent the interests of a class, and of that class which was engaged, not in the ownership, but in the occupation of land. In his opinion, the greatest present danger to the just rights of property, of which he was as firm an upholder as any Member of that House, came from the selfish policy and the power of control which the tenant farmers and occupiers of land generally had in the counties. He anticipated with great confidence a material improvement in the representation of Ireland when the exclusive power of control of the tenant farmer was removed, and when power in regard to elections in Ireland was placed more largely—as it would be by his proposal—in the more impartial hands of the artizans and labourers of that country. If the policy he advocated was carried out in Great Britain they would see a much more healthy regard for the rights of property; they would see a much more dignified dealing in Parliament with agricultural questions; they would see less truckling on the part of all parties for the farmers' votes when the farmers had no longer exclusive control over the elections in the counties. In all sincerity he commended this view to the consideration of the landed gentry. The abolition of the freeman vote would, in fact, only remove from the list of resident voters a few persons in some of the smaller boroughs who, but for their right as freemen, would be disqualified as paupers. The number of freemen was fast diminishing; and whereas in 1832 there were 63,000, the number had fallen in 1866 to 41,000. The main object of uniformity of franchise was however, to facilitate the equitable redistribution of political power. There could be no dealing with the electoral areas of this country such as could afford the slightest hope of anything like a permanent settlement unless the basis was prepared by the adoption of uniformity of franchise. As to the second of his Resolutions, the only compromise he could offer to his hon. Friend (Mr. Blennerhasset) in his design to establish proportionate representation, including, he supposed, Mr. Hare's scheme, was that he looked upon that system of election not only as possible, but as probable, in the remote future of the country. His (Mr. Arnold's) object—he avowed it plainly in order that there might be no misconception—was to give decided predominance in that House and in legislation to the voice of the majority of the people. He denied that this involved any unfair dealing with the rights of minorities. Had his hon. Friend, and those who appeared to like his Amendment, forgotten the dictum of Mr. Disraeli, that the history of minorities was the history of success? Every hon. Member of the House sat by right of majority; but if he valued his seat it was ever present to his mind that that majority might be turned into a minority, owing either to his own action or that of the Party to which he belonged. He quite agreed with the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Stanhope) that the franchise had an educating effect; but it must be remembered that the hon. Gentleman (Mr. Courtney) had said it was easier to give enfranchisement than to give representation. That was obvious. They had given enfranchisement to the great cities and boroughs of the country, but they had not given a fair representation; and the real barrier to the progress of legislation in that House lay in the fact that the voice of the majority of the people was not made effective. The majority of the people, in spite of the absurdities of our representative system, could make a Minister, but they could not order a policy. The House was so well acquainted with these anomalies that he should not dwell upon them. He would only say, by way of example, 27 English, Scotch, and Welsh boroughs, containing together about one-half the number of electors of the city of Manchester, returned 27 Members to that House, while Manchester only sent three. Or, again, what could be more destructive to the growth of a sense of justice in the minds of the people than that in regard to the question of policy of peace or war, of Free Trade or of Protection, the great city of Manchester should give equally with the town of Marlborough one vote in accordance with the sentiments of the majority of the population? Some of his hon. Friends were fanatical in their fondness for that which they called the representation of minorities; he regarded the system as the disfranchisement of the majority. In 1867, what he might call the high-water mark was reached at 10,000 of population, because it was then enacted that any borough containing fewer than 10,000 people should return only one Member to the House of Commons. It was said at the time—it had been maintained by the Liberal Party ever since—that the re-distribution accomplished in 1867 was utterly inadequate. He did not blame the authors of that arrangement; because it was difficult, if not impossible, to make further progress in re-distribution without taking into account the inadequate representation of the counties, and the Party then in power had no taste for uniformity of franchise throughout the whole of the country. He did not apprehend that he had to meet arguments in favour of maintenance of the existing distribution. When it had been assailed in former years he had not observed that it had been defended, nor was there any question that all Parliamentary Reform had proceeded—grudgingly, it was true, but yet surely—upon the basis, as to representation, which was the only true basis, of population. Fifty years ago the House formed an idea that 2,000 should be the lowest unit of representation; 15 years ago the House had doubts whether 10,000 was a proper unit. To-day there was an idea, equally wanting in any foundation as to principle, floating in the minds of some hon. Members, that the next advance might be that boroughs with 20,000 population should have but one Member, and that boroughs with fewer than 10,000 should be disfranchised or grouped. What Parliament would require would be that the Government should bring forward some plan of reform founded upon distinct principles and bases so as to give ground for the hope that it would be an enduring reform. There was an argument in favour of small boroughs of which he thought they would hear no more. That was the argument which he had called the "talented young man theory." He did not think anyone would repeat, in the face of the present House of Commons, arguments which were arguments in favour of patronage and privilege as against popular election. There were 21 boroughs in England and Wales with fewer than 1,000 electors; there were 47 with fewer than 2,000 electors. Who were the talented young men that these boroughs returned? They might be many; but who were those whose abilities the House had recognized? There was, for instance, the noble Lord the Member for Woodstock (Lord Randolph Churchill), whose illness he greatly regretted. It seemed to him, however, that the noble Lord was encouraged, not in his brilliant promise, but rather in his pranks, by the favour of a family borough. On the Liberal side who were the talented men that came from these small boroughs? He did not doubt there were many whose talent the House had not yet discovered; but who were those whose ability had been recognized by the House? There were, for example, the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Courtney), the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen), and the noble Lord the Member for Calne (Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice); yet, if ever the House had observed the slightest defect in any one of those Members, he was certain that it had immediately, and by reasonable instinct, ascribed the defect to the malefic influence of the representation of a narrow constituency. With the presumption of uniformity, they could proceed to consider what were the lines of equitable re-distribution. They must travel, as a matter of duty, upon the basis of all preceding Reform Bills—that of population—the attainment of the opinion of the people. He had been glad to observe that in 1878, when this matter was discussed, the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India (the Marquess of Hartington), who then most ably led the Liberal Party, mentioned the number of 50,000 people with very considerable prominence. Now, those figures had a virtue in this relation which no other figures possessed—they represented a principle. If they divided the population of Great Britain and Ireland by the number of seats in that House the quotient was 53,717; and, therefore, however they might differ, and whatever plan they might adopt as to Parliamentary Reform, they must all agree that the decimals 50,000 had a peculiar character and strength in this connection which could not belong to any other figures. Of Parliamentary boroughs containing a population greater than 50,000, there were, he thought, in England and Wales, 59, and what he said of England and Wales applied equally to Scotland and Ireland. Boroughs with a smaller population partook more or less of the character of county towns, and of the 139 smaller boroughs a great majority possessed a distinctly agricultural character. He believed he spoke in the interests of all classes in saying that one of the greatest political evils and dangers of this country was the sharp division between town and country, between urban and rural life, for which the distinction between county and borough franchise was so largely responsible. One of the makeshift devices of statesmen under the existing conditions of our franchise had been the grouping of small boroughs. It seemed to him that the pleas for the adoption of that system would be abolished when the franchise was uniform over all the country. The absurdity of the system was shown by a proposal made in 1866 to group Woodstock, in Oxford, with Abingdon, in Berkshire, and with Wallingford, which was partly in Oxford and partly in Berkshire. As to electoral purity, the grouped boroughs had obtained, he thought, a spurious reputation, founded quite as much upon the increased cost of Petitions as upon the absence of corruption, for that system left the mechanism of corruption untouched by preserving intact the organisms of corruption. To introduce a general system of grouping when the franchise was uniform would seem to him to be an unpardonable offence against the common life of the country. That was his main objection. The first act of re-distribution must be to do justice to the counties. With uniform suffrage, the disproportion of county representation became glaring. England and Wales possessed 489 seats in the House of Commons; 299 were occupied by the Representatives of cities and boroughs, five by Universities, and 185 by the counties. But the population of the counties was 13,698,493, while that of the cities and boroughs was only 12,269,793. If they divided these populations by the respective number of seats the result was 41,036 for each borough seat, and 74,036 for every county seat. How was the balance to be redressed? How was the just claim of the counties to be satisfied? He ventured to suggest that they should proceed on the lines followed in 1832; but that they should do so with an endeavour not slavish or pedantic or too precise, but with a general endeavour to reach that firm ground of the principle which was represented by taking 50,000 people as the general unit of representation. All the Amendments proposed on his Resolution agreed in the desire for the representation of the people, and the Census of last year was instructive as bearing on this question. It showed that there had been an absolute decline of population in North Devon, Dorsetshire, East and West Essex, Huntingdon, Rutland, West Suffolk, South Wiltshire, and other parts of England; and that while there had been a steady increase of population in Scotland there had been a decline in Ireland. The average population for each seat in Scotland was 64,386—that was 12,000 more than in England, and 14,000 more than in Ireland. A prime matter, therefore, in regard to re-distribution was to consider the equitable claims of the Three Kingdoms. Excluding the University seats, a just re-distribution would give England and Wales 484 seats, Ireland 96 seats, and Scotland 69 seats, involving the surrender by England and Wales of four seats, which might be the seats for Beverley and Bridgewater, now in abeyance; the surrender by Ireland of seven seats, of which two might be those of Sligo and Cashel, now also in abeyance; and the increase of Scottish representation by these 11 seats. That would be equitable as between the Three Kingdoms. In 1832 the boundaries of most Parliamentary boroughs were enlarged, so as to take in portions of the county. That was the course which it would seem desirable now to follow in the case of those of the 139 boroughs of which the population did not approximate to 50,000. It would be pedantry to disturb the boundaries of boroughs which were growing, and which now contained over 40,000 population. His proposition would involve a re-arrangement of electoral areas except in the case of boroughs containing, say, more than 40,000 persons, according to the Census of 1881. He was of opinion that boroughs containing more than 100,000 inhabitants ought to have at least two Members, and that those containing more than 200,000 should return not fewer than three Members to the House. He hoped also that in the not very distant future the Divisions of the counties would cease to be known by unmeaning names which were attached to them by the Reform Acts, and would come to be distinguished by the ancient and honoured names of boroughs which would cease to have separate representation. How much better and more interesting would "The Canterbury Division of Kent" sound than the present "East Kent," or "The Salisbury Division of Wiltshire" than "South Wiltshire?" Of course, the nearer re-distribution advanced to the adoption of constituencies of 50,000 as a minimum the more durable would be the settlement. There would be no more hotly-disputed measures of Reform. It was remarkable that in a most Liberal Parliament—perhaps the most Liberal Parliament this country had seen—no further demand should have been made. But if there were any who hesitated to recognize the moderate character of his proposals, he would remind them that 100 years ago the Duke of Richmond made in the House of Lords proposals much in advance of those he had submitted. The Duke introduced, in 1780, a Reform Bill of sublime simplicity. It provided that every man born a subject of Great Britain should be entitled to vote at the age of 21 years; that a list was to be made in every parish of the names of those so entitled; that the total number should then be divided by 558, the then number of seats in the House; and that the quotient was to be the number by which one Member should be elected. Every county was to be divided into districts, to be called boroughs, each containing this number of electors. He thought it would be well to adopt one of the Duke of Richmond's suggestions, and to make every Member a Representative of both borough and county. The late Conservative Leader told them that finality was not the language of politics; and, as an argument in favour of such Parliamentary Reform as should give reasonable hope of endurance, he might, in the words of the same great authority, say that—

> "Questions have been lately treated in this House without that entire national sympathy which is desirable."

What he (Mr. Arnold) proposed was not equal electoral districts, but that the reform should proceed on the old lines. He believed, however, with the Prime Minister, that every man who was not incapacitated by some consideration of personal unfitness or political danger, was morally entitled to come within the pale of the Constitution, and felt convinced that the aid of these large classes of the country would not only result in beneficent legislation, but would tend to give greater security for the preservation of order, authority, and law, and to the maintenance of an established reign of peace and justice. With regard to the proposed reform, he thought it might be reasonably expected that great benefits would flow from the establishment—for the first time in modern history—of the political unity of the people, and from the attainment, absolutely for the first time, of the fair expression of the desire of the majority of the people in Parliament. Conscious of his own insignificance in relation to this great subject, he had leaned much upon the utterances and opinions of others; and now he would recall words which no less a person than Mr. Pitt spoke in that House in 1782 on the same great theme with which they were dealing in the same year of the succeeding century. Mr. Pitt said—

> "Without Parliamentary Reform the nation will be plunged in new wars; without Parliamentary Reform you cannot be safe against bad Ministers, nor can good Ministers be of use to you."

It was the privilege and the immortality of genius to utter words which not only defied the hand of time, but which became resistless weapons in the hands of meaner men of after ages. He might invoke other illustrious shadows of the past to re-assume, on this, which was their question as it was ours, their ever-honoured place in that House. But he preferred that these words of Mr. Pitt, revived, as it were, upon the very centenary of their utterance, and precisely expressing their dangers, their difficulties, and their demands, should stand alone in the wonderful significance of their application. This Parliament was born at a time when the enfranchised people of this country were fearful—whether rightly or wrongly he did not wish to say—of a policy of foreign broils. They exercised, within the actual lines of the Constitution, their electoral power up to its very summit. They denominated their Minister, one whom they, representing their majority, believed to be a good Minister; and now the question with them was—how could good Ministers be made of greatest use to the people? Who could doubt that, in the words of Mr. Pitt, this was to be accomplished by Parliamentary Reform—by the complete enfranchisement and the just representation of the people? He trusted there was not a Member of that House who would argue against the right of the majority of the people to direct the legislation of Parliament. He trusted there was not one who, in the presence of 2,000,000 of unenfranchised homes in this Kingdom, and of the existing arrangement of constituencies, would contend that the voice of the people found equitable expression in that House; and he would fain believe that there was not one who did not in his heart desire that it should be the crowning glory and the supreme distinction of this Parliament to confer electoral unity upon the population of the United Kingdom, together with a just and enduring re-distribution of political power. The hon. Gentleman concluded by moving the first of his Resolutions.

MR. ARTHUR ELLIOT, in seconding the Resolution, said, his hon. Friend had made it perfectly clear that the proposition now before the House, if carried out, would effect a very large and important change in the Constitution. The question appeared on a very different basis than that which it used to have when formerly brought forward, year after year, by his hon. Friend the Member for the Border Burghs (Mr. Trevelyan). Throughout the country, from one end to the other, that which had united the Liberal Party at the last General Election was the question of the county franchise. He ventured to think that the bringing forward of this question this evening was extremely opportune; because they had heard last night, as they had all had reason to believe before, that circumstances might possibly occur which might bring to a more rapid termination than any of them on that side of the House wished, the rule of the present Government; and many of them had thought what a terrible thing it would be if a Parliament, more specially sent to deal with this question than any other, were dispersed before the intentions of the Government and of Parliament had been made perfectly clear. It was entirely unnecessary for him to point out in any detail the great anomalies that existed in the present system of representation. These had been pointed out a year or two ago by the Postmaster General, in a magazine article, as concisely as they had been pointed out anywhere else. He, for instance, pointed out that populations of less than 50,000 in the aggregate sent no fewer than 10 Members; while, on the other hand, populations approaching 1,500,000—Glasgow, Liverpool, and South-West Lancashire—sent only eight Members to the House of Commons. It was unnecessary to refer to the over-representation of Wiltshire, which was, to a certain extent, a decaying county, compared with Yorkshire or Lancashire. He wished to point out to the House why it was that they had great reason to hope that by bringing in fresh constituents to the county electorate they should be adding to the efficiency of that House, and the power it possessed of passing and bringing about useful legislation. Considering the question of the electorate and of the population, in England the electorate consisted of 2,500,000 to a population of 26,000,000; in Scotland there were 315,000 electors to a population of 3,750,000; in Ireland the electorate numbered about 230,000 to a population of about 5,000,000. That showed that the electorate, as compared with the population, was in a higher ratio in England than in Scotland, and in much higher ratio in Scotland than in Ireland. As regarded the borough electors in England, speaking roughly, there were 1,500,000 of county electors over 1,000,000. In Scotland the borough electors somewhat exceeded 200,000, and the county electors somewhat fewer than 100,000; while in Ireland the county electors were nearly three times the number of the borough electors. It was proposed by these Resolutions substantially to make the county franchise consist, as it did in the boroughs, of a household, a ratepaying, and a resident qualification. As regarded England, they had in the county population 13,700,000 people, again speaking roughly, and that was a population by no means purely rural. The English county population might be classed either as purely urban in character, as suburban, or as purely rural; and it was proved clearly by the last Census, and by previous ones, that the tendency was for the urban population to grow, as compared with the counties. Of this population outside the Parliamentary boroughs, it seemed that, according to the last Census, which was based upon the urban sanitary districts, there was an urban population of 5,250,000. The remaining 8,500,000 was the real rural population of England. He wished to point out to the House that though there was a proposal for bringing within the franchise a very large number of persons, they were not persons of whose character the House was without knowledge as regarded Parliamentary experience. The population of such places as Accrington and Keighley did not differ in any material degree from that of the places which sent Members to Parliament. The day was really past when objections of that sort could be urged. Look at Preston and Manchester. Was it a benefit or not to the House that these large industrial communities sent Members to Parliament? He ventured to say that if they looked at the character of the Representatives sent by such constituencies they had every reason to feel that there was no deterioration whatever in the standard of Members which those constituencies sent up. That would apply as regarded the purely urban constituencies. As regarded the suburban constituencies, they were divided, as a rule, by purely imaginary lines from the constituencies already enfranchised. There was no reason to suppose that the electors there differed in any way from those already enfranchised. As to the last class, the 8,500,000, he admitted that they stood to some extent in a different position, and they were not able to judge, from their experience in the House, as to the kind of Representatives they would send; but they were not entirely without authority as to that, because there were rural districts that sent Representatives, such as Christchurch, Stroud, and other places, where a rural population had the same franchise as that of the boroughs. It would, however, be the greatest mistake to look simply at the way in which places which were enfranchised exercised their Parliamentary franchise; because there were many matters with which the rural interest were connected that showed the qualification of the people to act as electors, and especially in Scotland. Look at the school boards. Everybody who paid a rate was entitled to exercise the right of taking part in the education of the parish, and they had shown themselves thoroughly competent to undertake that. It was the same in regard to parochial matters, and in Scotland they had another power—that of electing their ministers. They managed their educational and their parochial affairs, and elected their own ministers; and he ventured to say it was really almost preposterous that when they had people well educated, of the kind they had in Scotland, who took an intelligent interest in their local affairs, they should not be permitted to take a part in their Parliamentary elections. The population of Scotland, of which he was speaking, was, however, more thoroughly rural than that of England outside the Parliamentary boroughs. He did not know that he entirely and thoroughly agreed with everything his hon. Friend had said as to the grouping of boroughs. At all events, it was the fact in Scotland that that system had been very largely followed, and the result was that the country population in Scotland was much more thoroughly rural in character than the corresponding population in England. They had been much worse treated there as regarded the Parliamentary franchise than any other class; because, in the first place, there was no 40*s.* qualification, and then, owing to the small size of the counties, those select bodies to whom they had given the franchise had not very often been able to carry out their wishes or political opinions. They had been disgracefully swamped by the extraneous element which had been brought in. It was from his experience, from what he had seen and read as to the swamping of constituencies, that he thought some limitation of residence should be placed upon the qualification. The grievance of swamping constituencies had gone on for half-a-century; and although there had been continual grumbling, and bringing of the matter before Parliament, the people did not feel the grievance any the less that nothing had been done. They hoped an opportunity would soon be taken to put an end to this grievance. It was one of the essential propositions of his hon. Friend's Resolution. Lord John Russell, when asking leave to introduce the Reform Bill in 1832, said, with reference to the borough franchise—

> "Non-residents produced much expense, caused a great deal of bribery, and such other manifest and manifold evils, that non-resident voters ought not to be permitted to retain their votes."

Further on, speaking of the Scotch county constituencies, he said—

> "That latterly the proprietors of land had sold their superiority, which has been purchased for corrupt purposes by persons altogether unconnected with the counties in which they have votes."

Nevertheless, although Lord John Russell was perfectly aware of the evil, he did not see his way at that time to correct it, and the abuse went on. These constituencies were enormously increased after the Reform Bill of 1832. Yet the system of creating extraneous, non-resident votes was by no means put an end to. He thought he ought to point that out; because his hon. Friend the Member for the Border Burghs (Mr. Trevelyan) in his speeches gave one the impression that, if the county franchise was extended, it would put an end to swamping of constituencies by extraneous votes. He ventured to say that was very doubtful, because they would have to deal with the balance of constituencies. The Committee appointed to inquire into the constituency of Mid Lothian found that in the six years from 1832 till 1837 the constituency, which had been 1,300, had increased to 1,900. Now, he was afraid a Reform Bill passed upon the principles which his hon. Friend proposed would not put an end to this system. With regard to Mid Lothian, what struck one was the remarkable and sudden growth from time to time in that constituency. The right hon. Gentleman who represented that county spoke at one time of the Revenue of this country advancing by "leaps and bounds." He would apply the words to Mid Lothian, and say that constituency increased by leaps and bounds in the most extraordinary manner. In 1879 the constituency numbered 2,799, or an increase, as compared with 1873, of 204; which gave an average of about 30 for each year. In 1879 a very different state of affairs arose. He was not now alluding specially to what was done on one side or the other, although he had a strong opinion about that; but he did not wish specially to go into such matters. The constituency, which was increasing at the slow rate of 30 per annum, suddenly in 1879 sprang up 131. In 1880 it increased by 330, and in 1881 it increased by 610. Now, he wanted hon. Members to consider what that meant. The real contest was not between the merits or capacity of individual candidates to competently represent the constituency; it meant a mere competition between rival election agents. Such a course as that debased and degraded political contests; and he hoped the publicity given to that abominable system by the Prime Minister in the contest he waged at the last General Election would have a good effect in putting an end to that very discreditable system. But it was said that those who had property in a county, and did not reside there, were properly qualified. But, as a matter of fact, the mass of non-resident voters had no real interest in the county. In the Scottish counties, after these additions to the register had been largely made, from 1832 to 1837, the whole matter was inquired into, and a Committee of the House reported in these words—

> "A very large proportion of the non-resident voters were totally unconnected with the county. They are usually writers and lawyers resident in Edinburgh, and keen political partizans. Much jealousy is entertained by resident electors, especially in the smaller counties."

That had continued for half-a-century, and it continued still. He thought it illustrated most forcibly the necessity for requiring residence as a qualification. Some hon. Gentlemen thought that if a gentleman owned a large estate in a county he should be entitled to vote in it though he did not reside there. But he would point out that though he might own a most valuable property in Edinburgh or Glasgow, if he did not live in Edinburgh or Glasgow, or within seven miles of these burghs, he should not have a vote in respect of that valuable property. Why should it be harder in the one case not to have a vote than in the other? As regarded re-distribution of seats, not much of that would be required in Scotland, as they had no very small borough constituencies. He saw opposite his right hon. and gallant Friend (Sir John Hay), who sat for the smallest borough constituency in Scotland. But that right hon. and gallant Gentleman's constituency, though a small one in Scotland, would not be considered small in England, and in Ireland he supposed it would be a large constituency. It numbered 1,400 electors. Compared with the Wigtown Burghs, he found that in Ireland, Carlow, Dungarvan, Ennis, and New Ross each returned a Member, with a united constituency of 984. He was fully aware that the borough franchise in Ireland was not the same as in this country and in Scotland; but what he would like to point out was that in dealing with this question, while it was desirable to increase the Irish electorate, it was not desirable to increase the number of Irish Representatives. Ireland, he thought, hon. Members would allow, was fully represented in Parliament, although the franchise differed from England and Scotland. If, for instance, the four boroughs he had mentioned elected between them one Member, they would be much more largely represented in that House than any borough in Scotland. As to the newly-enfranchised class swamping the present constituencies, he wished to point out that in this country, so far as politics were concerned, people were not divided by the same lines as divided class. It was not a case in which the wealthy and well-educated all went in one direction, and the poor in another. The fact was, if they had popular institutions at all, when the nation had thoroughly made up its mind on any particular matter which greatly interested it, its will would prevail. The Reform Bill of 1832 was carried by a great many representing close boroughs. The questions affecting social legislation, liquor laws, education, artizans' dwellings—such matters would be much better dealt with if the constituencies were larger. He had not the slightest reason to think that in Imperial questions the new electorate would take a less national view of British politics than the class at present enfranchised. One word upon minority representation. Hon. Members took very different views upon that question. He had a very strong prejudice in favour of the system which, in the main, prevailed in Scotland. Nearly all the constituencies there had one Member, and he was strongly in favour of that. There was nothing so simple, which admitted of less wire-pulling, of less arrangement, or in which the electors could act so thoroughly and entirely for themselves. He knew some hon. Members had a strong feeling against that; but he must say he would view with regret any change which would create plurality of Members, except in very large constituencies, where, perhaps, there might still be three Members. He was sorry that, by the way in which the Amendment appeared on the Paper, it suggested there was an antagonism between the county franchise proposal and the minority scheme of representation. He was in favour himself, in some way or other, of the opinions of minorities finding due expression in that House; and he was happy to think that in some of the recent admissions within the Ministerial circle there were very strong advocates of that system. So far as their experience of the past went, they might look forward with great hope to the passing of an extension of the franchise. They knew that the period immediately succeeding the passing of those measures had been the most beneficial period this country had gone through in the way of useful and desirable legislation. They might surely argue in respect of the future from what they had found in the past; and that they had every reason to hope the next Reform Bill would be succeeded, as the past had been, by a period of most useful and beneficial legislation. For these reasons, he had very great pleasure in seconding the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"1. That, in the opinion of this House, it would be desirable, so soon as the state of public business shall permit, to establish Uniformity of Franchise, throughout the whole of the United Kingdom, by a Franchise similar in principle to that established in the English boroughs."—(*Mr. Arthur Arnold.*)

Mr. GLADSTONE: I desire, on the part of the Government, to say a few words upon the course which we propose to take upon this occasion; and, before doing so, I must say my first duty is to express a sentiment which, I think, will be common to the entire—or nearly the entire—House, certainly not confined to those who agree with my hon. Friends who made and seconded the Motion. I think the House will be of opinion that the great ability and great care with which they have investigated the matter which they have brought before us have done them high honour; and that the speeches which they have made are valuable contributions towards the more thorough understanding, and more general understanding, of a very great and very important question. I must own, as having the honour to hold a Scottish seat, that I feel a particular obligation to my hon. Friend who has seconded the Motion for having called the attention of the House specially to the relative hardship which Scotland suffers at the present moment under the electoral law as it actually stands, and the very strong claim — I will not speak now of the manner in which it is to be satisfied—and I think the irresistible claim, that she possesses to an increase of electoral power. With respect to the general subject, I must draw a distinction between the merits of the question and the time and circumstances under which it is brought forward. As to the merits of the question, I have from the time when it was first submitted to the House by my hon. Friend near me (Mr. Trevelyan) —very much to his credit and very much towards the formation of his permanent reputation in the country—I have been a friend to the extension of the franchise to the rural districts. I never thought it possible that anything except what I might call a secondary and incidental opposition—an opposition founded upon a limited basis—could possibly be offered to it. There is nothing on principle that can be brought against it, and the soundness of the general doctrine is unquestionable. The House approximates more and more, I think, to the opinion that the admission of properly qualified persons to the franchise is not a weakening, but a strengthening of the Constitution. There is no doubt, at least in my mind, that that is the triumph of truth over a venerable, or what I may call a very ancient, superstition. There were many honest men, many upright men, many enlightened men, who had a latent belief—which they were afraid, perhaps, even to formulate to themselves in distinct terms—that the exclusion of the great proportion of the people from the Constitution was a condition of its safety and strength. It is impossible to conceive anything more contrary to nature and to common sense; and I rejoice to think that that belief, at any rate, has now learned so much modesty that scarcely anywhere will it venture to show itself above the ground; and, further, I believe that such root as it had in any portion of the mind of any Party in this country is being gradually weakened, and will finally, and that shortly, perish altogether. Now, with regard to the competency of the voters outside the limits of Parliamentary boroughs, it seems to me that it is absolutely impossible to deny it. In the first place, a very considerable proportion of them are of the very same quality as the artizans and mechanics within the Parliamentary boroughs; and if the population of the districts outside the boroughs are to be distinguished from those within the boroughs, then they are rather distinguished by a circumstance which is in their favour—that is, that you do not find in those districts the same amount of what may be called residuary, or some may call even, refuse, population. That more doubtful and questionable fraction is not found in the districts outside the Parliamentary borough in the same proportion as in the districts inside. But we have also arrived at a state of things in which a non-extension of the suffrage beyond these boroughs is becoming unintelligible, and almost amounting to a political contradiction. We have in England what is unknown in Scotland. We have boroughs almost entirely made up of purely rural populations. We have many cases—it is not necessary to go into them—where the boroughs themselves, properly so called, are so insignificant and decayed, so limited, at any rate in their population, that it becomes absolutely necessary that they should derive the principal part of whatever title they might have to Parliamentary representation from the importation into them of considerable districts of rural and even peasant population; and it is impossible to carry political absurdity and paradox to a more elevated point than that which they reach in this case, where, for purely arbitrary reasons, and conventional reasons, connected with the convenience of individuals, the influence of families, or particular views entertained by this House, the very same classes of persons have been emancipated in one village, and left unenfranchised in another. There is one reason, however, which must be added to the consideration of this case, and certainly I, for one, feel it to be very strong. I have said that a good deal of the argument in favour of the extension of household suffrage to the county bears upon the fact—its cogency and clearness and simplicity depend upon the fact—that so many of the population outside the Parliamentary boroughs are of exactly the same quality and class as those who are now voters inside. But, upon the whole, and setting aside the strange anomalous cases where fictitious boroughs have been manipulated by Parliament out of rural villages—taking the case of the agricultural population as a whole, in this country, they remain unenfranchised. The agricultural labourer, speaking generally, is an unenfranchised man. Now, is there any reason why that should be so? I have never thought there was any justice in the disparaging remarks which some have been accustomed to make upon the intelligence of the peasant. I must say it appears to me a reasonable proposition, on the whole, that the rural employments of the peasantry are employments which ought, of themselves, to go to develop, and even to require, a considerable degree of intelligence. It is impossible, for example, to take the fair average farm labourer and call him, in the strict sense, anything like an unskilled man. He has many things to do which require a great deal of skill; and the fact that he is compelled to turn his mind so much and so often from one subject to another, and from one employment to another, does involve a very great deal of practical education. The main reason for which I wish to see this enfranchisement is, that it is so greatly to be desired that we should have some enlarged representation of labour in this House. It is only of late we have begun to have this at all. We have at present, I believe, only two Members among us whom we can call, from personal experience and predilection, as well as general capacity, Representatives of the labour of the country. And I ask the House whether the specimens that we have possessed in the presence of those two Gentlemen to whom I refer—the Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) and the Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt)—are not such as to lead us greatly to desire an extension of that class of representation? Much as I desire that extension in regard to the artizans of the country, I think it is greatly to be desired also that the agricultural labourers of this country should have some chance of being represented by those who belong, or have belonged, to their class. There is no fear among us now of an undue disposition on the part of the labour members of this country to choose Representatives from their own class. I wish I felt equally satisfied that they would always have a due disposition to choose Representatives from their own class; but we have seen that from the great extension of the franchise that has taken place, in some degree at least, the doors of this House have been opened to the Representatives of labour, and, accordingly, further extention of the franchise in the rural districts will, I believe, have the effect of adding to the number. Nor is there anything that contributes more to the union of all classes, to the strength of the Constitution, to the attachment of the people to the law, and to making us really and truly a nation one in heart and sentiment, thoroughly attached to the Throne and to our country, than this opening the doors of the House of Commons to the Representatives of all classes in the country. These, briefly stated, are sufficient indications of the elementary considerations that lead me greatly to desire the adoption of a measure based on the proposal now made; but I do not disguise from myself that they involve a great deal of ulterior legislation. I am very glad that my hon. Friend has shown, by the nature of his own speech, how conscientiously he has addressed himself to the consideration of this subject, and how fearlessly he has given expression to his opinions, and laid himself open to those who may be disposed to attack any of his conclusions; but I do not propose to enter upon the question of his second Resolution. My hon. Friend, I believe, is desirous, if he can, to obtain a vote of the House on his

2nd Resolution; but that vote he cannot, of course, hope to obtain apart from the discussion of the 1st. The proposal now before us is the proposal we have in the 1st Resolution, though I must say that I have spoken in a manner, I hope, clear in regard to the merits of the proposal; and though I have no blame whatever to bestow on my hon. Friend and his Seconder, yet I own it is with only a qualified satisfaction that I can give a vote on the subject at the present time; because I feel that there is something that is unreal, and something also that is unsafe, considered as a mode of Parliamentary procedure, in the recording of opinions of this House on subjects of very great public importance, which opinions we have no immediate hope or early prospect of being able to carry into practice. There has been no one whose fate it has more often been than my own to endeavour to dissuade the House from the adoption of abstract Resolutions; and I am bound to say that it is only in the peculiar circumstances of this case, in the peculiar circumstances under which the House stands at the present moment, that I do not think it is our duty to refuse to my hon. Friend the support he asks. Had we come from the General Election in the position we used to stand in 40 or 50 years ago, when the time and strength of the House were really adequate to the successful and tolerably rapid and punctual dealing with questions soliciting attention, I should be foremost to argue against a proposition of this kind, and should have said that the proper time for entertaining it was when we were prepared to put it into the shape of a practical measure, and to obtain the immediate judgment of the Legislature upon it. But that is not the case in this instance. It is now two years since we came from our constituents; and, undoubtedly, a large majority of this House did, during the Election, express strong opinions in favour of the extension of the suffrage and of the establishment of household suffrage in the counties—a subject on which, during those two years, we have been compulsorily silent. I can assure my hon. Friend it has been sufficiently painful for the Government to find themselves so retarded and so impeded by the force of circumstances—I am not now making a charge against anyone—in the general Business of legislation. Now, with respect to this important subject, it is certainly one of the subjects which I regard as being, if I may say so, one of the essential parts of the mission of the present Parliament to deal with. I am, of course, now presuming that the existence of this Parliament is not to be interrupted by any unforeseen catastrophe. Should it enjoy the term of its natural life, I cannot but believe—and I do very firmly believe—that it will record among its achievements a great measure for the extension of the suffrage on the basis indicated by my hon. Friend. I have no doubt it will give great satisfaction to what is, under the circumstances, a warrantable and a natural feeling, when we have recorded this vote, which I hope we may be allowed to do to-night. But, on the other hand, I must confess it is not so satisfactory to me to reflect that a considerable interval may lapse before we proceed to make this vote operative in the shape of an Act of Parliament. I am particularly desirous to found a justification of my vote on the special circumstances of the case, and on the moral right which our constituents may be said to have, to know, from some visible sign at any rate, that we are faithful to the declarations we made to them at the time of the Election; because I feel that, as a Member of the Government particularly, I ought to express my general scruples and misgivings with regard to the passing of abstract Resolutions. It is a very dangerous thing indeed to endeavour to live on promises instead of upon performances. That has been the characteristic of certain persons at certain epochs in history. One remarkable case—perhaps the most remarkable case that has happened in Europe for a long time—is that of the late Pope Pius IX., who came to the Throne in 1846. He spent the first 18 months or two years of his reign in promising to the population every description of political privilege. I believe, I am bound to say, it was done with benevolent intentions, and I am far from casting any reflections upon the course he adopted; but too soon it became evident that his temper was too sanguine, and that he had made very deficient calculations of the impediments in his way; and it was that which led him to pursue a course which, for the moment, brought him so much popular fame, and finally to the deplorable catastrophe—I will say deplorable, so far as regarded him personally—I cannot say that it was deplorable that an end should be put to the temporal Sovereignty of the Popedom—the catastrophe—and it was a heavy one—which very soon overtook his well-intentioned endeavours. I should not be surprised if our voting for this Motion should be criticized to-night. I shall not resent it. I think all promises by a Government ought to be viewed with a good deal of jealousy and misgiving, except such as they are immediately prepared to redeem. On that account we should not think of asking the House to make any declaration of this kind. My hon. Friend so far relieves us of that responsibility. He has felt—and I cannot, in the circumstances, go so far as to say that he is wrong—that in those circumstances of comparative impotence in which the House is unfortunately placed upon that very peculiar ground, he may be justified in asking us to declare what we think upon this subject. I would hope that our making this declaration to-night will be regarded by us as importing a real obligation to give to this great question that high and early place in the list of legislative questions to which it is entitled, and likewise that it will be held to import our determined resolution to go forward with measures which shall place this House in a condition to discharge its duties properly. Under these circumstances, I shall be prepared to vote for the Motion of my hon. Friend, thinking it necessary to give these cautions, which I hope will not be misunderstood, and pleading for myself an exceptional warrant as giving a promise I cannot fulfil; having no doubt whatever of the merits of the question my hon. Friend has presented to us, but, on the contrary, animated by the fullest conviction that this is a measure of reform and of justice—a measure bringing into the exercise of political power, and duly, large masses of men who have hitherto been excluded from it, and likewise a measure which no one need contemplate with the slightest fear or apprehension, but one which will tend not less to the harmony of all classes of the community than to the strength of the Constitution.

Mr. BLENNERHASSETT, in rising to move, as an Amendment to the Motion—

> "That no change should be made in the Electoral Franchise or the distribution of political power until full and accurate information has been laid before this House with respect to the relative advantages of various systems of Election, including proportional representation, the Cumulative Vote, and the Limited Vote, and that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire what system of Election is best calculated to secure the just representation of the opinions of all classes of Electors,"

said, he was unable to accede to the appeal of his hon. Friend not to proceed with his Amendment. His hon. Friend the Member for Salford had made an extremely large proposition. He had advocated a new Reform Bill, the effect of which would be to admit a larger number of new electors than had ever been admitted by any previous Reform Bill. He had brought forward the proposal without any check, balance, or counterpoise whatever. He could not but agree with the Prime Minister that there was something in the proposition that was unreal. The present, however, was a time when consideration might very profitably be given to the question. They ought to pause and consider in what way so great a change might be brought about in the best way possible. The hon. Member for Salford, in criticizing his Amendment, had dwelt on the least important part of it—namely, the appointment of a Select Committee. It was true that it was not fitting to send the British Constitution upstairs for revision, or, as his hon. Friend had said, "to obscure apartments of the House;" but such a Committee might deliberate upon practical details, and upon questions connected with the working of various systems of election. He repudiated the suggestion of his hon. Friend that he had any desire to deprive the majority of the electors of their due share in the representation. The supremacy of the majority he regarded as the fundamental principle of government by a Representative Assembly. He was opposed to giving any undue influence to minorities. But the real question was to reconcile the rapid advance of democracy, consequent on the extension of the franchise, with the rights and liberties of every section of the people—how, in a Reform Bill, to unite generosity and intelligence. If the proposals of his hon. Friend were carried out the new county electors would far outnumber the whole present constituency. The agricultural labourers were to be admitted; the miners and the factory hands. He would be glad to welcome them. But was there no danger, at the same time, of excluding other classes from political power? There were active political forces at work, which would certainly confer political power on those now unenfranchised; but the danger was lest they should have the whole power in their hands. To that the true principles of democracy itself were opposed; those principles required the just representation of the whole people, and of every class in the people. His hon. Friend had referred to Mr. Hare's scheme, and said that it was an admirable theory, and would have to be considered hereafter, with a view to its adoption. But his hon. Friend must have very strangely read history if he did not see that it would then be too late to consider such questions. If once political supreme power had passed into the hands of one class in the community, it would be impossible to take it away from them without a revolution. The great practical question before them was how to reconcile the admission of a large number of new electors, all practically belonging to the same social class, with effective securities for the representation of all sections of opinion existing throughout the country. The antiquated expedients by which the variety of their electoral institutions had been hitherto preserved would probably be swept away; and therefore it was desirable that, before leaving the old paths, they should have full inquiry and consideration as to how this great change might be made wisely and well. Great changes of this kind were no mere experiments. Every step they took was absolutely irrevocable; and they should, therefore, remember that if they were to temper their reforms with wisdom and prudence, they must do so now, or they would lose the opportunity for ever. He could find some justification for his Amendment in the great diversity of opinion that existed on this question. Even his hon. Friend who seconded the Motion did not agree with the hon. Member who moved it. The principle which should guide them in this matter was clear and just. Indeed, it was so clear and just that he was satisfied that if public opinion and Parliament were once made familiar with it, nothing but hasty legislation could prevent its being given effect to. He fully admitted that the majority must rule; but there the right of the majority ended. It was one thing to allow the will of a nation clearly expressed to have effect in the legislation of the country; but it was quite another to allow no voice to be heard except that of a series of numerical majorities. Parliaments representing some momentary passion or some popular feeling of the hour might have for five or six years the control of the affairs of this great Empire. Surely it was most important in such a case, whatever the majority might be, that independent opinion should be heard, and that every proposal should be subjected to free and impartial criticism and the examination of independent minds. The gross injustice of not making some provision for the representation of minorities had been recognized in our previous legislation. The Reform Act of 1867 made provision for the limited or restricted vote, which, however, applied to only 40 Members of that House. In his opinion, practical inquiry into the way in which this provision had worked might be very properly conducted by a Select Committee. The cumulative vote adopted for School Board elections, and the system of proportional representation, were likewise fitting subjects for such an inquiry. It was admitted by the Postmaster General, in his speech at Hackney, that there could not be a certainty of real representation where nothing but the majority in each constituency was represented. Another Member of the Government, the President of the Board of Trade, was not generally supposed to look favourably upon the representation of minorities; but still, he thought he might claim the right hon. Gentleman's support. At a meeting of the National Liberal Federation at Leeds, not long ago, the right hon. Gentleman, in a course of speech delivered by him on that occasion, made certain statements which were strongly in favour of the present Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman said he regretted to find that the local hundreds had supported the views of only a portion of the Party. They must understand that the conditions of success required that every section of the Party should be represented. The minority must be prepared to sacrifice their crotchets, and all

Parties must be actuated by a spirit of mutual concession, in order that all classes of opinion might be fairly represented. Then, in 1878, the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), speaking at a public meeting, remarked that in any future plan of Parliamentary Reform it would be necessary to provide some arrangement by which the agricultural classes might be as fully represented as the great centres of the labouring population. He hoped his Amendment would commend itself to the House. Everyone must desire that every class should be represented in the House, and that the community should not be subject to the domination of a single class. They should consider the permanent interests of the country. On the nature and scope of the new Reform Bill depended the future of this country. If the House made careful inquiry into this question, they would be able, in the next Reform Bill, to satisfy all classes by a liberal extension of the franchise, which would be capable of representing, not the mere feeling of the hour, but the thought and intelligence of the English people. The hon. Member concluded by moving his Amendment.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the first word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "no change should be made in the Electoral Franchise or the distribution of political power until full and accurate information has been laid before this House with respect to the relative advantages of various systems of Election, including proportional representation, the Cumulative Vote, and the Limited Vote, and that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire what system of Election is best calculated to secure the just representation of the opinions of all classes of Electors,"—(*Mr. Blennerhassett,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Notice taken, that 40 Members were not present; House counted, and 40 Members being found present.

Mr. NEWDEGATE, while making allowance for the witching influence of the hour, at which Members of Parliament were wont to refresh themselves—for they must eat like other mortals—thought the fact that the House had been so nearly counted out proved almost conclusively that hon. Members felt that the country was not at all prepared for the change proposed by the hon. Member for Salford. It was rather a curious circumstance that an English Member should move for a reform in Parliament to be undertaken at once, so far as the Resolution indicated, that he had been seconded by a Scotch Member, and that those two Members were taught caution by an Irish Member. It proved that the sad experience of Ireland had a sobering effect on the intellects of the Irish Members. He was glad that there was further proof of re-action from the wild democratic feeling in the midst of which that House was elected, stimulated as that feeling was by the eloquence of the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman had warned the hon. Member for Salford not to trust the fulfilment of promises made by voting abstract Resolutions—a very pregnant warning, and one that did not surprise him, because what was the first reform which that Parliament had been invited to make? Why, the House had been asked to admit an avowed and notorious Atheist to a seat in that House, when he would not be admitted to any jury. They might depend upon it that the manner in which the pretensions of Mr. Bradlaugh had been urged was producing a deep re-action. He had proofs of it every day in the correspondence he received, and he rejoiced at that fact. The hon. Member for Salford had quoted a former Duke of Richmond, who, during the last century, recommended universal suffrage. He feared that the hon. Member had forgotten that Mr. Fox, the eminent Leader of the Whigs—he would not call them the Liberals—of that day spoke cautiously against the Resolution. He was afraid that the modern Whigs were not such sound Constitutionalists as Mr. Fox, wild though he became under the infection of the first French Revolution. But when that Motion was made, and when the Duke of Richmond spoke, the world had not had that great lesson of the danger of unrestrained democracy and the fallacy of trusting it as a security either for personal or national safety, or for personal or national freedom; that lesson was taught by the first French Revolution. The right hon. Gentleman told them not to trust to Parliamentary promises given by votes for abstract Resolutions if they were not immediately to be fulfilled. Nor was this surprising, for the right hon. Gentleman had given manifold proofs of his wonderful susceptibility to conversion. It was not more than 12 years since the last Reform Bill was completed; and in 1866 the right hon. Gentleman urged the adoption of a £7 rating franchise for the boroughs in opposition to the proposal of household suffrage. It seemed to be forgotten that those were virtually represented who had not votes themselves, otherwise this country never had more than a sham representation until 1867; and even now, according to the modern theory, an enormous proportion of the population was unrepresented, and there would be an enormous proportion unrepresented even if this Resolution were carried into law. A learned work, founded upon the records of France prior to and during the first French Revolution, by M. Taine, described the desire for equality as a strange passion wholly of the brain, nourished by magniloquent phrases, but the more destructive; because phantoms were created out of words, and against phantoms no reasoning or actual facts could prevail. The records of the French Revolution showed that the mind of France ran wild at that epoch on the idea of equality. Equality, political, social, or personal, never had existed; and when persons argued, as the hon. Member for Salford did, that equality was necessary to national unity, they belied the whole history of their country, they raised delusions in the public mind, and created an appetite which they could never satisfy. Allusion had been made by the Mover of the Amendment to the operation of the Caucus. Now, he was himself a near neighbour of the Caucus. When they talked of the counties being isolated in representation from the boroughs, he remembered that a large proportion of his own constituents were Birmingham men. He had heard something of the operation of the Caucus, and he must say that it was tainted with an arbitrary dictation from which sundry from Birmingham took refuge in North Warwickshire. He believed that the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster had some feeling of that kind; because, previous to the passing of the last Reform Act, the Boundary Commission recommended that the large suburb of Aston should be taken out of North Warwickshire and added to the borough of Birmingham, and that Birmingham should have four Members instead of three. The right hon. Gentleman urged the House to reject—[Mr. JOHN BRIGHT: No!]—at all events, the right hon. Gentleman's Friends and Party voted against that recommendation of the Commission of which Lord Eversley was the Chairman. Now, he himself was happy to represent Aston; and he had always represented it; but with the right hon. Gentleman's opinion as to the representation of numbers, he never could understand why the right hon. Gentleman prevented Birmingham having a fourth Member. His Party voted against the proposal that Birmingham should have four Members, and the right hon. Gentleman never complained. It was by the decision of the Liberal Party that Birmingham had three Members instead of four; and it was in opposition to the efforts of those miserable Constitutionalists, among whom he was proud to be numbered. History did not afford any assurance that large constituencies secured purity of election, and of the truth of this, so far, at all events, as municipal elections, there had been very recently a strong presumption in Birmingham; for when the election of a Town Councillor was questioned before a Commissioner, the seat was only saved by the happy accident that Mr. Wright's agent had burnt his pocket-book. He (Mr. Newdegate), if there was to be any vote at all, should vote against the Resolution.

MR. A. GREY rose to support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Kerry. He wished, however, at the outset to declare his regret that his hon. Friend had not seen his way to draft his Amendment in such a manner as to make it evident to the House that while he was in favour of inquiry, he was no less anxious than the hon. Member for Salford to see rural householders placed in possession of those same rights and privileges which were enjoyed by those living under similar conditions in the towns. Indeed, he was of opinion that his hon. Friend would have added material strength to his Amendment had he inserted in its terms some statement as to the expediency of the equalization of the county with the borough franchise, of which it was notorious that a very large majority of the House was in favour, and to the granting of which the present Parliament stood absolutely pledged. But while he was no less eager than his hon. Friend the Member for Salford and the hon. Member for Roxburghshire to see the extension of the household suffrage to the counties safe upon the pages of the Statute Book, he ventured to believe that the question which called most urgently for their consideration at the present moment was not extension of the suffrage, but re-distribution of seats; for while the question of extension was practically settled, the question of re-distribution was still open and unsolved, and yet he maintained that upon this question of re-distribution the hope of extension depended. He trusted he might not be thought presumptuous if he gave utterance to the firm conviction which he held—namely, that it would be impossible for any Government to bring about an equalization of the county with the borough franchise unless it was accompanied by a measure for the re-distribution of seats. The Postmaster General had most positively declared, both in his writings and speeches, that an inseparable connection between the extension of the suffrage and the re-distribution of seats ought to be maintained, and that he would oppose the equalization of the suffrage, for which he had hitherto voted, if the Government taking it in hand did not add to it a measure for the re-distribution of seats. He (Mr. Grey) maintained that after the deliberate utterance of such sentiments as those, it would be impossible for him (the Postmaster General) to vote for extension of suffrage unaccompanied by any measure of re-distribution, without giving a deep wound to the cause of political morality, which, by his conssitent, bold, and honest attitude on all public questions of the day, he had done so much to chasten and improve. The Postmaster General was not the only Minister of the hour whose vote, they had a right to believe, would be given against extension unaccompanied by re-distribution. The nature and character of the opinion to which the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. Courtney) had given repeated expression justified the belief that he would follow the Postmaster General into the Lobby. Nor would they be the only Members of the Liberal Party. From expressions which he had heard dropped in the Lobbies of the House he believed that there was a considerable number of Liberal Gentlemen, all of whom wished to see the household suffrage extended to the counties, but all of whom would resist the extension unless it was accompanied by a measure for the re-distribution of seats. Believing, then, if extension was to be carried, an inseparable connection should be maintained between it and re-distribution, he viewed with great regret the change made in the character of the Resolution of his hon. Friend, for which, in its original shape, extension and re-distribution appeared as two parts of one and the same Resolution. In its altered form the two questions were separated and divorced—one Resolution being devoted to the question of extension, the other to that of re-distribution. He trusted that this change did not imply that in the mind of the hon. Member for Salford there should be a divorce between two subjects which, in the opinion of the Postmaster General, should be inseparably connected. [Mr. JOHN BRIGHT dissented.] He observed that the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster made a gesture of dissent. He was sorry that he had not with him the article already referred to by his hon. Friend the Member for Roxburghshire, entitled "The Next Reform Bill," in which the Postmaster General had pointed out the reasons why it was desirable that the extension of the suffrage and the re-distribution of seats should be kept parts of the same question. But, although he was unable to produce the quotation, the article could be easily referred to; and hon. Members would find, in the clear and convincing language of the Postmaster General, how desirable it was that an inseparable connection between these two subjects should be carefully maintained. There was only one argument in favour of that connection on which, inasmuch as it seemed to him a convincing argument, he wished to make a few remarks. Under the existing system of various and conflicting franchises, the representation of different interests was insured. While the county franchise was based on a property qualification, labour could command the representation of the boroughs, and thus there was ample guarantee that neither labour nor capital should be excluded from representation in that House. But, extend the suffrage without any alteration in the present system of voting, and there would be no longer any security for the representation of any class save one—that class, namely, which maintained itself by manual labour—which, being the majority in every locality, could, if it pleased, under the present system of voting, carry every constituency in the Kingdom. He did not assert that even if the classes who maintained themselves by manual labour were intrusted with a monopoly of political power they would outvote all the other classes and monopolize the Legislature; but what he wished to impress upon the House was that they could use their power, if they liked, to prevent the Representatives of any other class from obtaining a seat in that House—and this, if not a probability, was, at any rate, a possibility, against which that House ought to protect itself. Although he readily admitted the strength of the position taken up by those who argued the larger the class the smaller the class interests, he yet agreed with Mr. John Stuart Mill, who had pointed out that if the command of the representation of every constituency was given to the manual labourers, that—

> "When there was any question pending on which these classes were at isssue with the rest of the community, no other class could succeed in getting represented anywhere."

Now, there was no question on which there was more likely to be a difference of opinion between those classes and the rest of the community than the distribution of political power; and although he held a high opinion of the general and natural fairness of the labouring classes, he did not by any means feel certain that once they had in their possession a monopoly of political power they would be ready to part with any fraction of it in order that large and important minorities might have secured to them their fair share of representation. It was in the teeth of all experience to suppose that people would give up any part of their power unless obliged to do so; and he therefore contended that it would be highly dangerous to give one Session to a numerical majority the monopoly of political power, in the hope that nothing would interfere to prevent the same Parliament from passing in a subsequent Session a measure of re-distribution, having for its object the making of that House a true reflex of the feelings and opinions of the nation. If the two questions were separated, it might well happen that a Dissolution might intervene between the extension of household suffrage to the counties and the passing of a measure for the re-distribution of seats. It might then happen—he was not discussing probabilities, but possibilities—that those classes who had, by the measure of extension, been invested with the monopoly of political power, would be opposed to any measure for the representation of minorities. Fifty years ago, before 1832, one class—the Peerage—held a monopoly of political power. The hon. Member for Salford had forcibly and eloquently depicted the evils under which they were still suffering, which resulted from the class legislation of those days. It was the boast and glory of Liberalism that they saved the country in 1832 from the evil effects of class legislation. They were now in some danger, he apprehended, of going to the opposite extreme, and of handing over the monopoly of political power to the hands of another class, not less a class because it possessed a numerical majority in every locality in the Kingdom. For these reasons, he was opposed to any separation of the question of re-distribution from that of extension of the suffrage. What principle they had then to determine ought to regulate the future re-distribution of seats? He maintained that that re-distribution would alone be fair which, while it insured absolute supremacy to the majority of the electoral body, secured to the various sections of opinion representation in just and fair proportion to their strength. By insuring the representation of the various sections of opinion in just and fair proportion to their strength, they could alone hope to obtain a good House of Commons—a House which, conspicuous for its variety and for its compound character, might prove a good legislative machine; at the same time that it would possess, in consequence of its being the true reflex of the nation, the love and confidence of the people. The question to be determined was, how was the fair representation of the people to be obtained? The hon. Member for Salford was opposed to an inquiry on the ground that that debate would furnish a great public inquest which would serve to enlighten the public mind. He ventured, however, to believe that the public mind, which was completely uninstructed and uninformed on this all-important question, would find little in the speeches which had been delivered that evening to instruct or guide them. The hon. Member for Salford did, indeed, venture to suggest that large towns, like Manchester, should have a plurality of Members, for which suggestion he immediately received a smart tap upon the knuckles from the hon. Member who seconded his Resolution, who scouted the idea of plurality of Members, advocating in its stead single-Membered electoral districts. The Prime Minister did not touch upon that question at all; but, on the contrary, made an earnest appeal to the hon. Member for Salford not even to embark on a discussion of that part of his Resolution which dealt with the re-distribution of seats. As, then, the extension of the suffrage, in his opinion, depended upon the re-distribution of seats; and as upon this question of re-distribution the public mind was a blank, which that debate had done nothing to remove, he considered that his hon. Friend the Member for Kerry (Mr. Blennerhassett) was completely justified in asking for an inquiry; and, indeed, if the Liberal Party had had its way, they would have had an inquiry long ago. In 1875 the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Charles W. Dilke) moved in that House for an inquiry into the various methods of bringing about a juster measure of distribution of political power, with a view of obtaining a more complete representation of the people. That demand was supported by the present Prime Minister, by every occupant of the Front Ministerial Bench, and by the whole of the Liberal Party; and he considered it was a great public calamity that this fair demand was unwisely refused by a Tory Government. It was argued by the Liberal Party at that time that although the passing of a Reform Bill was not within the range of practical politics, that, inasmuch as it lay a very little distance beyond that range, it would be desirable to have a careful inquiry into the various systems of representation that had been proposed, so that they might be in possession of all the information that could be thrown upon the subject before they proceeded to legislate in a manner that could not fail to bring about Constitutional changes of the very greatest importance. The Tory Prime Minister, Mr. Disraeli, was solemnly warned by the hon. Baronet that if inquiry was postponed he might suddenly find a Parliament returned to power pledged to deal with the question of Reform; and that the consequence of his unwise refusal to grant timely inquiry would be to render imperative hasty and ill-considered legislation on this all-important question. Part of the hon. Baronet's prophecy had already been fulfilled. They now had a Parliament returned to power pledged up to the eyes to deal with this question of Reform. Two Sessions had already passed away; a third would soon be gone. Under no circumstances could legislation much longer be deferred, and yet the country was entirely uninformed as to the principle which should regulate the re-distribution of seats. He earnestly trusted that that part of the hon. Baronet's prophecy which pointed to hasty and ill-considered legislation as the result of the refusal of timely inquiry would not be realized; and he maintained that the best guarantee against so great a misfortune lay in the institution of an inquiry at the present time. If the whole Liberal Party considered inquiry to be necessary at a time when all prospect of legislation was remote, it must surely be admitted that inquiry was 100 times more necessary now, when they were within arm's length of the introduction of a Reform Bill. The next Reform Bill must equal, perhaps surpass, in importance the Reform Act of 1832; and upon the character of the measure and the wisdom of its provisions would depend the whole future of this country. Surely, then, it was of the utmost importance that every information that could possibly be thrown upon the question should be in their possession before they undertook such weighty legislation. What harm could an inquiry do? It would help to increase their understanding of a question which it was of national importance that they should thoroughly comprehend. He trusted that they might not be obliged, in consequence of wanting sufficient information, to legislate blindfolded or in the dark. They had a right to know everything that could be known upon the subject. They had a right to demand, and he respectfully contended that it was the duty of Government to bestow, every facility for coming to a right decision. He earnestly trusted, therefore, that the Prime Minister would give his very favourable consideration to the demand of his hon. Friend; for he believed that national interests imperatively required that the Government should, without delay and before the introduction of their Reform Bill, institute a careful and searching inquiry, by some competent authority, into the various systems of representation that had been proposed, with the view of obtaining a good House of Commons, which would prove to be a true reflex of the feelings and wishes of the whole nation.

MR. O'DONNELL said, he saw in the discussion that had taken place a signal proof that some of the most important Business of the House did not consist in mere legislation. Unless such opportunities as the present were given for academic discussions, comparative ill-success might be expected to attend the House in the discharge of its legislative functions. The hon. Member (Mr. Arnold) asked them to re-affirm what the Liberal Party had always supported —namely, the principle that the next Reform Bill should be based upon the equalization of the borough and county suffrage. He (Mr. O'Donnell) supported that principle when he was a fellow-sufferer in Opposition with the Liberal Party, and he supported it still, though he had no longer any fellowship with the Liberal Party. But he could not but think that some of the views put forward, notably by the Prime Minister, were calculated to excite a somewhat mistaken apprehension of the bearing of the proposition. Warmly as he sympathized with the argument in favour of the enfranchisement of the agricultural labourers, he thought they must take this fact into account—that a wholesale enfranchisement of the agricultural labourers would be a wholesale enfranchisement of a totally unskilled, extremely ignorant, and extremely susceptible class as regards politics. Not that he doubted the common sense of large masses of that kind; but he foresaw that the agricultural labourers, with the highest intelligence in many respects, and with excellent patriotism, and so forth, would not exercise their new privileges under the spontaneous direction of their own intelligence. He meant to say that, unless some provision was made to prevent organizations which would really rival the regular organizations of the constituencies, they would find that the majority of the agricultural labourers would fall into the hands of the most successful manipulators of whatever kind of Caucus—whether Liberal or Conservative—that might happen to be in existence. Give him (Mr. O'Donnell) an hour's start with the name of a Caucus in a constituency of lately enfranchised labourers, and he defied the united genius of all the Prime Ministers, from Pitt to Gladstone, to catch up the mischief that he might be able to work in that hour. The newly enfranchised millions were the natural prey of the Caucus. He disagreed with the theory of the Prime Minister as to the peculiar advantages of having a considerable representation of what was called labour. There was no scheme and no theory more liable to be twisted to the purposes of mere Party than the representation of the working classes by members of the working classes. He wanted to know how a man who, by his brain and his labour, had worked his way up the social ladder above the working classes or the professional classes, ceased to be a member of the working classes if he continued to feel for them? He maintained, on the contrary, without any depreciation of the marked ability of the hon. Members for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) and Morpeth (Mr. Burt), that, as a general rule, a man who had left the working classes by sheer labour and brain was, at the very least, as much a representative of the working classes as the man who was still nominally enrolled with them. As a matter of fact, it was impossible for the working classes to be represented in Parliament by working men exactly like other working men. The instant a working man began to take the lead of his fellows in politics, and was recognized by his fellow-men as a leader of his class, he ceased to be a mere working man; and if he was elected by a constituency, he was, in reality, a Representative of the community at large. It was a favourite dodge of electioneering politicians, not only in this country, but other countries, to try to get the favour of a constituency in which a large number of any particular trade happened to be, by inducing someone who belonged to that trade to stand in order to get the votes of electors of his class, who would vote for him, because he was a member of their trade, wholly shutting their eyes to the fact that his membership of their trade was only a bait by which the electioneering agent got the support for his Party of that particular trade. This was no mere British device, for it prevailed in nearly all countries. Nor was the system confined to the working classes. When the Liberals wished to carry a county, knowing that if they brought forward a Liberal of the ordinary stamp they would be certain of failure, they pitched upon a farmer, in the hope that he might draw to their side other farmers who had always voted blue. He was sorry to hear the Prime Minister declare that he would vote for the Motion, merely because it formed a groundwork for a sort of academic discussion which was not to be followed by legislation. He recognized the astute skill of the practised Party Leader, in the manner in which the Premier in this branch of his speech contrived to say a word or two in favour of the *clôture,* in lamenting the impossibility of legislating at present on this franchise question. But since the Liberal Party entered the House, strong in number and strong in resolution, without delay to remedy the shortcomings of the franchise, some weeks, not to say months, had been spent which might have been saved by the Government, and during which they might have introduced a measure for enfranchising the agricultural labourers. He had been informed that a Scotch Member took occasion to suggest that the next Reform Bill should increase the representation of Scotland and diminish the representation of Ireland. If any hon. Members were desirous of diminishing the interest which Ireland now felt in the Empire, he commended to their consideration the scheme suggested by that hon. Member. He (Mr. O'Donnell) would not deny to Scotland additional representation; he knew that England had for a long time been very much over-represented according to her population; but any attempt to diminish the representation of Ireland he would oppose to the bitter end, notwithstanding the *Clôture* Rules and the terrors which were proposed to be added to the powers of the Speaker. Some time ago he wrote a letter to *The Times* on this subject with reference to some extraordinary statements of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright). He pointed out then that, down to the very last Election, Ireland was very much under-represented in the House. For half a century from the passing of the Union Ireland ought to have had from 200 to 240 Members in proportion to her population to the population of England and Scotland. For that half century Ireland had been scandalously cheated out of more than half her legitimate representation. At the time of the Union the population of Ireland was 5,000,000, and that of England and Scotland 10,000,000; but Ireland had only 105 Members, while England and Scotland had 550 between them. Twenty years later the population of Ireland was something like 7,000,000, and the population of England and Scotland 14,000,000. Ireland ought accordingly to have had 230 Members in Parliament. She had only 105; while generous England and Scotland expended their generosity upon themselves, and kept 150 Members more than they were entitled to have. Down to 1840 or 1850 something similar was the case. In 1871 Ireland was entitled, according to her population, to have 112 instead of 105. It was only now, for the first time since the Act of Union, that Ireland showed a population which would entitle her to fewer than 105 Members. Ireland was now 150,000 souls poorer in population than on the day the Act of Union was passed. The generous Representatives of England and Scotland discovered now, for the first time in a century, that there was something wrong in the representation of Ireland; although not one of them ever proposed to raise the representation to its legitimate number during the 80 years the country was so unjustly below its legitimate proportion of Representatives. In the course of the debate the great question of the re-distribution of seats had been referred to. The dominant idea in the speech of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Grey) was that in the redistribution of seats, or in any settlement of the question of representation, special regard should be had to the representation of classes in that House. He could only say that he was unable to find anywhere any instance in which, while there was general suffrage or household suffrage, it was found possible to make the Lower House representative of anything but numbers. If it were desired to have representation of classes, of wealth, of intelligence, of special capacities, or of special institutions, then they must fall back upon the device of a Second Chamber. It was upon that device that all the great States which had adopted a liberal suffrage for the Lower House had fallen back for class representation. To take the case of France, which had been taken as the chosen exemplar of British progress for the future, they found the House of Deputies representative of nothing but numbers. It was in the Upper House—the Senate—that they found the representation of class; though there was a tendency in France to reduce the Senate more and more to the level of the Lower House, and to make it the mere representative of numbers. In Spain the Cortes—the Lower House—was representative only of the numerical majority; while the Representatives of the landed classes, the Universities, and the clergy formed the Upper Chamber. In Germany the able men who had presided at the building up of the German Empire had given up as hopeless the problem of making the Lower House represent anything but the numerical majority. The Reichstag represented numbers through manhood suffrage; while the Members of the other House were chosen by the Government. In the United States the Upper House was, to a large extent, made the representative of a special class of interests in the same way; while the House of Congress was, above all, the representative of a numerical majority. Every other country which had made any real progress towards a general enfranchisement of the mass of the population had, in a similar way, been obliged to give up as absolutely insoluble the problem of making the House of Representatives reflect the opinions of anything but the numerical majority. If ever they had to solve the problem of providing a special means for the representation of class interests, however respectable, he ventured to say that the solution would not be found in any attempt to limit the giant voice of manhood, universal, or household suffrage, or by a fancy re-distribution of power; but that they would have to face the question of a reform of the Upper House. Some means must be contrived by which the Second Chamber should be made more representative of special classes than at present, supposing those special classes were worthy of representation. He was aware that they were then only going to have an academical decision upon an academical discussion. Much criticism had appeared in Liberal organs, on the fact that the Liberal Party was pledged to a new Reform Bill, and to an extension of the suffrage. That extension of the suffrage must naturally conclude the existence of the present Parliament; and he was afraid that the very fact of passing a Reform Bill would be an act of suicide on the part of the present House. That being so, he did not think there was any fear that the Liberal Party would hasten on that act of suicide. The Liberal Party came into power under very advantageous circumstances; and he believed now there was a common suspicion among them that those advantageous circumstances were not likely to be present on the occasion of the next General Election.

MR. BUCHANAN rose for a few minutes, principally with the object of emphasizing what had already been said by his hon. Friend the Member for Roxburghshire (Mr. Arthur Elliot), and to express the satisfaction he had felt, as a Scotch Member, and which, he was sure, all Scotchmen would feel, at the announcement of the Prime Minister, which showed that his promises, when he was a candidate in Mid Lothian, were being fulfilled when he was Member for Mid Lothian and Prime Minister. He alluded to the statement he made in the beginning of his speech—that he recognized that in any Reform Bill in the future to be brought forward Scotland had a very strong claim to increased representation. He, in common with all Scotch Members—and, he thought, even in common with the Irish Member who last spoke—could not but think that if one looked at facts as they were he must come to the conclusion that Scotland was very much under-represented, whether regard was had to its population or to the revenue which it yielded to the Imperial Exchequer. He should like to say one word upon the speech of the hon. Member for Northumberland (Mr. Grey). He confessed himself that it seemed to him rather an awkward mode of meeting the Resolution of the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) by moving the Amendment that had been moved by the hon. Member for Kerry (Mr. Blennerhassett); but if that was a somewhat strange mode of meeting the general Motion, the arguments by which the hon. Member for Northumberland supported the Amendment appeared stranger still. His arguments were twofold. He maintained, first, that the country wanted much greater inquiry upon this subject than had yet been made; and, secondly, he contended that a re-distribution of seats ought to accompany any extension of the franchise. With regard to the subject of inquiry, he thought certainly a great deal of information was necessary before a detailed Reform Bill could be brought forward; but he had to point out that that information could be obtained, no doubt, in process of time, by means of Returns and otherwise; but, although they recognized the advisability of further inquiry, that was surely no reason why they should vote against the general proposition of the hon. Member for Salford. It might be that a re-distribution of seats should accompany an extension of the franchise; but that was only a detail which would receive full consideration. He trusted that if there were a re-distribution of seats it would embrace the whole of the United Kingdom, and that seats should not be distributed first for England, next for Ireland, and then for Scotland; else they would find themselves in the same position in which Scotland was placed in 1868, when, the question having been left over for a year, it was with the greatest difficulty Scotland got enlarged representation, through the disfranchisement of certain English boroughs. He further should like to call the attention of the House to the point alluded to by the hon. Member for Roxburghshire — namely, that, in reality, there was a much higher franchise in the counties in Scotland than obtained in England. There they had no 40*s*. freeholders, as in England. According to the figures quoted by the hon. Member for Salford, there was in English and Welsh Parliamentary counties one voter for every 15 inhabitants; whereas in Scottish Parliamentary counties there was one voter for every 21 inhabitants. With regard to the other burden under which the county franchise in Scotland at present laboured—namely, the way in which it was swamped by non-resident voters, those who did not reside on their qualifications—he would like to add one or two facts to the statistics quoted by the hon. Member for Roxburghshire. He took some trouble, about a year ago, in inquiring into the number of voters in Scottish counties who did not reside on their qualifications, and he found they varied very much in the different parts of the country. He made inquiry in eight or 10 different counties, and he found that the proportion of non-resident voters in the Scottish counties varied from about 5 or 6 per cent in Banffshire and Fifeshire to 11 and 12 per cent in other counties, and no less than 30 per cent in Mid Lothian. The actual figures for Mid Lothian for this year were 1,237 voters who did not reside on their qualification, out of a total of 4,018 on the roll, those outvoters being distributed over the face of the earth. He took the trouble to look over one of the rolls—that of Renfrewshire—and he found that the non-resident voters were distributed over no less than 28 other Scottish constituencies—that a large number were in England, some in Ireland, and several abroad. The only other point which he would like to touch upon for a moment was the importance of this question from the point of view of the Representatives of boroughs and cities. The hon. Member for Roxburghshire had pointed out that a great number of the newly-enfranchised voters by the next Reform Bill would really be urban and not rural. He found that one-third of the urban population of Great Britain were outside Parliamentary boroughs—that was to say, at this moment there were in England 5,000,000 inhabitants who really lived in urban Parliamentary counties, but did not possess the borough franchise; while in Scotland there were 877,000 inhabitants who were inside Parliamentary counties, but actually lived in boroughs and small towns, though they were only under the county franchise. In further confirmation of that, as regarded England, he might call attention to the Return presented a few months ago, by which it appeared that in England and Wales there were 151 towns with over 10,000 inhabitants without the borough franchise, of which 20 were over 20,000 inhabitants, and four over 50,000. Therefore, he ventured to think that on a question of this sort one could fairly appeal to the sympathies of the Members of every large town constituency, and to their constituents, in urging forward this measure for the enfranchisement of those who, by the mere accident of their living outside an artificially-drawn Parliamentary boundary, were deprived of the franchise which they themselves enjoyed.

Viscount LYMINGTON and Sir JOHN HAY rose together, and Mr. Speaker called on Sir JOHN HAY.

SIR JOHN HAY said, he was one of those Members who were anxious to see an assimilation of the county franchise to that of the boroughs; but he was also anxious to see along with it a considerable re-distribution of seats. But he heard the Prime Minister with some surprise when, instead of replying to the hon. Member for Salford by saying he would cause a Bill to be drawn of the nature desired, with a Schedule of the boroughs to be re-distributed, he merely said that the abstract Resolution might in part be accepted. He thought it was a great misfortune that they should be discussing this subject without a Bill before them, and without a Schedule in the Bill giving the names of the boroughs which were about to be grouped or appropriated in the representation of counties or of large towns. He found, from the Return which had been presented to the House on the Motion of the hon. Member for Tamworth (Mr. H. Bass), that there were towns, such as West Ham, with more than 100,000 inhabitants which were unrepresented. If he looked at the Schedule which he had endeavoured to draw up of small boroughs having two Members, he should find almost first in it the name of the town represented by the noble Lord the Member for Barnstaple—to whom he apologized for intervening between him and the House—(Viscount Lymington). There were 50 English boroughs which had less than 10,000 of a population, having 51 Representatives in the House, one of the boroughs returning two Members; and, in his opinion, it would be very much better if these seats were re-distributed, and a considerable number of the Members given to Scotland, as had been suggested by the hon. Member for Edinburgh (Mr. Buchanan) and his hon. Friend the Member for Roxburghshire (Mr. Arthur Elliot). He might fairly hope that that would be a result; because in his speech at Dalkeith the Prime Minister stated that he proposed to increase the representation of Scotland to 75 Members, under one condition, or 78 under another —by 15 or by 18 Members—but the only suggestion he gave by which the representation might be increased was by the six seats which at that moment were unappropriated. It was quite evident that the six seats would not fulfil the condition which the right hon. Gentleman had suggested was desirable for the increased representation of Scotland; and, therefore, it appeared to him (Sir John Hay) that any proposal which was brought before the House in the nature of an extension of the county franchise and an increase of the representation of Scotland must include also a re-distribution of seats, and the disfranchisement of a considerable number of English boroughs, and not only English boroughs, but three Welsh boroughs and 18 Irish boroughs. They had at this moment in England 53,000 persons represented by one Member, and in Ireland 50,000 represented by one Member; whereas the labours of Scotch Members were out of all proportion—each having to represent 62,000 of the population, which was an arduous duty, and they required considerable assistance in the work of representing the country. The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister must himself feel that the labour was more than he could be fairly called upon to discharge, and would be glad, no doubt, of a Colleague as an assistant for the county of Mid Lothian. If they looked also at the Poor Law valuation, each English and Welsh Member represented a valuation of £323,000, and each Irish Member of £132,611; while in Scotland they had to represent each £371,248, which was an additional labour thrown upon them, and which was, no doubt, shared by the Prime Minister. He was of opinion there was no necessity for further inquiry. He could not believe that his hon. Friend the Member for Kerry (Mr. Blennerhassett) was going to a division. He had listened to the hon. Member's speech with great interest; but he was of opinion that the present representation of boroughs, where population had diminished, should be fairly distributed among larger communities, and that 18 Members should be at least appropriated from the Irish constituencies to assist the Scotch Members in representing Scotland. He would remind the House of words, which would be received with marked respect by hon. Members on that side, as they were used by the late Lord Beaconsfield when he introduced his Reform Bill. That eminent statesman then said—

> "We think there is a principle, the justness of which will be at once acknowledged, the logical consequences of which will be at once remedial, and which, if applied with due discretion, will effect all those objects which we anxiously desire with regard to the county constituencies. We find that principle in recognizing an identity of suffrage between the counties and towns."

He fully agreed with those words; and if the hon. Member for Salford went to a division he would support him on both the clauses of his Resolution; but he could not agree to partially increased constituencies without a re-distribution of seats, which was absolutely necessary to give a fair representation to the Scottish constituencies.

Viscount LYMINGTON said, the right hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Wigtown Burghs, who had just spoken, had stated that among the first boroughs in his Schedule which would be swept away by any reform would be the borough he (Viscount Lymington) had the honour to represent. Unfortunately, Barnstaple began with a "B" and Wigtownshire with a "W;" but, on reference to *Dod's Parliamentary Companion*, he found that the electors in the borough he represented numbered 1,785, while those in the constituency of the right hon. and gallant Gentleman were 1,420. [An hon. Member: Barnstaple has two Members.] Certainly, extraordinary anomalies existed in respect of the numbers of the populations represented, and objections had been raised on that head to the present system. With regard to Wiltshire, to which reference had been made, there were in that county eight boroughs returning nine Members, but only containing a population of 60,000, in none of which was there any real manufacturing interest. Those boroughs sent to the House of Commons an equal number of Members with Liverpool, Wednesbury, Lambeth, and Glasgow, which contained populations amounting to 1,660,000 persons. The result was more striking if one took the Lancashire towns, like Southport, with 21,000 inhabitants; St. Helens, with 101,000; Accrington, with 36,000; West Derby, with 50,000, and Bootle, with 55,000, none of which had a Representative. In all these towns the working men, who constituted the main element in the population, were disfranchised; and yet, as a proof of the intelligence and fitness of the artizans in these large towns for the franchise, the Free Library Register at Southport showed that out of 10,000 volumes in the Library 8,500 are in constant use. Then it was contended, and with reason, that representation and taxation should be proportionate with each other. The eight Wiltshire boroughs were assessed at £775,000; whereas Liverpool, Lambeth, Wednesbury, and Glasgow, with only an equal representation, were assessed at £33,750,000. Many of the English boroughs were really rural, and not urban, in their character. That was shown by the fact that in many of them —Aylesbury, Cricklade, Retford, and others—the assessment under Schedule B, representing rent of lands, was double, or more than double, Schedule D, representing trade and professional profits. And, again, the rural character of these borough constituencies was shown in their area—Aylesbury having an area of 70,000 acres; Cricklade, 159,000 acres; Retford, 208,000 acres. In the strange speech of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) there was but one thing with which he could agree, and that was that there should be an adequate representation of minorities. He would be glad to support any scheme for that purpose if it were fair, practical, and reasonable; but he was inclined to think that the only way in which minorities—that was to say, certain interests—could be represented was by enlarging the foundation and character of the Second Chamber. He did not think anything would be gained, but that great danger might ensue, if Members came to that House, not as the Representatives of constituencies, but of certain classes and distinct interests.

Mr. SCHREIBER said, the noble Lord who had just resumed his seat seemed to have forgotten the proverb that "those who live in glass houses should not throw stones." For the purposes of that debate the small borough of Barnstaple, which returned two Members to Parliament, was a large glass house; and the class of boroughs each returning two Members, and to which Barnstaple belonged, was a still larger one. He would like, with the permission of the House, to call attention to the manner in which that class of borough was represented here. Omitting the corrupt boroughs of Boston and Sandwich, which belonged to it, he found there were 21 boroughs with populations between 10,000 and 20,000 returning 42 Members to that House; 12 of those Members sat on the Opposition Benches, and 30 on the side of the Government, and among those latter were the Attorney and Solicitor General, representing Taunton and Durham, and the Secretary of State for War, representing Pontefract. In any future scheme of re-distribution of seats, he hoped the rich preserve afforded by those 21 boroughs would not be forgotten. Now, he was not a little struck, earlier in the evening, with the ingenuity of the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) in finding a reason for his Motion in the present state of public affairs. That hon. Member said that this debate was for the instruction and information of Her Majesty's Government; but he (Mr. Schreiber) would remind him that the Prime Minister had already the most valuable experience bearing on the subject of Parliamentary Reform; and he thought that the right hon. Gentleman had handled it that night with all the caution and lightness of touch which might be expected from one who had already burnt his fingers with the question. No doubt, the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arthur Arnold) saw himself in this difficulty—either it was intended to give effect to these Resolutions, or it was not. If it was not, then the time of the House was wasted in discussing them. If it was, then they were opening a question which would not be closed before it had engrossed whole Sessions, and, perhaps, whole Parliaments, to the exclusion of all Business of every other kind, because the question of Parliamentary Reform was an Aaron's Rod, which would swallow every other. It was quite understood that the present Parliament could not, and would not, decide the question either of the franchise or the re-distribution. An appeal must first be made, and would first be made, to the constituencies, because the question was one which, for many of them, involved their own extinction. In a word, a new Parliament must be elected to carry a Reform Bill, and perhaps it would be dissolved without having carried it. That was what was meant by giving effect to these Resolutions. In the present state of public affairs, and especially of Ireland, such a course as the hon. Member recommended, in his (Mr. Schreiber's) opinion, was one not likely to be taken. But that was not all. Fourteen years had not elapsed since they had a Reform Bill; and he would ask what had been its effect, first upon the House, and next upon the constituencies? He spoke with special experience on the former point. He sat in the Parliament of 1865, which took the great "leap in the dark;" but not in the Parliaments of 1868 or 1874. Returning there after an absence of 12 years, he awoke, like another Rip Van Winkle, to a sudden sense of all the changes which the interval had brought about in the composition of the House; and he would say he thought the changes had been for the worse. [*A laugh.*] If anybody doubted it, let him look to the Resolutions lately laid upon the Table, and say what they meant. They might be wise, or they might be unwise; but at least, before 14 years were over, they had been thought necessary to enable the Public Business to proceed. And what was the cause of that state of things? He believed it to be that a more popular franchise had created a greater demand for popular oratory; with that demand had begun a supply of popular orators; and when popular orators found their way to that House they did what their constituents expected of them—they talked. The consequence was that that was the great talking Parliament, led by the great talking Minister. And what had been the effect upon the constituencies? Nineteen seats were at that moment vacant for corrupt practices, election agents were in prison, while his hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General had brought in a Bill for "the prevention of corrupt practices" so drastic in character as to be somewhat in advance even of the enlightened opinion of the borough of Taunton. He saw the Chancellor of the Duchy (Mr. John Bright) in his place. What had become of all his prophecies? The right hon. Gentleman had said, more than once, in his hearing—"Give me large constituencies, and give me the Ballot, and I will show you the end of all corruption." Well, they had got the Ballot, and they had got large constituencies. ["No!"] Well, some large constituencies; and he called the House to witness that the last General Election was the most corrupt of any in the political annals of this country. Hon. Gentlemen said that they had not got large constituencies. Was Oxford a small constituency? Was Macclesfield a small constituency? Was Chester a small constituency? And was it not perfectly certain that with adequate organization and adequate means—hon. Gentlemen opposite knew they never had such means as at the last General Election, the amount they spent was fabulous, some even said that all the money was not English—they might corrupt any constituency, however large. He would like to call attention to another result of the lowering of the franchise, which had been to bring about sudden oscillations of public opinion since the Reform Bill of 1868. In that year the pendulum swung violently on one side; in 1874 it swung violently on the other; in 1880 it came back again; and in 1883 or 1884 it would again swing to the other side. That was why he objected to a uniform franchise; because it meant not only monotony of representation, which was an exceedingly bad thing, but a political system absolutely devoid of balance. Therefore, he greatly preferred to stand upon the old lines of county and borough representation. That there might be no possibility of misrepresentation—and misrepresentation just now was a potent political engine—he wished to make it plain that those who sat on the Opposition Benches had no Party object to serve in resisting this change. He, for one, thought exclusively of its effect upon that House and the country; and he would therefore say frankly and at once that he regarded the agricultural labourer, who was to be enfranchised, as a man of capital and character compared with those less settled classes of our towns, who were sometimes to be enfranchised and sometimes to be disenfranchised by that crowning absurdity of recent legislation which went by the name of "Dilke's Act." He believed that that good man, the agricultural labourer, was, in the main, subject to good influences—those of the squire and the parson—and if they could not pull him against any Caucus, then he would back the squire's wife and the parson's wife to do it. So that, from that point of view, he believed that the change would greatly increase the political strength of the Church of England in the constituencies. Then, with respect to re-distribution, what would they agree to call a small borough? ["Poole!"] No; Poole was an ancient and a most interesting, but it was by no means a small borough. Let them first speak of boroughs with a population of less than 10,000. Of these there were just 55, returning each one Member; and while 28 of those Members sat on the Opposition Benches, 27 sat on the Ministerial side of the House. He had already spoken of the 21 boroughs with a population of more than 10,000 and less than 20,000, returning two Members each, of whom 12 were Conservative and 30 Liberal. There remained 12 boroughs—of which Poole was one—with a population of more than 10,000 and less than 20,000, returning one Member each, and of whom six were Conservative and six Liberal. So that from those three classes of boroughs they had 46 Conservative Members to 63 Liberal Members. The Opposition, therefore, had no Party interest in supporting or opposing the Resolutions of the hon. Member; and he did hope that hon. Gentlemen—some even on the other side—would have the "courage of their opinions," and in the vote they should give think only of the honour of the House and the welfare of the country. For himself, he felt that he should best consult both by going into the Lobby against these Resolutions.

Mr. BURT expressed his intention of supporting the Motion of the hon. Member for Salford. As far as argument could settle the question, it seemed to him it was now settled that the franchise should be extended to the rated inhabitants of the counties. It was assumed that this was a question which almost exclusively concerned the agricultural labourer. No doubt, it did directly affect that class; and there was, also, not the slightest doubt, as the Prime Minister had said in an early stage of the debate, that that was a class almost entirely unenfranchised. There were, however, large numbers of artizans and others who lived beyond the present boundaries, and whose occupation necessitated their living there, who were equally disenfranchised. For example, the classes with which he was directly connected—the mining classes—were in such a condition. There were in this country something over 500,000 miners, and it was obvious there must be a very considerable number of householders amongst them. Probably nine-tenths of them lived entirely outside of the present borough boundaries; and, although householders, they were absolutely excluded from a voice in the representation. In the counties of Durham and Northumberland there were nearly 70,000 miners above 16 years of age, and a large proportion of these, it was fair to assume, must be householders. But he ventured to say that there were not more than 5,000 voters out of that number. A large proportion had been practically enfranchised in Morpeth, and these included a large number of colliers; but the men connected with the collieries outside the borough, although they followed the same occupation, and were similiar in their habits, character, and intelligence to their fellows who were enfranchised in the boroughs, were not intrusted with a vote. This distinction had no basis in reason or common sense. But what he wished particularly to emphasize was this—that those who were excluded felt that exclusion very keenly, and were very much dissatisfied indeed with the present position of the franchise. He did not share the fear that the working people would become over-represented in that House. For 14 years the boroughs had had the power of returning Labour Representatives; and only two or three of the Members of the House were, at the present time, even nominally Representatives of the working classes. He entirely agreed with the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) as to class representation. He did not know that he could even call himself a working class Representative, for he came before the electors of Morpeth purely on political grounds. He was a disbeliever in merely class representation. The electors did not vote in classes, but according to their political opinions. Those opinions were pretty well divided between the two Parties. He acknowledged that the necessity for a re-distribution of seats had been established; but believed that it was not practicable to carry the extension of the suffrage and re-distribution in one measure. One of these could wait; but the other could not be long deferred without causing widespread and well-founded dissatisfaction among an important section of the people of England.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, the House had heard several speeches of great excellence during the present debate. One was the speech of the hon. Member for Morpeth (Mr. Burt), and another was that of the hon. Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Grey), whom he was sure the House would often desire to hear. The debate had, as the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) had observed, assumed somewhat of an academic character; he would, therefore, endeavour to restore it to its practical character, and in doing so he would state the two fundamental distinctions that existed between the two schools of thought in the House. One school was represented by the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Charles W. Dilke), who said a few years ago that in the case of a reformed Parliament the presumption was that it was in favour of change. He (Mr. Stanhope) approached the subject from the opposite view, for he thought the presumption was in the other direction, and that it was necessary for those who desired change first to show the advantage and the necessity of change, and, in the second place, that the time was ripe for making it. In the course of the years 1877 and 1878 a discussion of an important character took place on this subject; but since then what had been done? He did not think that there was a more remarkable fact than this—that nothing had been done since that time towards forming or informing public opinion on the question. They had had, it was true, an interesting and able discussion between two right hon. Gentlemen in *The Nineteenth Century*. That was a contest between two giant intellects, and no one admired it more than he. But, at the same time, he did not think anyone could deny that it was entirely without practical bearing on the actual subject before them. He would not venture to describe it in his own words; but he remembered that it was summed up in one sentence in a leading article of the leading journal of the day —*The Times* newspaper—when it said that the speculations of the one were fit for a balloon, and the arguments of the other were fit only for the receiver of an air pump. They were then asked to affirm a general Resolution in favour of an enormous reform in the representation of the country after a discussion which he might venture to call meagre. which had been carried on in a thin and uninterested House, when no real examination had been made into the subject, and no speech had been heard from the Government, except one of a few minutes' duration from the Prime Minister. They had been asked to commit Parliament and the country to an abstract Resolution which involved a policy of destruction. He should like to ask the House what had been settled in the direction of construction? As far as he was able to form an opinion, the question of construction was in as unsettled a state as it was five or six years ago. He did not think they had arrived any nearer to it, except as to the manner in which it should be carried out. A fundamental difference was found among hon. Gentlemen opposite, who were ardently in favour of its being carried out immediately. Then, again, as regarded the mode of voting, they had had various suggestions as to the manner in which that was to be altered for the better. There had been proposed to them, by persons entitled to consideration, various methods by which the minority might be represented in that House; but the public mind required instruction in that matter, for it knew little or nothing of those speculations at the present time. He believed that on such a subject as that some inquiry was eminently necessary. If he might venture to put forward his opinion, he should say that he quite agreed with what had fallen from the hon. Gentleman who seconded the Resolution, when he said that in some way or other they ought to take means for the efficient representation of minorities in that House. But he did not disguise from himself that it was a difficult thing to do. When they came to deal face to face with a majority they would find that if they tried to introduce into the system of representation any such element the majority would always be inclined to sweep it away. But that did not prevent him from thinking that inquiry should be made into the matter; and, therefore, he should vote in favour of the inquiry which the hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Blennerhassett) proposed. If it were right to make inquiry, as was done in 1876, it was much more right then, because the Prime Minister himself had told them that legislation could not follow upon this Resolution for several years. But he wished to know what was the precise object of hon. Members opposite in proposing a reform of the representation of the country? Was it in order to deal with the anomalies which at present existed, and thus to run after that bugbear of equality which Lord Sherbrooke had described as "the idol of superficial thinkers?" The anomalies which existed were considerably less than those which would have been introduced had the Reform Bill which was brought in by the Liberal Government, and passed by the House of Lords, prior to the Act of 15 years ago, become law. The hon. Gentleman who had just sat down had pointed out the difficulty of defending any argument where an imaginary line was drawn, and where the advantages enjoyed by those on one side were not shared by those on the other. It was the same as regarded the individual voter, who varied in each particular constituency. The voting power had always varied up to the present, and he thought it always would vary. But how was it proposed to remedy these anomalies? It seemed to him that, unless they were going to arrive at equal electoral districts, it was utterly impossible to get rid of the inequality. The right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government said that the voting power ought to vary. He said that a smaller number of Representatives was much more effective if they happened to represent constituencies near the seat of Government; and if on that he based his argument in favour of a large representation of Scotland and a small representation of the Metropolis, many wicked people would be inclined to say that he desired to give large representation to those who supported him and a small representation to those who generally opposed him. ["Oh, oh!"] He did not assert that the right hon. Gentleman had said so—that would have been unwise, having regard to the fact that there was another country—Ireland—by no means so favourable to his opinions. The arguments which had been put forward in favour of this Motion to-night practically amounted to this—that a great many people had not got the franchise who wanted to have it; that there were a great many people who had got something to tell them, therefore they ought to have the franchise; and that there were a great many people who had got the franchise who were no better than a good many people who had not got it. He would read a few words from an article written by Mr. Freeman, a gentleman whose opinions were entitled to some consideration. Mr. Freeman said—

> "When we look at some of those persons, especially of what call themselves the educated classes, who have votes now, it is impossible to conceive that the agricultural labourer can be lower down in the scale. He can hardly be more ignorant; he is certainly much less conceited. He is at the worst untaught; he is not elaborately taught wrong."

He did not quote those opinions against the agricultural labourers; he entertained the utmost respect for them; but he wished to point out that the arguments used were arguments also in favour of manhood suffrage, of universal suffrage, of suffrage for women, of the enfranchisement of all who had got something to tell them, and who were capable of exercising the right of voting. The question that ought to be considered by the House was not whether a change like that which was proposed was what a great many people wanted; but whether it would be likely to improve the representative character of the House, and likely to make the House a better machine for carrying out the wishes and purposes of the country? He had, however, during the whole course of the debate, not heard a single suggestion to that effect. The Prime Minister, no doubt, spoke of his desire to see an enlarged representation of labour. He (Mr. Stanhope) should be glad to see a Representative of the agricultural labourer in that House; but it was idle to suppose that agricultural labourers, who were earning wages of less than 20*s.* a week, would be able to send many Members to Parliament. It must be remembered that in more than one constituency the working-class vote was already the preponderating vote. So, also, if it was thought desirable that Members representing special classes should find seats in the House, there was no obstacle in the way of agricultural labourers taking their seats there, if their constituencies so desired it. It was perfectly clear that the persons whom they were pressed to enfranchise were already, to a large extent, represented in the House. But, if it was desired, for example, to include a larger number of miners in the representation, the borough limits might be extended so as to include them. With regard to the agricultural labourers, he had already stated that there was nothing to prevent their returning one, two, or more Members of their own if they chose, a large number of that class already possessing votes. He thought, moreover, the influence of the vote given to 40*s.* freeholders a most beneficial one. It encouraged thrift, and had been productive of very good results. He had received a letter from a gentleman in East Worcestershire on the subject. That gentleman informed him that there was a particular town in East Worcestershire in which there were 150 freehold voters, of whom 32 had obtained their votes by means of land societies, while no fewer than 82 had gained their votes by saving up money and purchasing their freehold. Yet this was the franchise which the hon. Member for Salford told them very coolly and carelessly that he proposed to sweep away at once. There were some considerable merits about our constituencies as at present constituted. Means already existed by which every agricultural labourer could be adequately represented, and by which farmers, persons engaged in commercial pursuits, and others could return class Representatives if they chose to do so. They were now asked, however, to sweep away a system which had produced such good results, and to declare themselves in favour of a dull uniformity of representation, in which labour alone was to be represented. It was true that those whom it was proposed to include in the franchise belonged to precisely the same class as many of those who were at present included. The difficulty was that it was intended to introduce them not in small or even in reasonable numbers, but in overwhelming numbers, so that they must inevitably swamp every other class in the country. It was not because he feared, from a Party point of view, the admission of these voters that he spoke in this sense. It was very likely that these voters, when they were admitted, would produce some very unexpected results. It was very probable, for instance, that they would introduce a system of Protection. [*Murmurs.*] At all events, he thought that was probable. They might introduce a good many other things which would be exceedingly detrimental to the interests of the country. But the thing most to be feared was the danger to the stability of all institutions of this country which was produced by the indiscriminate admission of an enormous mass of voters who might vote as a body, and who, if they did vote as a body, would certainly carry everything before them. Could anyone contend that Parliament, as at present constituted, was not sufficiently sensitive to the ebb and flow of public opinion? A good many people might, indeed, be inclined to take the opposite view, and to say that Parliament was a little too sensitive to public opinion out-of-doors. It seemed to many that it would be a great advantage if Members of that House could act with a little more independence; and if, instead of being entirely under the dominion of somebody residing at Birmingham, they could vote in accordance with their convictions. Of course, if any special grievance could be shown on the part of any class not fully represented, and if it could be further shown that Parliament was unable or unwilling to deal with it, a strong case would be made out for altering the representation. He denied, however, that any such grievance existed. When the present Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Trevelyan) first began to agitate this subject, and to bring forward his proposal for establishing household suffrage in counties, he used to specify certain special grievances that Parliament had not dealt with affecting agricultural labourers and labourers in towns. But the hon. Gentleman had since admitted that those grievances had been remedied; and if he had gone further, he would have felt himself bound to say that most of them were abolished by a Conservative Government. Let him bring this question to a practical test. Speaking a year or two ago, Mr. Joseph Arch, whom no one could doubt was a representative agricultural labourer, said—

> "We are asked sometimes—I mean those who live in the unenfranchised districts—why we urge the claim so strongly? Is there anything in a vote which will do you any good?"

Mr. Arch, in giving the answer, described what he called sanitary comforts—better drainage, better water, and better cottages. But was there the smallest ground for supposing that any Member of that House wished to deprive agricultural labourers of the best legislation for establishing all those advantages? For his own part, he was proud to be able to say that one of his first attempts in Parliament was to bring in a measure for improving the cottages of agricultural labourers. But that was certainly not the object of the agitators, because at the time when Mr. Arch was speaking there was another representative of the agricultural labourers, who went about the country saying that they did not include in their programme any scheme for the improvement of the labourers' cottages; and the reason they gave was that to do so would increase the dependence of the labourers on their employers. He was not sure that the true character of the Motion before the House had not been revealed by the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold). He himself had never disguised his opinion, either in the House or out of it, that in all their overtures to the farming interest, the aim of the Liberal Party was first to use the farmers for an attack on the landlords, and then to attack the farmers through the labourers. [An hon. MEMBER: What nonsense, to be sure!] He heard some hon. Member say—"What nonsense, to be sure!" He was not going to be discouraged by that. It was his first object and his intention to warn the innocent victims of their delusion; and, in the second place, to prove that it was the case by what had been said that evening. The hon. Member for Salford made no concealment of his design; but said plainly that the county franchise left the representation in the hands of a class that put forward projects obnoxious to the public interest, and that, therefore, he wished to swamp the farmers by the introduction of the agricultural labourers, at the same time taking care that there should be a sufficient introduction of urban votes to make the swamping more complete. The Prime Minister had called the attention of the House to the fact that there were two Resolutions before it, one for the enfranchisement of certain unenfranchised classes, and the other for the re-distribution of seats; but he would not allow the second of these Resolutions to be discussed, on the ground that it would take a great deal of time ——

MR. GLADSTONE: I never said anything of the kind.

MR. E. STANHOPE said, he had not intentionally misquoted the right hon. Gentleman; but he had taken down his words at the time, and he certainly said that the discussion of the 2nd Resolution would take a long time.

MR. GLADSTONE: I said a separate debate would be necessary.

MR. E. STANHOPE: The right hon. Gentleman meant that he would insist upon what he would not probably be able to obtain—namely, a separate discussion. The right hon. Gentleman had pledged the Government to what he called a real obligation—namely, if the present Parliament were not prematurely dissolved, to bring in a Bill for the extension of the county franchise. What had the Prime Minister said with regard to the 2nd Resolution? He had not said a single word about the intention of the Government in that respect, except that he saw in the dim distance a vista of reform. The right hon. Gentleman was going to add, if he could, 1,500,000 voters to the electorate of the country; he was entirely swamping the whole of the rural constituencies, introducing far greater inequality that at present existed, and he was prepared to go to the country with that inequality.

MR. GLADSTONE: I never said so; I never said anything of the kind.

MR. E. STANHOPE: I do not want for a moment to misrepresent the right hon. Gentleman; but the right hon. Gentleman did undoubtedly pledge himself to the 1st Resolution during the present Parliament.

MR. GLADSTONE: I beg your pardon. I spoke of the mission of the present Parliament. I did not speak of my own personal action. I spoke of the mission of Parliament, and I certainly spoke of the subject as a whole.

MR. E. STANHOPE: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. He distinctly said that he limited himself to pledging the present Parliament to deal with the 1st Resolution.

MR. GLADSTONE: No; the whole subject.

MR. E. STANHOPE re-asserted that the right hon. Gentleman expressly said so, and he challenged the right hon. Gentleman upon it. In not one single word of his speech did he refer to any date as to dealing with the 2nd Resolution, either in the present Parliament or within any definite time. Other Members of the House understood the right hon. Gentleman in the same sense; and the House had been told, in the course of the debate, that it was possible to introduce a new class of voters and to go to the country; and that, when a new Parliament was returned, it would altogether decline to re-adjust the voting powers of the electorate, and would leave untouched all the existing anomalies. In these circumstances, the Government, having made a declaration of a most uncertain and dangerous character, he (Mr. E. Stanhope) objected in the strongest manner to the House thinking for one moment of passing the 1st of these Resolutions without taking into account the 2nd. It seemed to him that the considerations he had put forward, though he did not pretend they were absolutely conclusive, proved, at any rate, that the question was at that moment thoroughly unripe for settlement. Did the House think the time was come for dealing with the matter? Was it not rather the case that, in the whole course of the last 10 years, no more inopportune moment could have been found? The noble Lord the Secretary of State for India, when, in 1877, he announced his conversion to the principle of the extension of the county franchise, gave as a reason that the time was favourable to legislation, and that a period of too great legislative activity would have been unsuitable for the change. Could the noble Lord say that the present moment was suitable? Her Majesty's Government had already on their hands the most difficult question, perhaps, that had fallen to the lot of any Adminstration in recent years; and they had before them a number of other subjects—the Prime Minister himself numbered them at 30—which it would be a public scandal not to deal with at once. Were they to delay dealing with all those 30 subjects until this great Constitutional question had been disposed of, which it could scarcely be hoped could be finally settled in a less period than two years? But if even a Government Bill on this subject would have to be postponed indefinitely, according to the declaration of the Prime Minister, how much more inconvenient would it be for the House to agree to an abstract Resolution, to which the right hon. Gentleman had told them he had a great objection, unless it were followed up by action such as that now before them? The right hon. Gentleman did not propose to follow up the Resolution with action; but, in the face of a great Party difficulty, he met it with a dangerous concession, and prejudiced their calm consideration of the subject by asking the House to debate an indefinite and partial Resolution.

Mr. TREVELYAN: It is with unfeigned reluctance that I rise to occupy a small and I hope the last portion of an evening which I think has been so usefully spent. I cannot agree with the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Mr. Stanhope) that this debate has either been ineffective or languid. It seems to me that the question before the House is one with regard to which every political man has had some experience of his own. It is one on which most people's experience has generally had something special about it; and on which the great number of Gentlemen who were returned to Parliament since this question was last mooted here have much that is valuable and new to say. That is very little the case with myself. Everything I have to say on the question has long ago so completely lost every particle of novelty that I am unwilling to occupy even a brief portion of the time of the House, if it were not for the sake of impressing on hon. Members one single consideration, which, perhaps, more vividly and forcibly presents itself to a veteran than to those who, as far as their presence here is concerned, has more recently enlisted in the cause of household suffrage. And that consideration is, what in the view of many of us here—what still more in the view of hundreds of thousands outside our walls is the real cause and aim of our discussing this question to-night? The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down (Mr. Stanhope) in his speech was certainly not ineffective, and most decidedly not languid; but he was extremely ingenious, and he did not touch this aspect of the subject at all. Why, Sir, what is the business view of it? We are not here to-night to consider the first reading of a Government Reform Bill. It is not a proposal brought forward by a private Member with regard to some elaborate distribution of political power throughout the country. Our object in being here to-night is this—It is the first opportunity which this Parliament—the first Parliament from which the county householder ever had a chance of getting his rights—has had of proclaiming that, in its opinion, the last great, overwhelming, and indefensible political injustice remaining in this country should cease. That is the way in which the unenfranchised multitudes regard it. I have a right to appeal to outside opinion, for these men are not our constituents, and to mention them is not to have recourse to that political pressure which this House invariably and justly resents. The proposals for the minority vote, and the cumulative vote, and for proportional and class representation are new to many hon. Members; but they are not new to the unenfranchised multitudes—the county householders. For 10 years they have waited at the doors of one Parliament after another to ask for a right and a privilege; which nobody or, at any rate, which not one Member out of 100 has ever in speech denied to be their due; but which, without any reason worth the name of reason being given, has been, by the vote of the House, invariably refused them. We have been asked to bring forward new arguments to-night; but there is no use in bringing forward new arguments until the old arguments have been answered, and, as yet, there has been no answer given to our old arguments. I do not know what the hon. Member means by new arguments. If the hon. Gentleman means by new arguments that this Metropolis disapproves of the policy of right hon. Gentlemen who sit on these Benches, all I can tell him is that, by a majority of 14 to 8, the Members for the Metropolis have already approved of the policy of Her Majesty's Government; and if I am to bring forward any new argument to-night I shall not coin one out of the hon. Gentleman's mint. I venture to say that no body of men in the history of politics ever received such treatment before. They come from such places as Keighley and Barnsley, and Rotherham in Yorkshire, in which latter town I am told that members of the school board and Dissenting ministers have no vote on account of the high rate franchise. They come from Ratcliffe and Heywood, and Middleton in Lancashire, the mining population of Durham and Staffordshire, the hinds and shepherds of Perthshire and Northumberland, who are as well educated in all the essentials of education as the middle-classes were in the days of the great Reform Bill. These are the people who have asked for their rights over and over again, and they have always been denied. In the general proceedings of Parliament, on every day of the Session but one, ever since the year 1867, they have seen Bills on every sort of question which affects their interests brought in and discussed, and passed or thrown out, and they had nothing to say to it. Debates of immense importance have taken place on foreign policy, and they have had nothing to do with them. Wars have been declared and peace made, and they had no voice in it. As Bishop Horsley said of the people in days when men who held these sentiments ventured likewise to express them, they have had nothing to do with the taxation of the country, except to pay it, and with the laws except to obey them. But there is one day in each Session on which they experience, not, indeed, the sensation, but the hope of citizenship. And that is the day on which their friends come forward to ask the House of Commons to declare that this great class of Englishmen ought to be placed on the same political footing as the people of so many more favoured countries. And what happens on that day? Everybody seems to be unanimous about their merits. Everybody joins in praising their industry, their common sense, their patriotism, and their loyalty. Everybody talks of them as most excellent citizens. And then, when the debate is over, and the division comes, hon. Members go into the Lobby with the praises of the county householders on their lips, and vote that they are not to be allowed the political privilege which every Negro in the United States has had for half a generation. That is the treatment which has been served out to these people, and the effect produced on their minds is one which must be expected. There is beginning to grow up among them a sort of feeling that Parliament is not dealing sincerely with them—a feeling that not only they cannot get justice and their rights, but that they cannot even get an intelligible reason why justice should not be done them. The House to-night has a golden opportunity of undoing the harm which has been done by its Predecessors; and I earnestly hope it will not be led aside by the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Kerry (Mr. Blennerhassett) and my hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. A. Grey), and lose that opportunity. If the debate to which the county householders have so long been looking forward ends in a Committee on Proportional Representation, there is reason to fear that the classes who want to get their votes will think they are being trifled with again, as they have been trifled with in times past. What they will naturally say is this—"You have already had two Reform Bills, and you did not require before, in each case where you extended the franchise, that there should be a previous inquiry by a Committee of the House of Commons. Now that our turn has come, what reason is there that you should look upon us with more suspicion than the borough householders in 1832 and 1867, and not only refuse to give us a Reform Bill, but even refuse to promise one until you have had an inquiry by a Committee?" The only way of re-assuring their minds—the only way, in my opinion, of doing our own duty, is for a majority in Parliament for the first time to say bluntly and unmistakably that the county householder ought to have the same privileges of a citizen which the borough householder has possessed since 1867; and I cannot imagine how that declaration can be made more clearly and decisively than by voting for the 1st Resolution of the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. A. Arnold). The hon. Member for Kerry (Mr. Blennerhassett) begs us not to embarrass ourselves with vague and indefinite Resolutions. Now, nothing could be less indefinite than the Motion which my hon. Friend the Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) has placed before the House. I refuse to accept the gloss which my hon. Friend put upon it. I refuse to see in it the abolition of the 40*s.* freeholders. I look upon it as simply what it is—part of the enfranchisement of the county householders. The hon. Member for Kerry asks—"Are we going to put into the hands of the county householders of the country the election of the whole House of Commons?" I answer—"Yes; in what other hands should we place it?" If we do not believe in the wisdom and patriotism of our own people, how can we expect the country to thrive under a system of popular government?

MR. BLENNERHASSETT: I said in the hands of the newly enfranchised electors.

MR. TREVELYAN: The newly enfranchised electors would be exactly of the same class as the existing electors, and the two together would carry the election of the House of Commons. These are subjects which do not create any difficulty in the eyes of those who believe they have a right to govern themselves, and that the government will be better, more or less, in proportion to the way in which this right is recognized. My hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland (Mr. Grey) says that the Resolutions which I and my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Charles W. Dilke) have brought forward year after year were not founded on this principle of popular government. He says that my hon. Friend (Sir Charles W. Dilke) himself proposed a Committee of Inquiry into the representation of the people; and, therefore, that he is bound on this occasion to vote for the hon. Member for Kerry (Mr. Blennerhassett). My hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs did, indeed, ask for an inquiry into the system of representation in a House which was averse to Reform, in order that the anomalies of the system might be made known. But, before doing that, he also voted for the extension of the franchise pure and simple, and twice afterwards he spoke and voted against the Amendment of the hon. Member for Kerry, when the purpose of that Amendment was to thwart and delay the emancipation of the county householder. I cannot, therefore, accept the statement of my hon. Friend the Member for South Northumberland, and I certainly cannot accept it when endorsed by the hon. Member who spoke last (Mr. Stanhope). The hon. Member who has just sat down stated that he agreed with the hon. Member for South Northumberland in his offer—which I cannot but regard as a most illusory offer—that he would extend the county franchise if the county householders would unite for the purpose of preventing the re-distribution of seats. I cannot see what motive they would have to unite for that purpose; and, indeed, the motive they now have to oppose the re-distribution of seats would be removed. One of the great advantages of this extension of the franchise is that it will facilitate the re-distribution of seats. At present, when there exists one franchise in the boroughs and another in the counties, you cannot have a re-distribution of seats without disfranchising some of the electors; but when you have the same franchise all over the country, you can merge the boroughs and counties without disfranchising anybody, and you can then have a re-distribution of seats. The truth is that I hardly think hon. Members have sufficiently considered what classes of our population they are which the present system so rigorously excludes. If there is one set of people among whom the average of comfort and intelligence is higher than elsewhere, it is among the people who inhabit those parts of the country which are the seats of new and healthy industries. Now, Sir, where are those industries carried on? They do not, for the most part, spring up within our ancient towns and cities, because there is no room for them. Those towns and cities are, generally speaking, too crowded already. Population follows manufactures, and manufactures require room to turn in. Population follows the spread of manufacturing and mining operations, and such industrial pursuits require plenty of elbow room. Where you get large new populations is where mining operations and coal and iron extend themselves at their own sweet will, without reference to the question whether the soil above them is within the limits of a Parliamentary borough. If hon. Members wish to see a really civilized and prosperous community, they should go to the borough which returns the hon. Member who moved this Resolution—the high ground which runs to the west of the Valley of the Irwell, between Manchester and Bolton. There, for mile after mile, they will find one long street of well-built houses, well-furnished shops and stores, lecture-rooms, reading-rooms, school-rooms, chapels, churches—everything that constitutes a town, except only the ratepaying household suffrage. That is the result of coal mining. It is just the same with manufactures. There is no manufacture that is more prosperous at this moment than the woollen industry in the South of Scotland. For many years past it has enjoyed a solid and equable measure of prosperity. Formerly it was carried on in the towns; but now, when a capitalist determines to go into the wool business, perhaps, and does not find room in Selkirk, Hawick, or Galashiels, instead of betaking himself to the tributaries of the Tweed, he plants his manufactory on the Tweed itself, where towns have sprung up similar to those which I have the honour to represent. Between Peebles and Selkirk are the singularly pleasant and prosperous settlements of Walkerburn and Innerleithen; and the population of these places is, to all intents and purposes, moral, social, industrial, and intellectual—the same population as that of the neighbouring burghs. But when a General Election comes the inhabitants of Hawick and Galashiels have the opportunity of bearing a hand in those dubious and stirring contests which take place in the Border Burghs; while the only part which the inhabitants of Walkerburn and Innerleithen can play is to stand near the polling-booths at Peebles or Selkirk, and watch the trains-full of Edinburgh lawyers and Highland-lairds who, once in seven years, favour the county with their presence, in order to elect for it a Member, for or against whom the genuine inhabitants of the county have no opportunity of voting. My hon. Friend (Sir Charles W. Dilke) and myself have always insisted on this argument with regard to the town population who live outside the Parliamentary boroughs. How very large a part of the question affects these people who are townsmen in every respect, except that they are not voters, and who are not voters merely because they live on one side of an arbitrary line instead of on the other, has long been a leading argument; and the results of the Census of last year, so far as they have been made public, confirm that argument with a strength which is really startling. The increasing predominance of the urban over the rural element is more remarkable. In 1861 there were 165 dwellers in town against 100 dwellers in rural districts. In 1871 the number had risen to 184, and in 1881 had reached 199, or about 200 per cent. Taking the population of England and Wales at 25,950,000, this gives 8,650,000 for the rural and 17,300,000 for the town population. Of that town population, 12,270,000 live within Parliamentary boroughs: so that we come to this striking conclusion—that there are in England and Wales over 5,000,000 of men, the very flower of our industrial population, who have every quality in their character, condition, and mode of existence which the borough householders possess, on whom Parliament in 1867—not an hour too soon—conferred the ratepaying franchise. If their claims are resisted many years longer, the old English sense of justice and fair play must have sadly deteriorated. Hon. Members opposite have quoted what Lord Sherbrooke said about equality being the ideal of superficial thinkers. What is the use of quoting Lord Sherbrooke against us, when everything the noble Lord had to say told as much against the Act of 1867 as against the present proposal? But, Sir, while we insist on the claims of this great mass of people, this population of 5,000,000, which is infinitely larger than the population of Switzerland or of our Australian Colonies, we must not forget the, if possible, still greater claims of another part of the population—the purely rural population. The village shopkeepers, the village artificers, of themselves a very special and worthy class, and, above all, the agricultural labourers, are petitioners for justice and redress. My own acquaintance has been a pretty intimate one with rural life for some 10 or 12 years past; and in that period I have seen, like everyone with the same opportunities, an extraordinary change and progress in the population in the country districts. If it is a question of education, it is certainly not the labourers who are indifferent, or who take a languid share in the election of candidates to a school board. If it is a dispute in ecclesiastical matters, such as will often arise where men are in earnest about religion, it is not the labourers who are apathetic in the matter. Hon.

Gentlemen who represent boroughs which include rural districts, tell us that the agricultural labourers under that very trying and demoralizing method of holding the franchise (for they are, as it were, privileged among their own class, and privilege has always its temptations), are mainly independent and pure. And I must say this, which has not been mentioned to-night, that if among the labourers, as among our town population, there are some who are degraded and ignorant, hon. Gentlemen opposite will have the matter in their own hands. They have the means of easily separating that degraded element from the persons who will be good and more trustworthy citizens. All that they have to do is to take the education test which they have ready to their hands; and if they are wishful that the power should only be placed in the hands of intelligent men, all they have to do, in the spirit of true Conservatism, is to strike from the Ballot Act the provisions which relate to the illiterate voter. If any hon. Member wishes to see any proof of the great industry of the agricultural labourer, let him peruse the interesting Return, which has been lately presented to the House, of the savings of our population as shown by the deposits in savings banks. That Return scarcely applies to Scotland, where the people invest their savings in another channel, nor does it prove the thrift of the people in the North of England — Lancashire, and Yorkshire, and Durham. The great bulk of these sums so saved are the test and measure of the industrious and self-denying character of the people of the Southern and rural counties. And now, before I sit down, let me call the attention of the House to one fact which I think has not been sufficiently considered, and I wish in doing so to answer the last part of the speech of the hon. Member opposite (Mr. Stanhope). In that speech he referred to the farmer and the labourer, and he used expressions which I am sure are unjust towards the Liberal Party, and which I cannot kelp thinking might be made a source of danger in future political controversy. There is a question which, by universal acknowledgment, lays before us—what is generally known as the Land Question. Upon that question the late Government brought in a measure which, if it had not been killed by the General Election, would have been a very great advantage to the country. It was a measure for enabling parts of encumbered estates to be sold. I gather that that was the direction which everyone was agreed that legislation should take. And to what class do those belong who are most dependent for their comfort and welfare on this sort of legislation? It is most important that the land of this country should be in hands that can do it justice; that, instead of remaining as at present where the money is not, it should go where the money is. It matters to the farmer a good deal; but it does not concern him as much as some other classes. It matters to the landlords still more; but it is a matter which, to a degree almost impossible to exaggerate, concerns the whole future of the agricultural labourer and cottager. And yet you take the class of tenant farmers, who are only some 200,000 in number; you let them alone have votes; you give them a preponderating influence in the settlement of the Land Question; you teach them to think that the man who happens to be renting 300 or 400 acres of land at a time when a Land Bill is brought forward is the only person whose interest, besides that of the landlord, is to be considered. You give them, as I see, a preponderating influence in the settlement of this great and complicated question, and you exclude all the rest of the rural population from any voice in the question which is of the deepest moment to them, and in regard to which they hold opinions perfectly rational, perfectly safe, most moderate, most sensible, and, as far as possible, removed from any taint of Socialism. No one—and this is my answer to the hon. Gentleman—no one who has watched a county election can deny that it is managed as if the farmers are the only body of men in the county who need to be appealed to. If the great body of consumers—the people whose only interest in the price of bread is that they want to buy it cheap—had votes in recent county elections, do you imagine for a moment that you would have heard anything of a 5*s.* duty on corn? The hon. Gentleman opposite asks us what we intend to do with this new class of voters, and he asks us whether we desire to teach them Protection? My answer is, that we will leave that to his brother Members in his own county.

MR. E. STANHOPE: I said I thought it might be quite possible that that new class of voters would themselves desire it.

MR. TREVELYAN: I beg the hon. Member's pardon. My answer to that is, that they are the last people in the world who would desire to introduce Protection, because they approach the question of a duty on corn in the character of the eaters of bread, and and not of the sellers of it. The truth is that these appeals to the private and selfish interests of classes are doubled-edged weapons, as hon. Members now willing to use them will one day find out. What we want to do is not to perform the almost inhuman operation which the hon. Member opposite has described of setting one class of our fellow-countrymen against the other and afterwards swamping them both; we want to bind up county society of all ranks by one common tie of political equality. Until that is done we believe it can never rest on any sound foundation, and that county elections will never cease to be governed by appeals to the private interests of classes, instead of appeals grounded upon national advantage. I have now gone through, as briefly as possible, the classes of men of various orders and occupations whom these Resolutions propose to enfranchise by an act of tardy justice. Every bye-election which is held, every faggot voter who is added to the registration list, is only one more item in the account which we have against the House of Commons; and I trust, as a first instalment in the settlement of that account, hon. Members will walk through the Lobbies in very different proportions from what was the case when my hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and myself used, year after year, to stand at the glass-doors, and afterwards come up to the Table on the left flank of the line of Tellers.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Salt.*)

MR. GOSCHEN said, before the House went to a division on the Motion for Adjournment, he wished to ask the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) whether, in case they divided on the 1st Resolution, it was his intention that the 2nd Resolution should be put to the House? It was, he thought, only fair that this information should be given, because it was essential that the House should know whether ultimately the subjects of both Resolutions were to be dealt with by the present Parliament—whether, in fact, they were to be dealt with as one great subject, or whether they were to be treated separately. He gathered from the speech of the hon. Member that his original intention was that the 2nd Resolution should be put; and, if he would now give that assurance, he (Mr. Goschen) should certainly vote against the adjournment of the debate, because, after the discussion which had taken place, he did not understand why the House should not go to a division on both questions. He had himself been prevented taking part in the discussion and stating his views on the subject by the state of his voice, which was scarcely audible, a fact which he alluded to because he did not wish it to be supposed that he shrank from taking part in the debate. He thought hon. Members opposite might be fairly asked to go to a division, in order to show in what way they proposed to treat this matter, which was one of such great importance that the attitude of Members of the House generally with regard to it should be known. For his own part, he should not shrink from voting on the question.

MR. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, if the Resolution which had been put from the Chair were carried, it was certainly his intention immediately to ask Mr. Speaker to propose the 2nd Resolution to the House; but in that case he should be prepared to accept the suggestion which had fallen from the Prime Minister not to press for debate upon the 2nd Resolution. With regard to the Motion of the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt), he hoped it would be withdrawn.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE observed, that this was the first occasion in the present Parliament on which this very important question had been brought under the consideration of the House; and, that being the case, he thought it was but reasonable that it should be discussed in a full and ample manner. The House had undoubtedly listened, in the course of the evening, to a number of very useful and excellent speeches, nevertheless there was a large number of Gentlemen—he was himself aware of many—who desired to take part in the discussion of this question, and who, he thought, had a claim to be heard. It seemed, however, to be suggested that the House should go to a division on the 1st of the two Resolutions of the hon. Member for Salford, and that the discussion on the 2nd should be adjourned; at all events, he understood that to be the meaning of the suggestion of the Prime Minister, although he had not the advantage of hearing the right hon. Gentleman. Moreover, he understood the hon. Member for Salford to say that if the House would come to a decision on his 1st Resolution he would adjourn the debate upon the 2nd until some future day. But the question presented itself as to whether the two Resolutions could be taken one after the other, a large number of hon. Members thinking that they could not be so taken. That opinion had been held on former occasions in that House. It was essential to the present question; and he thought that, by coming to the decision that the 1st Resolution could be divided upon and its principle settled without knowing what was going to be done with the 2nd, they would be laying down a very important and inconvenient precedent. Therefore, he thought it was but reasonable that the House should deal with the proposition of the hon. Member for Salford as a whole. It had always been open to question whether this matter should be treated by way of abstract Resolution, or whether it should take the form of a measure to be introduced into the House. But hon. Members were now told not only that they were not to see the measure to be introduced, but that they were not to be allowed to pronounce on the abstract principles that would be urged as the reasons for the legislation which might follow. He hoped the House would not resist the very reasonable proposal for the adjournment of the debate. They had heard nothing in the speeches delivered in the course of the evening which could be considered as superfluous. No time, certainly, had been wasted. As far as he had been able to listen to it, the discussion had been of a very able, and, at the same time, of a very temperate character; and he was satisfied that the hon. Member for Stafford (Mr. Salt), and other Gentlemen who wished to be heard, would continue it in the same spirit in which it began.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I think that a portion of the remarks which I offered to the House, having reference to the division upon this Resolution, has not been understood; at all events, what I said has not been understood by the right hon. Gentleman who has just addressed the House. I said we were about to have an expression of opinion on the part of the House, upon the question of county franchise; and although my hon. Friend the Member for Salford very naturally desired to have a decision upon the whole of his Motion, yet I did not anticipate that it would be possible to have a full debate upon both Resolutions. It has been assumed that the House would be allowed to divide upon the 2nd Resolution, without further debate, after the 1st Resolution had been disposed of. But I never intended to suggest that it would be improper to proceed with the 2nd Resolution. Hon. Members opposite appear to desire further discussion upon the 1st Resolution, and I think it quite fair that they should demand this if they think such further discussion necessary. In that case they will, of course, support the Motion for the adjournment of the debate. I believe, however, that the great majority of the House are not of opinion that the 1st Resolution of my hon. Friend requires further debate. We, on this side of the House, do not hold the question of the extension of the franchise in counties to be a very difficult one, or one that requires to be very elaborately debated; but we are anxious to obtain from the House an expression of its opinion upon the subject. I believe myself that our minds are undoubtedly made up, and that the House is perfectly prepared to pronounce a decision; and, therefore, I trust we shall be allowed to take that decision by dividing upon the 1st Resolution. If upon both, so much the better; but the division upon the 2nd Resolution we can hardly ask, as a matter of propriety, to-night. In the event of our not being allowed to divide upon the 1st Resolution, I think the fairest course will be not to object to the Motion for the adjournment of the debate, but to take the division upon that Motion as coming as nearly as possible to an expression of opinion upon the Resolution of my hon. Friend.

MR. THOMAS COLLINS said, his efforts to catch the Speaker's eye during the last two hours had been unsuccessful. He objected to a division being taken upon the merits of this Resolution until he had an opportunity of calling the attention of the House to the question of the representation of minorities, which had scarcely been touched upon throughout the discussion that had taken place that evening. The subject was one in which the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and the right hon. Member for Hackney (Mr. Fawcett) had both taken a great interest in former days; and as he desired to make some observations thereupon, he hoped the Motion for the adjournment of the debate would be agreed to.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he did not think the evident sense of the House had yet been declared in favour of closing the debate. They had listened to a discussion upon a highly important question, which, in the case of Ireland, would have a very wide application. Very few Irish Members had spoken in the course of the evening, and there were some who thought that the question was one upon which they ought not to be asked to vote without having first an opportunity of expressing their opinions with regard to it. They were disposed to vote altogether for the Resolutions of the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold), which, when they passed into law, would undoubtedly lead to some serious changes in the representation of Ireland. But the course proposed, of dividing upon the 1st Resolution, seemed to be an inconvenient one; and as Irish Members upon that side of the House wished to state their views upon the whole question he strongly urged that the adjournment should take place.

MR. O'DONNELL said, although he had great respect for the opinions of his hon. Friend and Leader, he was certainly inclined to vote against the Motion for adjournment of the debate upon the present occasion; and he should do so with the intention of supporting the principle involved in the 1st Resolution of the hon. Member for Salford. If the House was prevented from coming to a decision upon that, he hoped the country would regard the vote upon the Motion for Adjournment as a vote of the House in favour of the 1st Resolution. It seemed to him that there should be no great difficulty in putting the 2nd Resolution to the House also. Without going into the merits of the 2nd Resolution—

> "That it would be desirable so to re-distribute political power as to obtain a more equitable representation of the opinion of the electoral body,"

he would merely remark that Members sitting in any part of the House could say that. It was a perfectly harmless and safe Resolution—in fact, the expression of a pious opinion; and there was no reason, as far as he could see, why the House should not vote upon it at once.

MR. G. W. ELLIOT said, he had risen 12 times in the course of the evening, but had not succeeded in his endeavours to catch the Speaker's eye. He had brought in a Bill which touched this question last year; and he desired to address the House for the purpose of explaining his views upon the Resolution of the hon. Member for Salford. As he had not been able to do so, he trusted the Motion for the adjournment would be agreed to, so that he and some of his hon. Friends might have an opportunity of stating their views upon the question before the House.

MR. BIGGAR said, he had not at first intended to take any part in this debate, which, in a very great measure, was one of a Party character only. The course now proposed to be taken appeared to him to be in a very high degree ambiguous. It was indispensable in a question of this kind, when a vote was asked for which the Government would probably make the basis of future legislation, that the opinions of as many sections of the House as possible should be expressed upon the details of the question. For his own part, he should be strongly disposed to support the Amendment to the Resolution. But he thought it unreasonable that Irish Members should pledge themselves to opinions upon the question after the very short debate that had taken place; and, therefore, he hoped the Motion for Adjournment would be pressed to a division. He entirely dissented from the opinion that the vote upon that Motion would amount to an expression of opinion on the part of the House upon the Main Question; and, therefore, he hoped the Prime Minister would consent to the adjournment, in order that the details of this most important question might be further examined.

Mr. R. H. PAGET said, the course which the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) had chosen to take that evening had placed the House in an embarrassing position. He had divided into two parts a question which many hon. Members were of opinion could not with propriety be divided. Although he was ready to admit that the question of county householders with regard to the franchise was one which must be taken into consideration, he was not prepared to vote for it in the form of an abstract Resolution dissociated from the question of a re-distribution of seats. Moreover, other questions were involved, such as the representation of minorities in the great and small boroughs; and it was quite impossible that the question could be properly debated in the form in which it had been placed before the House. He could quite understand that the hon. Member for Salford was perfectly ready to take the decision of the House upon the 1st Resolution, because he cared very little what became of the 2nd after that decision was obtained. He thought, however, that this was not a fair way of treating the Motion, and that the debate should be adjourned, in order that the House might have an opportunity of considering both parts of the hon. Member's Resolution.

Mr. ECROYD said, he had been endeavouring to catch the Speaker's eye during the evening; and as one of the few Members of the Conservative Party who, for many years, had been advocates of the extension of household suffrage to the counties, he should be extremely sorry if he were called upon to take part in a division without having the opportunity of saying a few words. He therefore hoped that the debate would be adjourned.

Mr. R. POWER said, he was not one of those who had been endeavouring to catch the Speaker's eye. He only came into the House about 9 o'clock, and then he saw eight Gentlemen rise at the same time. He thought it would not have been wise to attempt to compete with those Gentlemen; but he wished it to be distinctly understood that when he and his hon. Friends voted for the adjournment they did not vote against the Motion of the hon. Gentleman.

Question put.

The House *divided:*—Ayes 137; Noes 192: Majority 55.—(Div. List, No. 55.)

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. G. W. ELLIOT said, that as the Government seemed disposed to exercise the *clôture* prematurely, and to burke discussion, he would move the adjournment of the House.

Mr. R. N. FOWLER seconded the Motion. He had no very strong feeling on the question, and he was not one of those hon. Members who had tried to catch the Speaker's eye; but, at the same time, he thought the House must feel that the two subjects of the extension of the franchise and the re-distribution of seats could not be discussed separately. Neither were they questions which could be satisfactorily and adequately discussed in one evening; and, therefore, it was a reasonable proposition that the hon. Member for Salford (Mr. Arnold) should on another day bring the question again before the House. He knew the hon. Member could not ask the Government to give him a day; but he might find a Wednesday on which it would be convenient for the House to continue the discussion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. G. W. Elliot.*)

Mr. GLADSTONE said, that, according to the hon. Member who had moved the adjournment of the House, the majority had no right whatever to express an opinion, and that no attempt on their part to close a debate ought to be allowed. The hon. Member said that any opinion expressed by a majority in favour of closing a debate in the face of a large minority was an attempt to prematurely introduce the *clôture.*

Mr. G. W. ELLIOT: I said nothing of the kind.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, the hon. Member could not escape from the meaning of his own words. He said he said nothing of the kind, without being kind enough to rise and explain what he did say.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS: I rise to Order. There is no question before the House.

Mr. SPEAKER: The Question is that the House do now adjourn.

Mr. GLADSTONE said, it was necessary to make a protest on the part of the majority to this extent, at least—that however sacred be the rights of the minority, and however good its title to prevail over the majority on occasions like the present, he hoped the hon. Member would not again intimate to the majority that they were committing an offence by expressing their opinion. He did not know what course his hon. Friend (Mr. Arnold) might be disposed to take. He should be inclined to follow whatever course his hon. Friend thought preferable; but his own opinion was that it would not be profitable to pursue the contest. The hon. Member would do wisely to accept the division which had just been taken as a very sufficient indication of the opinion of the House upon the 1st Resolution, especially when they knew from the declarations of many Gentlemen that, could he have obtained a direct division on the merits of the 1st Resolution, the majority would have been very considerably greater. He would advise the hon. Gentleman not to pursue the matter. Of course, he presumed, the Motion for the adjournment of the House would be withdrawn, and one for the adjournment of the debate substituted. If the present Motion were not withdrawn he hoped the House would divide.

Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE said, he hoped his hon. Friend (Mr. Elliot) would not divide.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question again proposed.

Sir H. DRUMMOND WOLFF moved that the debate be now adjourned, because it did not seem to be clearly understood how the question stood. The Motion for the adjournment of the House was withdrawn in the belief that the debate would be adjourned.

Mr. ARTHUR ARNOLD said, he would offer no opposition to the adjournment.

Motion *agreed to.*

Debate *adjourned* till *To-morrow.*

COUNTY CESS (IRELAND).

MOTION FOR A SELECT COMMITTEE.

Colonel NOLAN said, he was sorry at that late hour (1 o'clock) to have to trouble the House on this subject; but he would deal with it very shortly. The matter was one which should be got rid of one way or the other, either by granting the Committee or refusing it—it should not be kept on the Notice Paper day after day in this way. No doubt it could be disposed of in four or five minutes. Well, this opened up the whole question of the manner in which fines were imposed in Ireland for any damage done in a neighbourhood; and, to his mind, it was a matter of the greatest importance that a Select Committee should be appointed to consider it. He would give an instance to show how desirable it was that there should be some investigation. He would not refer to the Queen's County cases which were alluded to in the Motion, as he was not well enough acquainted with them; but he was informed by the two Members for the county that the cases were good ones. As to the Galway cases, however, the affair was different, they having occurred in his own neighbourhood and amongst his own tenants. It appeared that a hay-stack, worth about £97, belonging to a well-known solicitor, who was also an extensive farmer, had been burned. He did not for a moment mean to say, though he was moving for this Committee, that the solicitor ought not to have been compensated for the loss of this hay-stack. He did not contend that compensation should not be paid, for, after all, he did not think the law under which it was granted was a very bad one; but what he wanted to bring before the House was the manner in which this tax was levied. Eight shillings in the pound was levied on the townlands of Ballintubber, Brackloon, and Brockagh, which was a cruel and excessive charge, and one which should only have been upon the inhabitants of the townlands in the neighbourhood of the hay-stack, or upon the inhabitants of that townland to which the persons who did the mischief belonged. He did not wish to bring any heavy accusation against the Grand Jury in Galway; but he must say he believed they had very hurriedly put on the tax, and put it on people who had no claim on them. It was just as though that bag now on the Table of the House had been burned and the Government had put a tax to cover the cost of it, not on the whole of the Benches, but upon one particular Bench. Only three townlands, on which there was a poor population, had been selected to bear this heavy and crushing tax, though why he could not say, unless it was on account of their poverty. If the Select Committee was granted he was prepared to throw up the whole of his case, if the police could come forward and say they knew that men from these townlands had assisted in, or connived at, the burning of this hay-stack. But if there was no case, no reasonable suspicion that the damage was caused by people from these places, then, he contended, it was simply robbing these poor people to make them pay such a tax. A number of townlands in the hands of comparatively rich people were left untaxed, and the Grand Jury levied this charge in a manner that was positively cruel. They put upon these poor people a charge equal to a 6*s.* or 7*s.* Income Tax. Such a charge, if put upon a rich man, would be a great burden, and would be considered hard; but to put it on a very poor man was a terrible thing. All he asked for was an investigation, and if it were granted he should not insist upon having upon it many Irish Members. He was willing that there should be a majority of English Members upon it. The three townlands he had mentioned were inhabited by tenants of his own. In consequence of his Parliamentary duties, he had been unable to attend the meeting of the Grand Jury, or, of course, he should have protested against the imposition of this tax, which, it seemed to him, had been levied upon these people because they were the tenants of a popular Member of Parliament. Such an imposition, for such a reason, was highly improper; and he, therefore, thought there should be an inquiry by a Select Committee, who should report as to whether it was not necessary that some change should be made in the law.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the manner in which a County Cess of 8*s.* 1½*d.* in the pound was imposed at the summer assizes on the townlands of Ballintubber, Brackloon, and Brockagh, in the county of Galway, and the manner in which a heavy County Cess was imposed on Cool, Raheen, and other townlands in Queen's County."—(*Colonel Nolan.*)

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, the proposition of the hon. and gallant Member was to inquire into an arrangement carried out under an Act of Parliament. It was not complained that there had been any irregularity in the proceedings that had taken place; and he must, therefore, on these grounds oppose the appointment of a Select Committee. The Act of Parliament provided a certain machinery for the purpose of levying compensation for these damages, and that machinery was the Presentment Sessions, where the claims for compensation were decided in a regular way. But from the Presentment Sessions the claims went to the Grand Jury, who gave their decision, and if that decision was quarelled with it could be traversed. The Act of Parliament provided that the result of the traverse before the Judge should be final and conclusive to all intents and purposes whatsoever. That being so, he did not see on what ground they could appoint a Select Committee to consider the matter.

MR. HEALY said, he was surprised at the stand the right hon. and learned Gentleman had taken, and at the grounds he gave for that stand, because hon. Members knew that ere this—even this very Session—the Government had promised to amend this very law. In the Royal Address for a series of years the Government had promised to amend it; and even this Session there was a sort of promise given by Her Majesty's Ministers that they would take the condition of the Grand Jury Laws into their consideration. Yet, according to the right hon. and learned Gentleman, because a due process of law had gone on, though he himself thought, and though it was the opinion of the Government, that the law required amendment, it should not be amended, however bad it was, and there should be no inquiry with regard to it. Only that night he (Mr. Healy) had put down a Notice on the Paper of his intention to call attention to the Irish Grand Jury System; and to move—

"That this House regrets that the promises several times made in the Royal Address of Amendment in the Grand Jury System of Ireland have not been carried out."

In this matter he really thought the Irish people were to blame for paying the tax. A common sense view of the matter should be taken by them. Some people said that in the case of the "suspects" some of the arrests were fair and reasonable; but in this case no one could say that the imposition of a tax so flagrantly unjust was fair and reasonable. There should, therefore, be some manifesto—which it would be very easy to issue—against the payment of the tax. It was said all round that it was an unjust tax, and yet the Government objected to inquiry. He had given Notice of his intention to ask whether the Government would inquire into the condition of the Grand Jury of the County of Cork, for he found that a member of that Grand Jury—Captain Somerville, like many other magistrates in Ireland—had used some very extraordinary language. Captain Somerville had refused to allow the advocate who had appeared for some of the poor tenants to proceed, and had said—"If you talk in that way we shall double the assessment." And yet the Government allowed the continuance of a law of this kind. He would tell the people of Ireland what they ought to do—they ought to strike against the payment of unjust taxes. When taxes of this kind were levied by the Grand Juries the people should refuse to pay them, and leave the Government to collect them as best they could. Year after year had passed, assessment after assessment had been made, and yet the Government had refused to amend this law, in spite of the declarations in the Royal Addresses. Let the people strike then. The people had no representation on the Grand Juries. They were appointed by the sheriff, who was appointed by the Government, and the people who had to pay the taxes had no voice or vote in the matter whatever. The taxes were levied by the Grand Juries; the Grand Juries spent the money, and "the people who paid the piper"—as the Home Secretary would say—"could not even call the tune." That appeared to him (Mr. Healy) to be an extraordinary state of things. What were the facts? Outrages upon man and beast were said to take place in Ireland. To whose interest was it that these outrages should take place? Was it to the interest of the people who had to pay for them? No; but a landlord who had an animal with a fatal disease—say a cow—might obtain £10 for her if her tail was cut off—the money being given as compensation for the outrage. The £10 would be granted by the landlord's personal friends, and the landlord would make, perhaps, 50 or 100 per cent profit on the transaction. To whose interest would it be, he would ask, that this cow should have her tail cut off? Was it to the interest of those who would have to pay for the outrage, or to the interest of the landlord who would make money out of it? These outrages, he contended, were bound to go on so long as the landlords made a profit out of them; and the only way to put an end to the mutilation of animals and the burning of hay-stacks was to give the people a voice in levying the taxes. So long as the landlords had the assessment of compensation so long would these outrages continue, because agents and bailiffs, and many other people, made a handsome thing out of it. He hoped the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) would go to a division, if it were only as a protest against the conduct of the Government with regard to Grand Juries; and he trusted the people of these townlands of Ballintubber, Brackloon, and Brockagh, and of Cool and Raheen, in Queen's County, would refuse to pay one cent of these taxes.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I think, Mr. Speaker, the language employed by the hon. Member ought not to be allowed to pass without notice. I only rise for the purpose of calling attention to it, and to the policy recommended by the hon. Member. If laws are unjust they can be discussed with a view to their amendment; but that is not the course the hon. Member would recommend to the people of Ireland. He has distinctly recommended in this House that the people of Ireland should break the law.

Mr. HEALY: No, I have not.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: He has not disputed——

Mr. HEALY: I say I have not.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: He has not disputed that the taxes are legally imposed. He disputes the justice of the law, and he is perfectly entitled to do so; but what he is not entitled to do is to recommend the people of Ireland, or of any other part of the Dominions of the Queen, to break the law, by refusing to pay taxes which are rightfully and lawfully imposed. That is what he has done. He has spoken of the "no rent" manifesto, and has recommended the issue of a non-payment of taxes manifesto——

Mr. HEALY: No, I have not.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am in the recollection of the House whether I have not made a correct statement—whether I have not given the very words of the hon. Member. I call attention to those words, and I hope they will receive the reprobation of this House, and of every man who desires to see the law obeyed.

Mr. HEALY said, he thought he was entitled, whether by the courtesy of the House or otherwise, to be allowed to make a remark on the language of the right hon. and learned Gentleman ["Order!"]

Mr. SPEAKER: If the hon. Member desires to make a personal explanation the House will, no doubt, hear him.

Mr. HEALY said, he desired to state what he had stated, if the House was agreeable. If the House was not agreeable he would not do so. What he had recommended the Irish people to do was this—In cases where they considered the taxes unjust to compel the law to collect them as best they could. He had recommended them to do what the father of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Birmingham (Mr. Bright) had done in regard to the church rate—namely, to refuse to pay until a levy was put upon the property.

Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA ventured to say that the objections offered by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland did not meet this case. His hon. and gallant Friend the Member for County Galway (Colonel Nolan) asked for a Committee to inquire into the manner in which the county cess had been levied and the circumstances connected with it. The hon. and gallant Member had brought forward a case that would appeal to the House, and, he was sure, was one which should be inquired into. It was not for the Irish Members, in a case like this, to go all through the Grand Jury system. There could be no legitimate objection, from a Parliamentary point of view, to the Motion; and although he foresaw that it would be futile to go to a division, public opinion in Ireland required that their Representatives should record their view. Though he (Sir Joseph M'Kenna) fell in the category of those upon whom the hon. Member for the Borough of Wexford (Mr. Healy) was from time to time very severe, though he was a magistrate in Ireland, he had much pleasure in supporting the Motion.

Mr. SEXTON said, he had listened attentively to the speech of the hon. Member for the Borough of Wexford; and he was bound to take the earliest opportunity of saying that he did not think it was open, in the least degree, to the construction the Home Secretary had put upon it. ["Oh, oh!"] If hon. Members would content themselves to be quiet he would proceed to show why that speech was not open to the construction put upon it. The hon. Member had recommended the people in these townlands to withhold the payment of an unjust impost; but he had said, at the same time, that his object in giving that advice was that the Government should be put to the trouble of collecting the tax as best they could. He was not aware that, even in regard to the proceedings of citizens in this country, this proposal was by any means a novel one. The proposal was not only not a novel one, but had been absolutely carried into effect, and carried into effect more than once, and successfully, in procuring the reform of unjust laws. It was within the memory of everyone in the House who was well instructed in the history of England that the people of England had, from time to time, combated the imposition of unjust taxes by withholding payment. They gave the Government great trouble to collect the money, drew attention to the subject, and thereby brought about a remedy of the evils of which they complained. His hon. Friend's proposal was not a proposal to break the law, but simply to put those who had the power of the law in their hands to the necessity of enforcing it. If anything could have provoked an hon. Member to make such a Motion in the hurry of debate, it would have been the manner in which the Attorney General for Ireland received the moderate proposal of the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Nolan). What did the right hon. and learned Gentleman do? He was not disposed even to hear the case stated; he rose twice and endeavoured to attract the Speaker's eye, and interrupted the speech of the hon. and gallant Member. He then put before the House the case which, in a dry, lawyer-like spirit, he had prepared before he had heard a single word of the hon. and gallant Member's speech. He did not wish to hear what the grievance was, or in what way the Act had been exercised. No; he had referred to his law-books, conned the relevant and appropriate section, and, having satisfied himself as to the interpretation of it, he was not disposed to consider the matter further. Was it to be held that, because a procedure was according to an Act of Parliament, therefore it was not to be discussed? How had reforms in the law been legitimately, historically, and constantly procured in this country? Was it not by Committees of this House and the other House inquiring into the provisions of Acts of Parliament, investigating their nature, working, and operation, and ascertaining how far and in what degree they needed amendment? The theory of the right hon. and learned Gentleman was a political and Constitutional heresy of the gravest character. He would refer to the common experience of all politicians in this country to show that Acts of Parliament were improved by the adoption of such proposals as this. What was the case now made? A hay-stack was burnt; and for the moment he would assume that the injury was malicious. If the police of the county could show that any of the inhabitants were parties to the injury, he would agree to the imposition; but what did that mean? It meant 8*s*. in the pound; it meant that people who for the last two or three years had been plunged in distress, and unable to pay their rent and common debts, except by depriving themselves of necessary clothing and food, were to have this crushing and ruinous impost placed upon them; and the Attorney General said that, because the Act of Parliament provided for this imposition, no inquiry was to be made into the manner in which the Grand Jury had exercised their power. He did not think the Constitutional lawyer sitting by the right hon. and learned Gentleman would support that view, for he was aware that the proper method of reforming Acts of Parliament was an inquiry into them by Parliament. Nothing could be more reasonable than the demand made by the hon. and gallant Member. These poor people were deprived of proper redress; and he invited any other Member of the Government to support the theory of the Attorney General that because a certain thing was in an Act of Parliament the manner of exercising it was not to be inquired into.

Colonel NOLAN said, his whole objection to the impost was the area over which it was levied. These people were surrounded partly by poor tenants, and partly by rich grazing grounds and rich domains occupied by people closely connected with the Grand Jury. He did not accuse the Grand Jury of seeking to injure these people; but he thought they desired to protect their own people. The taxation ought to have been levied over a larger area. The man who had been injured did not accuse the people in the neighbourhood. He was on perfectly good terms with them; he was a large owner and a solicitor, and he did not think that these people had done the injury. This was a clear and well-defined case, and the House had his (Colonel Nolan's) responsibility for the facts; and what better case could the Government have for an inquiry than this? He besought the Government to reconsider their decision, and grant an inquiry. He had advised several of these people to pay the impost, promising to bring the matter before the House, and saying he was sure the House would order an inquiry as to whether the impost was right or wrong.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, the appeal of the hon. and gallant Member who moved for an inquiry had produced no effect on the attitude of the Treasury Bench; and from no cause but the sheer arbitrary exercise of power, which ought to have been taken from the Irish Grand Juries long ago, a number of poor people, not one of whom was even reasonably suspected of having had any share in what had occurred, were reduced to utter ruin by these irresponsible persons. It was a common remark among the Liberal Party that the Irish Grand Juries were utterly unworthy of the functions they exercised; and there was not a county in Ireland in which scandalous and disgraceful partiality was not continually displayed by these Grand Juries. A short time ago a gentleman who was a Parnellite went to Letterkenny on business. For the purpose of the journey he hired two horses of a most respectable hotel proprietor in Derry. On his return from Letterkenny it was discovered that both the horses had been cruelly poisoned with arsenic, and while one died after fearful torture, the other only recovered after several weeks' illness. This was a clear case of malicious injury; but when the hotel proprietor appealed to the Grand Jury at Derry, although there was evidence given by analytical chemists of the highest authority that, beyond doubt, the poor brute had perished from poisoning, the Grand Jury had the face to declare "No malice." The Grand Jury now concerned was not unworthy to rank with the Grand Jury of Derry, and it had utterly ruined three innocent townlands in Galway; but it was to be protected even from inquiry, because it had acted on the strict letter of the legal attributes of which it ought to have been deprived long ago. That was the statement of the Law Officers of the Crown. The next contribution was by the Home Secretary, who stood up and put an extraordinary interpretation on the speech of the hon. Member (Mr. Healy), and indulged in his habitual recreation of rebuking an Irish Member and holding his language up to reprobation! The idea of the right hon. and learned Gentleman holding language up to reprobation. The right hon. and learned Gentleman, after having heard the clear and convincing explanation of the hon. Member who was so unjustly accused, and after hearing that supported by other hon. Members who had listened to it quite as carefully as he, maintained his seat without the slightest regard for the courtesy of the House, and without the slightest word of apology. He did not expect an apology from Gentlemen of the character of the right hon. and learned Gentleman, who had not won his way to the position he held in the Liberal Party by the exercise of courtesy.

Mr. SPEAKER: I must request the hon. Member to address himself to the question before the House.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, no Member of the Government had made any reply to the statement of the Irish case. Was that worthy of the case, or of the ancient traditions of the House? His observation covered both Members of the Government who had spoken.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH said, it would have been gratifying to the House if the Government had granted this inquiry, for it could not be denied that the Grand Jury system in Ireland was not in very high favour in this country; and on the face of it this case of levying 8*s*. in the pound, on the rental, upon people who were represented as poor people, was so monstrously glaring that there did appear to be a case against the administration of the Grand Jury. The hon. and gallant Member did not challenge for a moment the fairness of the law that where malicious injury had been done, the district ought to be called upon to pay compensation; but if it was true that there had been a selfish exclusion of a large area, and the inclusion of a small and poor area, then he could not retain his seat without protesting against such a state of things. They must all feel that if such things remained unredressed, it could not be wondered at that the people in Ireland and some hon. Members of that House should express themselves, and even act in an injudicious manner. He would remind the Home Secretary that it was not alone in Ireland that people refused to pay charges and imposts that were regarded as excessive. In the papers of that day there appeared a case in which a farmer had refused to pay his tithes, and there had been a contest of no insignificant character, within the last 48 hours, which did not at all go beyond the recommendation of the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy). At the same time, he was bound to say that the hon. Members for Wexford and Dungarvan had scarcely taken a course likely to influence the House in their favour.

Mr. P. MARTIN said, he hoped the House would not be induced, by the statement made on behalf of the Government, to refuse an inquiry. The best way to preserve peace and order in Ireland was to show the people that there was no just grievance presented to the House which the House was not willing to redress; and it would be an evil thing for the people of Ireland to be able to say that the House refused to consider a case of this character when brought under its notice. What would be said when it was found that the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth), the Colleague of the Chief Secretary for Ireland, acknowledged that, according to what he had heard from the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan), a fair case for inquiry had been made out, but the Government refused an investigation? It must not be imagined that the Irish people were not quick-witted enough to perceive that, notwithstanding his sophistry, the Attorney General for Ireland had not fairly stated the case. He had contended that the tenants on whom this crushing tax appeared to have been imposed might have appeared at Presentment Sessions, and, if dissatisfied there, have traversed before the Judges of Assize. If they had adopted that course they would simply have incurred unnecessary expense. The Presentment Sessions in Ireland dealt with a case simply to ascertain whether there had been malicious injury, and if there had, they fixed the amount of compensation. The Judges had nothing to do with the question whether that amount should be levied over a particular area or not; that was a matter which was left wholly to the discretion of the Grand Jury. That discretion might be exercised in the most capricious and unjust way, yet the ratepayers were not permitted to intervene or appeal. The facts vouched by the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) clearly proved how unjustly and unreasonably the assessment had been made in townlands far distant from the place concerned, and where the people were so unable to bear the impost. If ever there was a case demanding an inquiry from a Select Committee this was a case; and let not hon. Members imagine this was a solitary instance of complaints of this character. Similar instances of alleged abuse in the determination as to the area had been again and again urged, as showing the necessity of amendment in the Grand Jury Code. Indeed, so far back as 1842—though the matter might now have passed from recollection—a Select Committee of that House entirely condemned the mode in which the areas of assessment were made by Grand Juries. It was a most dangerous power to place in the hands of any body of men. If Grand Juries, constituted as those bodies were, continued to discharge, as at present, without control or appeal, functions of this character, it would be ever said, as it had been frequently alleged in the past, that they would be led aside by the influence of prejudice and motives of self-interest. Therefore, when there was a case such as this, where an enormous impost was levied, an impost of 8*s.* in the pound, which, having regard to other rates, was sufficient to crush the tenants of these townlands; when the impost was made apparently without reason, and at the best capriciously; and when the hon. and gallant Member offered to prove that there had not been the slightest suggestion before the Grand Jury, or by anyone throughout that country, that the tenants had participated in the offence, a refusal of an inquiry would, he believed, bear evil fruit in Ireland.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER) said, the hon. and gallant Member asked for a Select Committee to inquire into the manner in which the county cess had been imposed at the Summer Assizes on certain townlands in the county of Galway and in Queen's County; but if the request were complied with, and a Select Committee were granted as to the mode of assessment in connection with these townlands, no practical advantage would be derived, because, although there could be no doubt that the hon. and gallant Gentleman had made out a case of hardship, nothing further could be done in the matter. The House, in directing a Select Committee to inquire into the circumstances, would really not give to the hon. and gallant Gentleman that which appeared to be the object he had in view, which was rather a general inquiry into the operation of the Grand Jury Law. An inquiry into a special case of this kind, although at first sight there were grounds for the belief that it was a case of considerable hardship, would not accomplish what the hon. and gallant Gentleman required, because every care would be taken that the inquiry did not drift into what was, in reality, the very thing the hon. and gallant Gentleman desired—namely, an inquiry into the operation of certain clauses of the Grand Jury Act. No Select Committee appointed under this Reference could enter into any such investigation. The course now pursued by the Grand Juries was that when a claim for compensation was sent in it was investigated, and the Grand Jury had the duty imposed on it of ascertaining whether the damage had been maliciously done, and then of prescribing the district over which the compensation was to be assessed. He was sorry that his hon. and gallant Friend had not been able to attend the Grand Jury at the time this case was brought on. It did appear that the amount of £97, as the price of a haystack, was a very large amount to be levied over this area; but, at the same time, the Grand Jury was the only legal tribunal which could prescribe the area, and there were no means on the part of the House of correcting their decision. He hoped that the hon. and gallant Gentleman, having attained his object by raising a discussion, would not press the Motion. If the hon. and gallant Gentleman brought forward a Motion for inquiry into the working of the Grand Jury Act generally as to awarding compensation, the Government would consider his proposition. He thought there were a great many matters connected with the Grand Jury Act which might fairly be made the subject of inquiry, with a view to their amendment. But if the inquiry now asked for were granted, it would begin and end with reference to the facts of this particular case only, and it could not possibly affect any change in the law, or produce any satisfactory result.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, the hon. and learned Gentleman the Solicitor General had certainly dealt with the question in a much better spirit, and with much better taste than his right hon. and learned Friend the Attorney General; and the hon. and learned Gentleman had one advantage over the Attorney General in appearing to have very little fancy for the melo-dramatic. But he hardly thought that the answer of the hon. and learned Gentleman was satisfactory. He did not think the inquiry which his hon. and gallant Friend (Colonel Nolan) desired was simply to alter the assessment of the compensation, or to get the decision already arrived at reversed. He (Colonel Nolan) rather desired to free these townlands from the disgrace of having a fine of this nature levied upon them. The hon. and learned Solicitor General suggested an inquiry into the working of the clauses of the Grand Jury Act. The Government had pledged themselves, over and over again, to reform the Grand Jury system. Not only the present Government, but other Governments for years past, had promised the reform of the whole system. His hon. and gallant Friend did not pretend that his Motion would bring about anything of that kind; but he had a much smaller and more practical object in view—namely, to show by this more narrow inquiry what the nature of the Grand Jury Law was, and how unjustly it worked. Such an inquiry would greatly strengthen the hands of any Government who desired hereafter to bring the general question forward.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 25; Noes 79: Majority 54.—(Div. List, No. 56.)

ORDER OF THE DAY.

PARISH CHURCHES BILL.—[Bill 99.]

(*Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Buxton, Mr. Courtauld,*
Mr. Cropper, Mr. Stanley Leighton,
Mr. William Henry Gladstone.)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. A. GREY said, he rose for the purpose of moving the second reading of this Bill, in regard to which he was afraid there was a very erroneous impression abroad. It was not, by any means, so large a measure as some hon. Members thought. It was a Bill which had been drafted and prepared by the Free and Open Church Association, which was presided over by Earl Nelson, and which included among its patrons the Archbishop of Dublin and 26 Bishops, 14 of whom were English Bishops. Among its Vice Presidents he found the names of the Whip of the late Government, of the Whip of the present Government, of the noble Lord who, in the late Government, filled the Office of Postmaster General; and the name of the son of the Prime Minister was on the back of the Bill itself. He also found among the Vice Presidents the name of the hon. Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. J. G. Talbot), whom he was glad to see in his place, and who, he hoped, was going to support the second reading of the Bill. The object of the Bill was to assert and maintain the equal right of all parishioners to the free use of the floor of the parish church. By the ancient Common Law, the body of the parish church belonged of common right to all parishioners, and no place could be permanently appropriated to the exclusive use of any person. Lord Chief Justice Hussey, in 1492, pronounced that "no place belonged to one more than the other;" and the correctness of this judgment was endorsed by the House of Lords' Committee "on the Deficiency of the means of Spiritual Instruction and Places of

Worship," who reported, nearly 400 years later—in 1858—that,

> "Returning to the normal state of things, where it remains unaffected by any special privilege, the body of every parish church belongs of common right to all the parishioners, and this right cannot lawfully be defeated by any permanent appropriation of particular places."

But the ancient Common Law, which asserted that the body of the parish church should be as free and common to all parishioners as the Queen's highway, had in the course of time become corrupted; and the practice of appropriating to the use of particular persons seats, which were properly for the use in common of all the parishioners, had become almost universal. The Bishops, for instance, when complaint was made to them by individual parishioners, invariably replied that by law it was the Churchwardens' duty to assign seats to parishioners as they thought fit. The following instances might be cited among many others: — Mr. G. W. Butler, a parishioner of Horley, Surrey, wrote last February to the Bishop of Rochester urging the legal right of the parishioners to the use in common of their parish church, and asking him to forbid the Churchwardens carrying out their publicly announced intention of assigning the seats in the church to a section of the parishioners. The Bishop replied, through his solicitor, as follows:—

> "7th of March, 1882.
>
> "Sir—I am desired by the Bishop of Rochester to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, and to inform you that by the Ecclesiastical Law it belongs to the office of the Churchwardens to assign seats in the parish church to the parishioners, subject to the general control of the Bishop in case of need; and that, according to the decisions of the Ecclesiastical Courts, the parishioners are not at liberty to choose any seats they like.—I am, &c. (signed), ARTHUR F. DAY."

Again, in the case of Stroud Parish Church, a correspondence recently took place in *The Stroud News* as to the appropriation of seats, and the Churchwardens wrote to the paper to explain that all the seats were appropriated. A parishioner then complained to the Bishop, who replied that "it is the duty of the Churchwardens to seat the parishioners, and for the most part rateably." The last case he would quote was that of the Parish Church of Droitwich and the Bishop of Worcester. The Rector lately gave notice in the church that the seats were free, whereupon the Churchwardens complained to the Bishop, who wrote at once to the Rector as follows:—

> "Hartlebury, Kidderminster,
> "October 22, 1881.
>
> "My dear Mr. Burrow,
>
> "Mr. Beanlands told me yesterday that you have given public notice in church that the seats henceforth would be free and open to all comers, without regard to any assignment of them which may be made by the Churchwardens. If this be true, it is my duty to tell you that you have assumed a power, in opposition to the acts of the Churchwardens, which you do not possess, and have taken a step which may lead to serious mischief. I must repeat what I have already said to you—October 4, 1881—that it is the exclusive duty of the Churchwardens—subject to appeal to the Bishop—to assign seats to the parishioners; that the Rector has no power to interfere in any way with such assignment, and that if any complaint arise it should be referred to the Bishop. If the Churchwardens think it wise and good to assign seats to the parishioners as they come into the church every Sunday, they would be within the law in so doing until otherwise directed; but if, as is usual in most parish churches, they assign seats to certain persons for the whole term of their year of office, they have a right to do so, and their action cannot lawfully be hindered by the Rector.
>
> "Yours faithfully,
> "(Signed) H. WORCESTER.
>
> "The Rev. R. F. Burrow."

These instances would be sufficient to show that it was the opinion in high places that the Churchwardens were empowered to appropriate seats for the year; and it would be found on inquiry that the opinion of the Bishops was almost universal throughout the country. But he contended that the Churchwardens had no such power; that their duty as guardians of order was—in the words of Canon 85—"to see that in every meeting of the congregation peace be well kept," and that no one should be allowed to obstruct the common right. He contended, further, that the use of the church was common to all the parishioners; that this Common Law right was inherent in themselves, and could not be taken away from them by the Bishop, or by the parishioners' own elected officers, the Churchwardens. There was one objection to the provisions of the Bill commonly made by persons who had not sufficiently studied the subject, and that was, that if the Bill passed into law, one of the most important sources of Church revenue would be lost. That, however, would not be the case, because the only effect of the operation of the

Bill would be to prevent the appropriation of seats and the levying of pew rents in those churches which were not legally authorized to levy pew rents by virtue of special Acts of Parliament. In those churches the appropriation of seats would be no longer admissible; but in all cases where the Ecclesiastical Commissioners had, under the powers vested in them by Acts of Parliament—powers which they acted upon whenever they thought necessary—authorized the levying of pew rents, such pew rents might still be legally levied. The existing rights in this respect would not be interrupted, nor would the legal powers of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to authorize in the future the levying of pew rents be touched by the present measure. He did not wish to weary the House at that late hour, and trusted he had said enough to make clear what were the objects of the Bill. He trusted the House would agree to the second reading of a Bill which aimed at the reform of a system which he maintained to be injurious to the Church, destructive to religion, and creative of class dislikes. He held it to be wrong that the pews in the churches, which belonged to all, should be appropriated to the use of the few; that the poor, for whom the Church primarily existed, should be robbed of their rights. What wonder, then, he asked, that the poor, who found themselves thus excluded from the Church, should come to look upon it with dislike, and regard it not as the Church of the poor, but as the Church of the well-to-do—the Church of a sect in which they had no place? Could it be a matter of surprise that they should forsake the Church and swell the ranks of Nonconformity? Therefore, with the wish to make the Church of England what it should be, and what it professed to be—the Church of the people—he asked the House to pass this Bill, which restored to all the parishioners their common and equal right to the accommodation which the Church afforded.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. A. Grey.*)

Mr. J. G. TALBOT said, the hon. Member for Northumberland had been good enough to infer, from his presence in the House at that late hour, that he was in favour of the Bill. With the general objects of the measure, and with the sentiments expressed by the hon. Member in connection with it, he heartily sympathized; but he was bound also to add that he thought the Bill, as it stood, was not one which could safely be allowed to pass the House; and, although he was quite ready to vote for its second reading, in the event of its passing that stage, he should feel it his duty to move certain Amendments in Committee which would indicate alterations that in his view were necessary before the measure took its place amongst the Statutes of the country. He would shortly refer to two points which deserved the attention of the hon. Member and the House, and in connection with which it seemed to him absolutely necessary to amend the Bill. In the first place, he thought it would be impossible to prohibit all appropriation of seats. He agreed that there should be no payment for pews in the old parish churches of the country; and on that point, therefore, he was entirely in accord with the hon. Member opposite. But he did not think it would be safe to forbid appropriation in all parish churches. There was an instance strongly fixed in his mind of a church at which he had the pleasure of meeting the hon. Member—one of the parish churches of the country, in which the concourse of persons was so great, owing to the popularity of the clergyman and the character of the service, and where the effect of non-appropriation of seats would produce the very result the hon. Member wished to prevent—that was to say, the driving out of the poor by the incursion of strangers. It was, therefore, a mistake to say that appropriation meant always appropriation to the rich and the driving out of the poor. In the case he referred to, the appropriation by the Churchwardens took place for the benefit of the parishioners; and the hon. Member would see that, under such conditions, it would be dangerous to the very class whom he sought to protect to prohibit the appropriation of seats. Again, it seemed to him that the Bill, as worded, would prohibit the letting of seats hereafter in all churches, even those already built under the Church Buildings Act, and those to be built.

Mr. A. GREY said, the hon. Member was wrong in supposing that that would be the effect of the Bill. In all cases the Commissioners, under the powers which they possessed, could authorize the levying of pew-rents and the appropriation of pews where they were satisfied that the available sources of revenue were not sufficient.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT said, his contention was that the wording of the Bill, as it then stood, did not sufficiently carry out the hon. Member's proposition. However, as he had stated that that was not the object he had in view, he would not, of course, oppose the introduction of words that would make the point perfectly clear. Those were his reasons for saying that he could not allow the Bill to pass in its present form without asking the House to consider the Amendments which he should move in Committee for the purposes indicated. It was a question whether the Bill, which dealt with a subject of great national interest and importance, had been brought forward at an hour when it was likely to receive the amount of consideration and discussion which was due to it? That, however, was a point that he should not take up the time of the House in arguing. The hon. Member opposite, as he was aware, was under the same difficulty which all private Members were exposed to in reference to bringing forward their Bills late at night; and it was the duty of all hon. Members who had objections to urge to them to remain until they came on for discussion. In conclusion, while he concurred with the hon. Member in the endeavour to make the parish churches, so far as possible, the churches of all classes of the people, he was not prepared to allow the Bill to pass through Committee in its present form.

Sir JAMES M'GAREL-HOGG said, in consequence of what the hon. Gentleman opposite had told him privately, he had been induced not to put down a Notice which would have prevented the Bill coming forward at that hour. Still, he was bound to point out that there were many Gentlemen who desired to take part in the debate, and who, like himself, did not agree with the hon. Member that the Bill would be advantageous in every way to the poor. His experience with regard to Church matters had been long and varied, and it led him to believe that it would not be possible to prevent persons who wished to endow and build churches from levying pew rents. He could say of many of the churches with which he had been connected that, had pew rents not been established, it would have been simply impossible for those churches to have been in existence. Without going into the various Acts of Parliament bearing upon the subject, the whole question could not be satisfactorily considered. But it was impossible to enter upon those Acts at so late an hour (2.15); and, therefore, considering that he had not blocked the Motion of the hon. Member, he would ask him whether he was not willing to postpone the further consideration of the Bill until another day? There were many hon. Gentlemen who desired to take part in the discussion, but who, owing to the late hour at which it had been reached, were unfortunately absent; and, for his own part, he had not expected, considering all the subjects connected with it, that the Bill would have been proceeded with that evening. They all agreed that the hon. Member had no other wish than to do all the good in his power for the Church of England, and it was to be hoped that he gave hon. Members on those Benches credit for the same intention; but the Bill, in his opinion, was too important to be disposed of at that hour of the night, and he appealed to the hon. Member to postpone it to a period when it could be more properly discussed.

Mr. RAIKES wished to join in the appeal which had been made to the hon. Member in charge of the Bill by the hon. and gallant Member for Truro. It appeared to him that, apart from any question as to the precise merits of this measure, there could be no doubt that it was one of very considerable importance, and that it aimed at effecting in the arrangements of the Church of England, so far as our parish churches were concerned, something which amounted almost to a revolution. The merits of the Bill he would rather not enter into on that occasion at any length. He felt sure that many hon. Members present, who had remained in the House for the purpose of watching the progress of the Bill, would be very unwilling to keep from the House those observations which, on a more favourable occasion, they would have been anxious to offer. While he agreed with some of the observations which had fallen from his hon. Friend the Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. J. G. Talbot), he was unable to go the same length as he went in being able to promise a general concurrence with the measure. He presumed there were few hon. Members who would not wish to see some provision made by law for the freedom of the seats in parish churches. But he confessed to holding the opinion that the provision which was made by the 3rd clause of the Bill, for preventing appropriation in all parish churches, would be little else than a prohibition of family worship in the parish churches of the country. Therefore, he trusted that the hon. Member, having regard to the great consideration shown by Gentlemen who did not quite agree with him, in not putting a blocking Notice on the Paper, would be content to allow the debate to be adjourned to some more favourable time, when he need expect no factious opposition, but simply the expression of opinions intended to make the Bill a practical and useful measure for the benefit of the Church of England, and the carrying out of some, at least, of the objects which he had in view.

Mr. ONSLOW said, he was not in a position to say that he was opposed to any portion of the Bill; but the hon. Member, in supporting his Motion for the second reading, had certainly made use of some arguments with which he entirely disagreed. For instance, he said it was only the want of accommodation which gave people a dislike to the Established Church. Now, he was acquainted with many parish churches throughout the length and breadth of the country, and in the course of his experience he had never yet known or heard of any body of parishioners who refused to go to church because there was no accommodation. He had known them stay away from church because they disliked the parson. So far as the appropriation of seats was concerned, the opinion expressed by the hon. Member was not universal; and he was quite sure that in many places the parishioners liked to see the squire in his place at church, and would be very unwilling that the seat should be taken away from a person who was looked up to with the greatest respect. He repeated that he did not believe the churches were deserted on account of the appropriation of pews; but, whether or not that was so, he appealed to the hon. Member in charge of the Bill to postpone the discussion upon it until a future time. Hon. Members opposite objected to this course; but he ventured to think that the measure had not been sufficiently considered by those persons throughout the country who were concerned in its provisions. He very much doubted whether many clergymen of the Church of England had seen the Bill yet, because it was only printed on the 8th of March, and when it was distributed he knew not. However trivial the title of the Bill might sound, its contents were of the greatest importance, inasmuch as it affected the interests of the Church of England; and, therefore, he renewed his appeal to the hon. Member to agree to the postponement of the debate.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT said, he was quite sure the hon. Member in charge of the Bill would not desire that it should pass into law without proper discussion; and he would suggest to hon. Gentlemen opposite, after the remarks which had fallen from the hon. Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. J. G. Talbot), to consider whether the Bill might not be allowed to be read a second time. The matter had been very fairly discussed by those who were opposed to the Bill. Hon. Gentlemen would lose nothing by allowing the measure to be read a second time that night, because they would have the control of it when it went into Committee. He was surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) call what was now proposed a complete revolution. As he understood the law, the parish church was absolutely free to the parishioners, and the Churchwardens could not let or sell a pew except under the authority of an Act of Parliament. What was there revolutionary in the Bill? It only limited the powers of the Churchwardens in appropriating the pews, and made the pews more free. Under the present law, Churchwardens could not let or sell a pew in the parish church except under Act of Parliament, and neither could a private person do so, and Clause 7 of the present Bill entirely protected those rights. He appealed to hon. Gentlemen opposite to allow the Bill to pass the second reading, and take the opportunity, if they wished, of amending it in Committee.

Mr. F.W. BUXTON said, that, as his name appeared on the back of the Bill, he might, perhaps, be allowed to make a few remarks. It was urged by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) that the Bill had not been sufficiently considered by the clergy throughout the country. He was not in the House at the moment his hon. Friend (Mr. A. Grey) moved the second reading of the Bill; but he thought it ought to be distinctly understood that the measure had been brought in after careful consideration by an Association consisting chiefly of clergymen. Among the list of Vice Presidents of the Association, he found the names of one Archbishop, 24 Bishops, and six Deans, and the Bill was fully approved by the Committee of the Association. The Bill was very simple in its provisions; it was, in fact, only a declaratory Bill, which re-enacted the provisions of former Bills. As the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary had pointed out, Clause 7 distinctly re-enacted that the provisions of former Acts should be carried out and not interfered with. Clause 6 of the New Parishes Act of 1856 stated—

> "Provided always, That one-half, at least, of the whole number of pews and sittings in such church shall be free sittings, and that it shall be shown to the satisfaction of the Sub-Commissioners that the said free sittings will, in respect to position and convenience, be as advantageously situated as those which may be rented and reserved."

He would ask hon. Members whether those provisions were honestly carried out in all the parish churches throughout the country? His experience was that free sittings were generally reserved at the lower end, and in parts of the church from which nothing could be seen or heard. He was persuaded that if the House would take the second reading that night his hon. Friend (Mr. A. Grey) would be quite prepared to meet, in as honest and fair a spirit as had been displayed on the opposite side, any Amendment which might be made in Committee.

SIR EDMUND LECHMERE said, that, as a member of the Free and Open Church Association, and as a Churchwarden of some years' experience, he felt bound to support the Bill. Personally, he was disposed to assent to the second reading that night, though he was not unmindful of the fact that, in Committee, it would be requisite to propose certain Amendments. He thought the House would almost stultify itself if it did not express its approval of the Bill, because they had already shown their disposition to proceed in the direction suggested by the Bill in their own parish church of St. Margaret, where, some years ago, there was a large portion of the church reserved for the Members of the House of Commons, very few of whom, however, availed themselves of the accommodation. Now, no hon. Member who went to the church failed to get a seat; but, at the same time, there was ample provision made for other worshippers. He trusted the second reading would be agreed to, and that, in Committee, the hon. Member (Mr. A. Grey) would consent to certain modifications.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said, the present was not a cheerful hour of the morning to enter on the discussion of so important a question as that submitted to them by the hon. Member (Mr. A. Grey). He did not think, however, that the people of the country—speaking of those who were the adherents of the Established Church, as well as of those who held his views—could have any great objection to a Bill which declared that the parish churches of the country belonged to the people of the parish. But what good it could do he could not understand. It was a matter of universal knowledge that the parish churches belonged to the people of the parish; but in spite of that knowledge the pews in parish churches were appropriated, and rents were paid for them, and this practice was common to all parts of the country. Now, he ventured to put this to the House—that when Bills had been brought forward for the removal, say, of various Dissenting grievances—such as the abolition of church rates, and the alteration of the Marriage Laws—it was by no means usual to enter on those very important ecclesiastical changes between 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning. They were not anxious that questions of Church Reform should take the form of smuggled legislation; and in the interest of the House of Commons, and in the interest of the legislation they were asked to undertake, he objected to the Bill being taken so late in a Sitting. There was a reasonable time when they might be asked to go into matters of that kind. For his own part, he had no objection to the Bill, although he believed it to be utterly useless. He was bound to point out that there were evidences that they were going to be flooded with Bills for the reform of the Church of England in every branch; and he warned hon. Gentlemen to be prepared to sit late on many occasions, for there was not a single department of the Church which did not want a radical reform, according to the views of one or other of the conflicting parties which went to make up the Church Establishment.

Mr. ASHMEAD-BARTLETT said, he would not take up the time of the House for more than a moment. He thought the friends of the Church should be very distrustful of the insidious friendship of the hon. Member for Bradford (Mr. Illingworth) in any proposal of this kind. He remembered that the hon. Member for Bradford adopted a similar course with regard to the Church Patronage Bill. He blocked its successful passage through the House by threatening Motions for Adjournment. Gentlemen like the hon. Member were always clamouring for Church Reform outside, and always preventing it inside the House. Reforms required might be radical, as the hon. Member stated; but his real object, and that of the Liberation Society, which he represented, was the complete destruction of the Church. That, he hoped, was yet far distant. The proposal of the Home Secretary was a sound and fair one—namely, that the second reading should be passed. It was only right that the Bill should be advanced a stage, if the hon. Gentleman in charge of the measure would give them assurances that it should be fully discussed in Committee.

Mr. A. GREY said, if anything could have induced him to meet the appeal in the largest and most liberal manner possible, it would have been the kind and chivalrous way in which the appeal had been made to him by the hon. Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. J. G. Talbot) and the hon. and gallant Member for Truro (Sir James M'Garel-Hogg). He owed a special debt of gratitude to the hon. and gallant Member for Truro, for it was by a kindly act of forbearance on his part in not putting a block to the measure that he (Mr. Grey) had been able to propose the second reading of the Bill that night. He trusted hon. Gentlemen would be satisfied with the proposal that had been made by the Home Secretary, and would allow the Bill to be read a second time, on the fullest assurance from himself that he would give every possible opportunity to discuss the details of the Bill in Committee.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *To-morrow.*

METROPOLIS MANAGEMENT AND BUILDING ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

On Motion of Sir James M'Garel Hogg, Bill to confer further powers upon the Metropolitan Board of Works with respect to Streets and Buildings in the Metropolis, *ordered* to be brought in by Sir James M'Garel-Hogg, Admiral Sir John Hay, and Sir Andrew Lusk.

Bill *presented,* and read the first time. [Bill 107.]

House adjourned at a quarter before Three o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Wednesday, 22nd *March,* 1882.

MINUTES.]—New Writ Issued—*For* East Cornwall, *v.* the Hon. Thomas Charles Agar-Robartes, called up to the House of Peers.

Public Bills — *Ordered — First Reading —* Burglary * [109]; Metropolis (Rating of Footways) * [110].

Second Reading — University Education (Ireland) [9], *negatived.*

ORDER OF THE DAY.

UNIVERSITY EDUCATION (IRELAND) BILL.—[Bill 9.]

(*Mr. William Corbet, Mr. O'Donnell, Mr. Gray, Mr. Dawson.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. W. J. CORBET, in moving that the Bill be now read a second time, said, the question of University Education for Ireland had been, over and over again, so exhaustively treated in debates in that House that it would be presumptuous on his part to attempt to add to the information already in the possession of the House on the subject. In the few observations, therefore, with which he proposed to introduce the Bill to the

House, he should confine himself to pointing out briefly the unmistakable fact that University Education in Ireland was far from being settled by recent legislation, and that a University question still existed, ought to exist, and must of necessity continue to exist, until it was dealt with on a just and proper basis—namely, that of providing for the Catholic people of Ireland education on a perfect footing equal to that of their Protestant fellow-countrymen, who formed but a small yet highly-favoured minority of the whole—a minority, it must be remembered, who had hitherto had all the loaves and fishes to themselves, and who were, and had been, in a much better position to take care of themselves and of their own interest than the majority of their fellow-countrymen. University Education in Ireland, as hon. Members knew well, was for centuries confined to Trinity College, Dublin—a University established by Charter in the reign of Queen Elizabeth in 1591, and largely endowed for the express purpose of exclusive Protestant education. The treatment of Catholics in those days, not only in regard to education, but everything else, was so painful a subject that he did not desire to dwell upon it. The atrocious Penal Laws, which blurred the Statute Book and disgraced the English name, had one by one been blotted out —those laws which the Prime Minister had so often and so eloquently denounced as un-Christian, barbarous, and abominable. But, although those enactments had been swept away, the inequalities between the two countries had been but slowly and gradually, and, he regretted to say, unwillingly diminished, and they were still far from having been altogether removed. With regard to those inequalities and the unwilling concessions which had, from time to time, been made in this House, he would, with the permission of the House, quote a very brief extract of the speech of the Prime Minister. Speaking on a kindred subject in this House, the right hon. Gentleman said there was no end to the concessions which had been accorded by a Liberal policy; but they had not produced the natural fruits that might have been expected; that the Roman Catholics still remained unsatisfied; and that Parliament was met with fresh demands; and his answer was—"As we have sown so have we reaped." He said the method pursued had produced its inevitable fruit, and what ought to have been seen. From time to time the Irish problem had been dealt with; but it never had been dealt with by removing the whole cause of dispute. How thoroughly well the Prime Minister understood the situation! He said that for 100 years they had been moving in the same direction. The right hon. Gentleman then quoted the concessions which had been made from 1778 up to 1829, when the Roman Catholics first took their seats in Parliament on a footing of substantial equality; but they had not proceeded from a spontaneous sense of justice on the part of England, in a melting mood, when considering the sufferings of Ireland, but rather from fearful anticipations of impending trouble; and, therefore, they were not to be surprised if they failed to elicit the abundant gratitude which the people of England expected. The facts spoke for themselves. In 1828, when the prospects of the American War were growing more gloomy, the first concession was made; again, when we had serious troubles with France; and again, in 1800, when that struggle had assumed its darkest and most desperate aspects, concessions were also made. At last, in 1829, they gave the Roman Catholics seats in that House, when the hon. Member who proposed the measure said unless they were prepared for concessions, they must look for civil war in Ireland as the only alternative. When they had engraved upon their own acts the motives from which they had proceeded, they would fail to have elicited the gratitude of the people. The right hon. Gentleman added—

> "I believe the laws of nature have been too strong for us, and they ought to have enabled us to predict what has happened."

Future legislation for Ireland, not only in the matter of education, but on other subjects, had been the fruit of, he (Mr. Corbet) would not say of the generous bounty of England, for they indignantly repudiated that idea—they did not desire to receive as a loan what was their right; but if legislation for Ireland had been the fruit of natural justice, not, as the Prime Minister had put it, of fearful anticipation, the relations existing between Ireland and England to-day would be very different indeed from what they were at present.

Those words of the Prime Minister were pregnant ones, and it was very much to be regretted that they were not more reflected upon and acted upon by Englishmen, both inside the House and out of it. Now, as to the existing state of University Education in Ireland, he would not say a single harsh word about Trinity College, Dublin; his only surprise was that a University founded by a Sovereign who in Ireland was so stern and relentless, and whose avowed object was to root out and destroy the religious faith of nine-tenths of the people, should for so long a period of time have preserved so large a share of popularity as it undoubtedly possessed, and that, too, amongst Roman Catholics, who had never sought to enter its halls, or endeavoured to obtain its distinctions, its honours, and its rewards. It would ill become him, or any Irishman, to speak disparagingly of a University which had given so many notable and brilliant ornaments to the world, to the Bar, to the Senate, to science, to literature, and society. But a sectarian University, founded as he had described, was founded not to meet the wishes or ideas of the great majority of the Irish people; and the late Sir Robert Peel strove to meet the difficulty by establishing, in the year 1850, the Queen's University—or the "Godless Colleges," as they were named, from the fact that religion in any or every shape or form was excluded from them. It was foolishly thought that the good Roman Catholic Bishops would assent to so monstrous an arrangement as the exclusion from what professed to be a National University of all religious teaching. Largely endowed with a grant of £36,000 a-year, the Queen's University was exceptionally advantageous to the Roman Catholics. But the one thing necessary was wanting, and after a sickly, peevish, and perverse infancy, it had ceased to exist, and the Royal University was substituted in its stead. But did the Royal University meet the circumstances of the case? Nothing of the kind. It did not place the Catholics on an equal footing with their Protestant fellow-countrymen. The Protestant Church had the University of Dublin, with its splendid buildings and endowments, and he should be sorry to grudge them. Belfast was what he might call its counterpart, with its Presbyterian College there. But Ireland possessed no teaching University whatever that was acceptable to the great majority of the people. In this respect, however, both England and Scotland were well provided for. England had its great Universities at Oxford, Cambridge, Durham, London, and so on, with multitudinous Colleges and great endowments. Scotland had its four or five Universities, with very great resources; and all these great Universities had the warm and hearty sympathy and support of the people of England and Scotland. But Ireland was left out in the cold. It had no teaching University such as those he had named, for this hybrid University, as he might call it, was only an examining Board, and it was, moreover, starved by an insufficient provision, and handicapped unfairly in favour of the Queen's Colleges. The Queen's College Professors could join and compete for its Fellowships and its honours, as also could the Queen's College students for its prizes, Exhibitions, and Scholarships; but the Queen's College doors were closed against the Royal University men. No reciprocity existed with respect to the two institutions; and, therefore, whatever relation existed between the Queen's College and the Royal University, it would almost seem, under these circumstances, as if Government did not wish to lift its own offspring out of the mire, but rather to nip it in the bud. He had spoken of the Royal University as hybrid, and he did not wish to use the word in any offensive sense; but such it unquestionably was. Let them just look at the constitution of its Senate, and he thought it would show that was not an inapt description. They had upon it both Protestant and Roman Catholic Lords and Bishops, and Protestant and Roman Catholic laymen. He would not trouble the House by reading the list of the names of the Senate; but he thought he was justified, under the circumstances, in calling it a hybrid University. But, hybrid as it was, and defective as its operations were, he wanted to see its advantages extended in the words of the Bill, which he respectfully asked the House to read a second time, and to place all classes in Ireland on a more equal footing with regard to the advantages of study, and the awards of merit provided by State endowments. The Royal University was the nearest approach to equal rights that the Roman

Catholics had yet obtained; and until the time arrived when they could have a Chartered University of their own, equal in all respects to Trinity College, Dublin, or, at all events, equal in regard to its privileges and emoluments, he desired to see the legislation on the subject of University Education extended in the way indicated in this Bill. He complained that while exclusive advantages were retained by the Queen's Colleges, the Royal University was compelled to devote a considerable amount of its petty grant of £20,000 a-year to the Queen's Colleges. He asked the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland a Question on this subject a few days ago, for the purpose of getting a little information as to the relative possessions of the Colleges and the University. He asked the right hon. Gentleman if he could state the number and value of the Scholarships, the number of Exhibitions open exclusively to the Queen's Colleges provided by the public funds, and the number of the students. It happened there were not so many candidates as there were Scholarships; and he asked the right hon. Gentleman if they were open to all students of the Queen's Colleges, and were they also eligible to the prizes, honours, and distinctions of the Royal University; and, if so, to open the prizes and Scholarships at present open to the Queen's Colleges to students equally—to all students of the Royal University; and this report in the papers was the reply he had received from his right hon. Friend. It was stated that at some times there were fewer candidates than prizes, that all candidates were eligible—that was to say, all candidates belonging to the Queen's Colleges. But he did not think it would be to the interest of education to offer the prizes of the College to those not belonging to it. But if the Royal University honours and prizes were open to the Professors and students of the Queen's Colleges, why not show some reciprocity by offering their prizes to the Royal University men? He complained, then, that the advantages possessed by the Queen's College men were altogether exceptional, and it was manifestly unfair thus to handicap in its very infancy the Royal University that had been just established. It was with the object of extending the advantages of a higher education to all classes of Her Majesty's subjects in Ireland that the Bill which he now asked to be read a second time was introduced to the notice of the House.

MR. O'DONNELL, in seconding the Motion, said he did so, because it was designed to relieve inequalities in the system of University Education, and to throw freely open to the competition of the youth of Ireland all the moneys voted for this purpose by Parliament, without any exception in favour of any particular sect. He maintained, in the language of the Bill, that it was advisable to extend the benefits of the Royal University of Ireland by placing all classes of the Irish people on the same equal footing with regard to the studies, the rewards, and merits provided by State endowments; and for the carrying out of that purpose. The Bill called attention specially to the fact that, since the abolition of the Queen's University in Ireland, the State endowments of the Queen's Colleges in Ireland had served to confer unfair advantages upon students entering the Queen's Colleges compared with the very large majority of the students entering the Royal University from other sources. The revenue of the Royal University was £20,000 a-year, while the endowments of the Queen's Colleges amounted to between £30,000 and £35,000 a-year. There was some alteration in the latter amount owing to the abolition of the central body—the Queen's University; but the fact remained that the Queen's Colleges were known amongst all the Colleges which had a right to compete for the honours and prizes of the Royal University; but the Queen's Colleges alone were endowed out of the public funds, while they were eligible to prepare and train their students to compete for the prizes, honours, and distinctions of the Royal University. In that respect distinctly, there was an unfair advantage conferred at the expense of the general taxpayers upon that section of the students of the Royal University who elected to prepare for the courses of the Royal University within the Queen's Colleges. They had a Royal University open to all the academic youth of Ireland; but when they examined the matter to see if the academic youth had a fair start all round for competition for the honours and prizes of the Royal University, it was a glaring inequality and injustice that stared them in the face that a student who entered any ordinary College, and worked in that College for the prizes and advantages of the Royal University, they must do so entirely at their own cost and expense from the first day of their preparation to the last; while, on the other hand, the student who competed for the prizes of the Royal University, and who entered the Queen's Colleges for that purpose, was supplied at the public expense with proper professorial and tutorial assistance and encouragement of every kind at the expense of the general taxpayer. There could be no equality, there could be no form of justice, on the grounds of undenominational and unsectarian education, if a system like that was maintained. When they knew, in addition, that already, in the very first year of the starting of the Royal University, the students who entered the Royal University—though the Queen's Colleges formed only a minority of the general body of students entering the Royal University through other doors—they found at once—and they must admit at once—that the grievance was not merely a theoretical one, but it was, indeed, a grievance which had already become of a practical and serious description. In that year some 800 students matriculated in the Royal University for its opening session. Of these 800, only 300 matriculated in the Queen's Colleges, while 500 matriculated in the other Colleges throughout Ireland; but if the present unjust distribution of public funds were obtained in Ireland, all the majority of the 500 matriculated students who were approaching the honours and distinctions of the Royal University from outside the Queen's Colleges must pursue their educational preparation at their own private expense; while the 300 favoured students, who elected to enter the Royal University through the lecture halls of the Queen's Colleges, would be supplied at every step of their course with Professors and tutors at the public expense. These 300 students were, therefore, most unjustly favoured; and instead of there being equality and fair play between the different Colleges in Ireland, instead of there being that healthy and honest competition which was of much advantage for the stimulation to a desire of knowledge and learning in Ireland, they had the students of the Queen's Colleges encouraged by the bribe of State endowments, while all the rest of the general students of Ireland were left out in the cold. Was that the way to redress Irish grievances and to remove the inequalities of centuries? On the contrary, the system under which the Queen's Colleges were subsidized, and all the rest of the Colleges in Ireland left out, was nothing more or less than an aggravation, and a most offensive aggravation, of the previous injustice, whereby a scandalous system of inequality and favouritism was maintained. When they took another point into consideration, that injustice and inequality to which he had referred became more apparent and painful. They knew, as a matter of fact, that the Royal University was established ostensibly—and, he believed, with the intention of Parliament—to meet, in a special manner, the wants of the vast Catholic majority of the people of Ireland; but not only did they bribe, at the public expense, the students of the Queen's Colleges as against the students of other Colleges, but they bribed the students of those Queen's Colleges which, as regarded the vast bulk of the people of Ireland, were the most hopeless and incurable failures that could be imagined. He would show the failure of the Queen's Colleges, notwithstanding its bribery, by briefly quoting some statistics showing the number of Catholics who, in various years, received the humble degree of B.A. from the Queen's University. Take the average year of 1865. From all Ireland only six Catholics received the degree of B.A. in the Queen's University. In the following year only nine Catholics graduated to B.A. in the Queen's University. In 1867 only seven; in 1868, seven; in 1869, six; in 1870 only five. Just imagine keeping up, at the public expense, a University and Colleges for the ostensible advantage of the people of Ireland, the total work of which Colleges and University, as regarded the bulk of the people of Ireland, only amounted to an average of five graduates in Arts in the whole of Ireland. In 1871 the number rose to eight, and in 1872 the number for all Ireland was only six. Statistics for the later years were not forthcoming, although they were prepared, he believed, in 1872, with a view to the prosecution of a measure of University education by the Premier about that time. From those, however, which he had given, it appeared that, even under the stimulus and influence of a special University to themselves, the Queen's Colleges only succeeded in making from five to eight graduates in Arts per annum throughout all Ireland, and for that result the taxpayers had been paying £35,000 a-year to these very unsuccessful forcing institutions; and the most recent statistics as to the attendances at the Queen's Colleges in Ireland fully confirmed and corroborated the conclusions drawn. The reason why he took the Faculty of Arts as the test of the education in the Queen's Colleges was that the Faculty of Arts was the only educational Faculty. Medicine or engineering would not be any test, because in the Queen's Colleges no previous degree in Arts was required to qualify for medicine or engineering studies, and a student who entered one of the Queen's Colleges in Ireland to study for either of those Professions merely obtained the means of earning his daily bread. He was at work in a purely professional school from his first year, having no connection with a University education, properly so-called, except that connection which consisted in the accident of the prolongation of the roofs of the University Department to the various professional schools in which young men received a purely professional training. There was a great deal of difference in this respect between the College of a Queen's University and Trinity College, Dublin. For instance, he believed it was the rule in Trinity for a Bachelor of Medicine to be a Bachelor of Arts as well. Thus the medical degree of Trinity College imparted an educational degree in addition to the mere professional qualification; whereas in the Queen's Colleges the professional degree imparted no educational qualification whatever. In support of that statement, he would quote from the evidence given before the Royal Universities Commission of 1857, by Mr. Craik, the then Professor of History and English Literature in the Queen's College, Belfast. He said—

> "I could hardly insist on a student being rejected, however great his deficiency in any department. I do not consider it as important as Greek or Latin. If a student proceeds to medicine, his knowledge of the English language is not tested in any subsequent year. 'A man may then proceed,' asked Sir T. M. Reddington, 'through his whole College course and obtain the degree of medicine without any competent knowledge of the English language?' The witness replied—'If he was found totally ignorant of the English language, he should not be allowed to enter College at all. Possibly I could hardly go the length of saying that if a person came entirely ignorant of the English language I should pass him.'"

This showed the want of educational strictness insisted upon with regard to medical and other professional students in the State-supported Colleges of the Queen's University, and that, in order to obtain the professional degree, no educational degree whatever was required. He wished it had been otherwise, and that the student would receive degrees in Arts as well. When they went outside the Arts Faculty they went outside the educational Faculties altogether, and the instruction given in the Queen's Colleges could be tested by the instruction in Arts alone. He would now give the statistics of attendance to which he had already referred. In the Queen's College, Cork, for instance, he found the total attendance in 1881 of 72 students in Arts. Cork was the capital of an almost exclusively Catholic Province, whose inhabitants were comparatively prosperous, and having a population among whom the benefits of education had always been most highly esteemed, yet only 25 of the Art students at the Queen's College, Cork, last year were Catholics. At the Queen's College, Galway, in the midst of the almost exclusively Catholic Province of Connaught, out of a total of 81 Art students last year only 16 were Catholics. The Queen's College, Belfast, which was to a certain extent numerically successful, was so entirely on account of the support it received from the Protestant and Nonconformist Bodies. It was, in fact, a distinctly sectarian College—a Protestant and Nonconformist College supported by funds raised from the taxpayers under the false pretence that it was an undenominational institution. During its whole existence from 1849 to 1881, 3,625 students had entered the halls of the Queen's College, Belfast, and of that total the Catholic students, Medical, Law, and Engineering, numbered only 158—158 Catholic students against 3,467 Protestant and Nonconformist students. From the point of view of numerical attendance the Queen's College, Belfast, was not a national institution in any sense of the term; it was simply and absolutely a sectarian Protestant and Nonconformist institution, supported out of the public funds on the pretence of its being a non-sectarian institution. With regard to its tendency to become so, there was this palliation to be offered. It was but natural that as the Catholics of Ireland refused to go to the Queen's Colleges, and particularly to the Queen's College, Belfast, that institution readily accepted its position as a Protestant College. If this fact were a little more plainly admitted, and successive Chief Secretaries for Ireland in moving for grants to the Queen's College in Ireland were to do so on the ground that they were sectarian Colleges for Protestants and Presbyterians, there would be more uprightness and straightforwardness about the whole transaction. His contention was that these Colleges, whether they were sectarian or non-sectarian, should receive no advantage at the expense of the taxpayer, if the same advantages were refused to other Colleges in Ireland. Especially did that argument hold good when the Queen's College had totally failed to secure the attendance of the mass of the people. As regards the Queen's College, Belfast, in particular, it was not, as was originally intended, an unsectarian, undenominational College; but it was an institution of a sectarian character, especially adapted to the teaching and to the wants of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland; it was, in fact, officered with a view to securing Protestant and Nonconformist patronage. The Roman Catholics were affronted at seeing that not only was their own religion not taught at this College, but that instruction of a kind offensive to Catholics was taught at a College which, though devoted exclusively to Protestantism, was yet maintained at the expense of the common purse. He would give the House an illustration as to how the so-called unsectarian system worked at Queen's College, Belfast. The 17th section of the Queen's Colleges Act provided, on the subject of religious instruction and training, that for the better enabling of a student to receive religious instruction according to the creed he held, it should be lawful for the Governing Body to assign lecture rooms within the precincts of such College hall to be set apart for the use of such religious teachers as should be recognized by such Governing Body. But for years past a curious and significant alteration and contravention of that Act had been freely committed in the Queen's College, Belfast. Day after day there appeared on the notice-board of the College a notification addressed to the students of the College, announcing that a course of Presbyterian religious instruction was about to be given at one of the Presbyterian churches in the town, under the auspices of the Presbyterian General Assembly—that was to say, that such instruction would be given within the walls of a professedly sectarian institution and not within the College itself. He would give the House another illustration showing how far the authorities of that College were impartial in their treatment of different religious bodies. At length, some of the Catholic students had taken offence at this singular advertisement on the walls of a professedly non-sectarian institution. As a test, these students proceeded to copy out the course of religious instruction that was being given at the same time in the Catholic Church of St. Malachy, in Belfast, with the intention of having a similar notice framed and posted up, as had been done in the case of the Presbyterian notice. They asked permission of the Council of the College to place their notice on the same board as the other notice had been placed upon, and under the same circumstances; but the President of the Council at once refused to allow the Catholic notification to appear upon that board, upon which for months or years previously, in a professedly non-sectarian institution, the notices of Presbyterian religious instruction had been displayed, and the reason given for the refusal was that the Presbyterian Body would resent the introduction into the College of notices which might have a proselytizing influence upon the minds of the Presbyterian students. He (Mr. O'Donnell), or any Catholic Member of the Irish Party, did not want favour or disfavour shown to any religion or branch of his fellow-countrymen in Ireland; but that which was done to one should be done to another. None in that House would stand up more warmly and earnestly for having equal educational facilities granted to all classes in Ireland without distinction of creed than the Catholic Members of Ireland. They claimed that the endowments and favours should be equally shared by every class and every creed in Ireland. They repudiated all idea of sectarianism in this matter. He would now call the attention of the House to a significant fact, to show that the arrangements by which the Queen's College at Belfast was to be practically a Presbyterian institution were of no recent origin, but, on the contrary, although concealed from the public, had been contemplated from the earliest days of the College. He would call the attention of his hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General for Ireland, one of the most distinguished of the students of the Queen's Colleges, of the Queen's University, to that fact, and would refer hon Members to evidence given in 1857 by the Rev. Robert Wilson, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, who was examined. He clearly expressed how, in the minds of the Presbyterian Body, the Queen's College was intended above all things to be an institution especially adapted to Presbyterian feelings and requirements; and from notes of proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, it was shown that the Body had held a meeting to consider the steps to be taken towards the establishment of a special College for Presbyterians. They had received a certain amount of subscriptions, but suspended operations until it should be seen whether a College to be established in the North of Ireland would be suitable for their object. They had a very strong assurance from Sir Robert Peel himself on the matter, when the measure itself was introduced. It was brought before a regular meeting of the General Assembly in Dublin, and certain suggestions and alterations were made at that meeting. At the General Association of the Presbyterian Church in 1849, the Queen's College at Belfast was formally approved of, and a resolution was passed permitting Presbyterian students to attend the classes there. The resolution set forth that, whereas Government had enabled them to provide for religious instruction, that one of their ministers, in whose paternal care they had every confidence, had been appointed to a Professorship; and the qualifications and character of the persons appointed in the Queen's College, Belfast, for those classes which the students of that Church would require to attend were such as to justify that Assembly in accepting certificates and degrees from that College. Thus, they gave permission to their students to attend the classes in the Queen's College at Belfast, and the General Assembly would not have gone to the trouble of passing that formal resolution and granting that solemn permission to their theological students, if it had been only the Faculty of Arts that concerned them; it was in connection with the classes which the students of that Church were required to attend, and the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland were led to express their complete satisfaction with the appointments in the Queen's College at Belfast. From a perusal of the list of the existing Professors in the Queen's Colleges, he thought they would be fully enlightened upon the nature of the qualifications which enabled the students of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland to attend their instruction. With regard to the Staff of the College, he found that the President was a Presbyterian, and that the Professors of Latin, Natural History and Geology, Logic and Metaphysics, Medical Jurisprudence, Surgery, *Materia Medica*, and Midwifery, the Demonstrator of Anatomy, the Librarian, and the Bursar were Presbyterians also. The Professors of Greek, Natural Philosophy, Chemistry, and History and English Literature were Episcopalians; and one Chair only, that of Medicine, was occupied by a Roman Catholic, Dr. Cumming. It seemed, then, that in every department, even in the training schools, which most indirectly affected education throughout the whole Faculty of Arts, the Catholic was rigidly excluded, and very nearly the whole teaching of the College was thus in the hands of Protestants. Belfast, therefore, practically possessed a sectarian College, endowed out of funds to which Protestants and Catholics alike contributed. As he had said, the meaning of the guarantee that the character and qualifications of the Professors in Queen's College, Belfast, should be such as to allow the General Assembly to approve their teaching, simply meant that all the Chairs in Belfast were to be kept in safe Presbyterian hands; and what was the actual composition of the students in Arts in the Queen's College, Belfast, in the present year? There were only seven Catholic students in Arts, while the number of Presbyterian students in Arts was 131. There was the reason why the Professorial Chairs were carefully kept out of Catholic hands. The total number of Catholic students of all Faculties, including the mere professional schools, was only 20; while the number of the Presbyterian students attending College was 374. And, again, what was the composition of students of the Arts Faculty. Out of the 131 Presbyterian students in Arts in Queen's College, 100 or upwards of 100 were Presbyterian theological students, receiving the whole of their secular education under Professors in conformity with their religious belief; and to that extent the Presbyterian Church received its recruits for its ministry at the expense of the general taxpayer of the country. In communications he had received from other students at the Queen's College, Belfast, with regard to the general class of text-books, and with regard to the general class of instruction given by the Professors in that College, he found the distinct complaint that they were directly hostile to Catholicism. The Catholic students who made those complaints were, at the same time, so fair as to state that they did not set down that anti-Catholic tone in the lectures and class-books of the College to any deliberate wish or intention on the part of the Professors to insult or offend the Catholic students; but it stood to reason that if anti-Catholics were chosen as Professors in the History of Literature, in General History, and in Natural History, it was impossible for any of them to do so without unconsciously uttering expressions and giving tone to their instructions which were most detrimental to the convictions and hurtful to the feelings of students of a different religion from their own who were listening to them. He thought he had laid before the House a crucial proof of the tone and tendency of the instruction given by these non-Catholic Professors to such unfortunate Catholics as were misled by the pretence of unsectarianism to attend the sectarian classes of the Queen's College. That, as hon. Members would at once perceive, was inevitable, especially in the domain of History. Mr. Froude, for instance, could scarcely lecture on such a subject in a manner agreeable to a Catholic audience; nor could a Lingard or a Newman avoid displeasing his Protestant hearers. To give an example of the way in which Catholic students were trained by Protestant Professors, he would introduce to the House a book called *Three Centuries of Modern History*, by Mr. C. D. Young, Regius Professor of History and Literature in the Queen's College, Belfast. Alluding to the Reformation, Professor Young spoke of the dominant priests and the subject laity, and gave as a reason why many adhered to the Catholic faith that "it was easier for them to purchase absolution for their vices than to abandon them." Such statements might be an object of good-humoured mirth both to Protestants and Catholics in a piece of Exeter Hall declamation; but the teaching of a Professor whose mind was filled with those ideas could not but be hurtful to the consciences of Catholic students. Again, take the case of the reception of the news of the horrible massacre of St. Bartholomew in the various Courts of Europe. It was well known that it was the first care of the French King, in order to conceal his guilt, to send messengers to the Sovereigns of Europe, stating that a monstrous conspiracy against the life of the Monarch and the security of his dynasty had been discovered in time, and had been prevented by the destruction of the intending assassins. That statement was conveyed to Queen Elizabeth, who sent her expressions of satisfaction at the escape of a neighbouring King from a horrible assassination. The same message was received by the Pope, who had solemn services of thanks celebrated for the French King's escape. But how did the Regius Professor of History and Literature in Queen's College, Belfast, deal with the massacre of St. Bartholomew? He wrote that the only Sovereign who showed himself insensible to the infamy of the deed was the Pope, who was eager to claim a share of it for himself and his religion; that the Pope and his Cardinals offered up thanks to God for the singular favour which, in permitting the massacre, he had shown to the Holy See and to Christendom; and that he decreed a jubilee, and ordered a salute to be fired on the occasion. Another illustration of the Professorial mind that was dominant in the Queen's College, Belfast, was afforded in the description given of the Holy Roman Emperor who ruled over Germany at the time of the outbreak of the Thirty Year's War. The same writer said that Monarch

> "Had been educated by the Jesuits—that fatal Order whose narrow principles and relentless bigotry have been the chief source of the evils that have flowed over the French and Spanish dominions."

Could a Professor with such views possibly treat the subject of the Jesuits, wherever they appeared in history, without his teaching to his students reflecting and being coloured by those opinions? In the same volume the severity of Louis XIV. against the Huguenots was thus explained—

> "The Huguenots were special objects of antipathy to his confessor, a Jesuit, who out of the King's vices found a way to the gratification of his own bigotry, and who, finding it impossible to induce Louis to forsake his licentious habits, was willing to accept a compromise by which, instead of abandoning them, he should atone for them by the extirpation of Protestantism."

Was that the kind of teaching to be given to Catholic students? If, however, the Professor of the Queen's College, Belfast, were to unsay all his disagreeable things to his Catholic auditors and to say only agreeable things to them, he would put his Presbyterian auditors in the same state of mind as he had put his Catholic hearers on the other supposition. That showed the disadvantage of mixed education. That was an illustration of the non-Catholic professional mind predominant in the Queen's College, Belfast; and he (Mr. O'Donnell) maintained that it was in consequence of that predominance that the Queen's Colleges in Ireland had failed in the past and were failing at present. It was these hopeless failures; these Colleges rejected and justly neglected by the feeling of the vast majority of the nation; these masquerading institutions, that were carrying on the game of Presbyterianism under the name of Denominationalism. It was these institutions that were being subsidized out of the general taxes of the common taxpayers of the country, in order to induce the men who might be tempted by such bribery to enter their halls, and in those halls to compete against the unendowed youth of all Ireland. The Royal University pretended to open its arms to all Ireland; but it was impossible it could do so with an endowment of no larger an amount than £20,000 a-year—about as much as this House would vote for the matrimonial establishment of a Princely pair. The students of the well-endowed Queen's Colleges had not only secured to them absolutely their chance within their own Colleges of the special endowments of their own Colleges, but had the sole use of their Professorships and tutorships to prepare for endeavouring to snatch some of that paltry £20,000 from the general youth of Ireland. This was a dishonesty none the less flagrant and none the less scandalous because it was generally unnoticed. It was an instance of the fact that Irish affairs were totally unintelligible in this country, because the vast majority of the Leaders of opinion in this country did not take the necessary steps to understand Irish affairs. It was impossible that this system could live. They could not possibly keep those institutions going. They could not have three Collegiate failures only suited to the religious requirements of a mere handful of the people to the detriment of a large majority of them—the Catholic population. It was not even fair competition so long as they allowed these special State bribes to be at the disposal of the Queen's Colleges. The object of the Bill, which they asked the House to read a second time on that occasion, was to do no injustice to any student or Professor of the Queen's Colleges. All their pecuniary advantages, prizes, stipends, and salaries would be religiously respected; but it was doing them no injustice to say their students should get the honours, rewards, and endowments of the State on the same principle as the rest of the youth of Ireland, with a fair field and no favour. They only wanted all the endowments of the Queen's Colleges to be thrown into the same common fund as the Royal University, and to let every student in Ireland, of whatever religious persuasion, whether Catholic or Protestant, get as much of them by fair competition as he could carry away with him. That was the moderate, just, and courageous proposal made from these Benches, and he hoped the House would accept it. It was impossible for the Party which, on grounds of religious equality, disestablished the Garrison Church to maintain in a far more odious way an example of religious ascendancy by funds extorted out of the pockets of Catholics as well as non-Catholics.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. William Corbet.*)

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that the hon. Member who last spoke (Mr. O'Donnell) had made a long and, in many respects, an interesting speech, a good deal of which was occupied with historical University questions. As regarded that part of the speech of the hon. Member, he did not propose to follow him. Except in the last few sentences, he had hardly made any allusion to the Bill actually before the House. He (Mr. W. E. Forster) could hardly suppose that the proposal for the second reading of the Bill was much more than an attempt to bring up the question of University education in Ireland. He thought he was warranted in saying that on account of the manner in which the Bill was drawn. Supposing the House were to consent to the second reading, it would destroy the Queen's Colleges entirely; but it declined to repeal the enactment made only two or three years ago when the University Act was passed. Therefore, he thought this could hardly be regarded as much more than an academical discourse on the question of education. At any rate, the Government could not accept the Bill in any form, because it was a Bill that tended to the destruction of the Queen's Colleges, and he believed that by a large proportion of the Irish people, or of those likely to obtain the advantages of University education, their destruction would be considered a misfortune. ["No, no!"] Certainly the facts of the case would seem to show that, for the Queen's Colleges were more flourishing now than they had ever been before, and they gave to a great number of students what was most useful—namely, a good professional education. A great number of young men would find much more difficulty in earning their living without that advantage than they did now. The hon. Member for Dungarvan went on to say that those Colleges had proved a failure; but he (Mr. W. E. Forster), educationally speaking, could not agree with him as regarded that statement. There were more than 1,000 students in the three Queen's Colleges. Let them take Belfast College. The number there last year was 508; that was a larger number than they had had in any previous year. [Mr. O'Donnell: How many Catholics?] There were very few there, 22, he believed; but they were like the Protestant subjects of the Queen, and it was desirable that they should get a good professional education. They liked to go to these Colleges, and it was a very serious matter to suddenly deprive them of the advantages of these Colleges. If this Bill were carried out, no young men would be enabled to procure this education. [Mr. O'Donnell: They could at the University.] He would mention afterwards the position they would be put in there. If they went to Cork they would find that there the majority were Roman Catholics. There, again, the number was considerably more than it had ever been before; last year 327, in the previous year it was 300, and in the three years before that it was 280, 257, and 232 respectively. That showed a steady increase. The number of Catholic students had also increased considerably every year for the last five years. In 1876-7 it was 113; in 1877-8, 130; in 1878-9, 146; in 1879-80, 152; and in 1880-1, 179. That showed that the Queen's Colleges were not the actual failure that hon. Members seemed to state. [Mr. Synan: How many of them are Art students?] A good many of them were Art students; but it was a matter affecting the professional education of those young men, and the young men who hoped to obtain these advantages would not thank hon. Members for trying to prevent them getting them. There were 69 Art students in Cork. The hon. Member seemed to suppose that that professional education was given without any regard to general education. That was a mistake. He supposed that he was alluding to medicine; but, according to the rules of the Medical Council, no young man could enter on his professional studies without passing an examination upon subjects for which considerable general knowledge was necessary. The first objection of the Government, then, that was made to this Bill was that it would deprive the Irish people of institutions to which they showed they attached very considerable value. The hon. Member for Dungarvan then went on to show how in an indirect way the views of the Professors might effect the religious belief of the students. He (Mr.

W. E. Forster) thought he ought to mention the fact that the book from which the hon. Member quoted was not a text-book.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he did not say it was a text-book. He referred to it as the production of one of the Professors.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, he did not think that the hon. Member for Dungarvan meant to convey in so many words that it was a text-book; but hon. Members might easily have supposed it was. It, as a matter of fact, merely showed the private opinion of the gentleman who wrote it. He would leave it to his hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General for Ireland (Mr. A. M. Porter), who knew much more than he did of the Queen's College at Belfast and its discipline, to reply to the attacks made by the hon. Member. He might, however, say that he thought the contention of the hon. Member was not proved, for the conditions of unsectarian teaching had not been broken in the Queen's College, Belfast. Probably there would be more teachers there who held views in regard to history that were not generally acceptable to the Roman Catholic Church than there would be in the other Colleges; but certainly, in his opinion, people did not, as a rule, find that the religious character of their children remained as they wished by wrapping them up in cotton-wool and not allowing them to hear the opinions of the other side. He doubted very much whether the hearing of opposite opinions did have the effect alluded to by the hon. Member. He thought there was a striking instance to the contrary in the case of the hon. Member himself. The hon. Member had referred to the teaching he himself received at Galway; but that teaching did not seem to have the effect of moulding his views to those of the teachers.

Mr. O'DONNELL: The right hon. Gentleman is speaking without any knowledge whatever of my tutors, their opinions, or how far I was dependent upon them in any way as far as my teaching.

Mr. W. E. FORSTER said, that he understood the hon. Member to refer with pleasure to the instruction that he had received, and yet he alluded with an expression of so much sorrow and pain to the similar teaching which other young men were now receiving in the Queen's Colleges of Ireland, that he (Mr. W. E. Forster) imagined the hon. Gentleman had been subjected to the trial and had stood the test. But it was not correct to say that young men were subjected to a trial when they received such instruction as that to which the hon. Member had referred. It was the result in more cases than he supposed. There was a striking example of it in Oxford at one time. There was a sort of current of free thought, and almost Radical views in politics, and to some extent in religion, which he believed was a reaction on extreme teaching on the other side, and he was told that a similar reaction was now following from many of the teaching staff being Liberals. In this case, the young men guarded their own views very much as the hon. Member guarded his. If parents in Ireland preferred to have University teaching conducted according to their own ideas of religion, and even to apply them to matters of history and general knowledge, there was no reason why they should not be allowed to do so; and he did not doubt that great as were the advantages of the mixed system, if parents would take to it, it was not a system on which they could solely or mainly rely for education in Ireland, whether elementary, intermediate, or University education; but there were a great many people in Ireland who liked the mixed system, or at least did not dislike it. It was a very serious matter to step forward and say that a year or two after they had destroyed the Queen's University they should destroy the Queen's Colleges, which were doing a great service in Ireland. The hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. Synan) seemed to suppose the Bill would merely place the education of these young men in connection with the Royal University, instead of with the Queen's Colleges; but the hon. Member could hardly have read the Bill, because it would deprive them of any educational training whatever. That would be the effect of the Bill. Its 2nd clause handed over the money to the Royal University of Ireland to be employed for the same purposes as the funds already provided by Parliament for the use of the University; but the hon. Member was well aware that the Royal University was only an examining Body, and that consequently the educational and Collegiate training of these young men would cease, and they would be left to get their training as best they could. [Mr. O'Donnell: Establish Fellowships.] He had always supposed that hon. Members thought it would be an advantageous thing that there should be established a Collegiate training for Catholics in Ireland rather than a mere examining Body; but if they thought so, it struck him as a very curious thing that they should have brought in a Bill which would abolish all Collegiate training in Ireland outside Trinity College. Even the buildings of the Queen's Colleges would be rendered useless, and would have to be sold, because the Royal University could not by its Charter use them. That brought him to what was a sufficient objection if there was no other. It was too early to re-open the University Question in Ireland. [" No, no!"] He meant by an Act of Parliament; he did not object to hon. Members raising the question, and stating what they considered was justly due to them, though he imagined that even from their own point of view they would have done it by a better drawn Bill; but, in his opinion and in the opinion of the Government, it was too early to re-open the question. It was only three years ago an Act was passed to meet the claims of the Roman Catholics in Ireland. He did not say that it fully met them. He was now speaking solely of himself, and was not to be understood as pledging anybody but himself; but he would state the same views now as he had expressed before—that it would have been far better to have boldly endowed a Roman Catholic College than to establish the clumsy method of mere prizes for education, which he thought was open to the same religious objection, and was not educationally as advantageous. That was, however, accepted. [" No, no!"] He did not say it was accepted as final; but it was so far accepted that the most influential Catholics in Ireland were setting to work to do the best they could with it to get it into full operation, and he did not think it was fair to ask Parliament to unsettle the matter until it was found out what the Royal University could do, and all those eminent persons, including all those of the highest dignity and influence in Ireland, had found out what were the effects of the Act; but, under any circumstances, it seemed to him a very objectionable mode of proceeding, and to be levelling down with a vengeance, that because the Roman Catholics had not got what they would like to have, a Collegiate training of their own, therefore they should take the present Collegiate training away from those young men whose parents wished them to have it, and with whom and for whom it was working most satisfactorily.

Mr. SYNAN said, this was a very instructive discussion, because it showed the House the manner in which Irish questions were dealt with, and proved that the Government had not the courage of their opinions when they refrained from asking the House to carry legislation which would settle the question once and for ever. During his (Mr. Synan's) long Parliamentary experience of the last 20 years, various Governments had been peddling with this question, and the settlement invariably proposed by either of them could neither receive the assent of the House, nor the assent of the people of Ireland. They always endeavoured to march between two contradictory lines by attempting to please the mixed educationists of England and by trying, at the same time, to conciliate the denominational educationists of Ireland. In that spirit the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland addressed the House a moment ago. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that the question was not satisfactorily dealt with by the Act of 1879; but that he could give no pledge on the part of the Government to take it in hand again. When it was remembered that the right hon. Gentleman was the Educational Minister for England for many years, and that he succeeded in carrying great reforms, why had he not the courage to give his opinion, and to tell the Government that in Ireland, as well as in England, the question ought to be settled, and that it could only be settled by adapting the educational system of the country to the opinion, interests, and desires of the people of the country. The right hon. Gentleman endeavoured to prop up the Queen's Colleges by pointing to the rush of students to them lately; but could any fair-minded man who was accustomed to listen to the speeches of Irish Members on this subject, after listening to the speech of the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell), come to any other conclusion than that the Queen's Colleges in Ireland, as far as the education of the Irish people was concerned, were almost a total and absolute failure? Every matriculated student of the Queen's Colleges by the Act of 1879 became a student of the Royal University, and the increase of students since 1879 could be easily accounted for by the advertisements published in the papers, inviting them to matriculate in the Queen's Colleges, because they would have the double advantage of having a chance of gaining the prizes of the Royal University and of gaining the prizes of the Queen's College as well. The Chief Secretary for Ireland admitted that that was unfair; but, if it was, why did he not remedy it? Two years ago the Irish Party brought the question before the House by a Resolution asking it to throw the educational prizes of the Queen's Colleges and those of the Royal University into one common fund, so that all could have access to them. What was the answer given to that demand? That the Queen's Colleges were not disturbed by the Act of 1879, and that, therefore, they should remain as they were. That was no answer to the Irish people, or to the students of the new University. Neither was it any justification of the injustice which was practised upon them by giving the Queen's College students an unfair advantage and depriving the others of the advantage of competing for a portion of the fund given by Parliament for the education of the people of Ireland. Upon what principle was £4,000 a-year exclusively appropriated by the Queen's Colleges for prizes and scholarships; and why should students educated in other Colleges at their own expense have their funds encroached upon by students of the Queen's Colleges without any chance of having the £4,000 a-year given to these institutions? He would admit that the Bill before the House was badly framed; but he did not think the Government could have any difficulty in appropriating section 3, which proposed to transfer to the Royal University the £4,000 a-year already referred to for prizes, scholarships, and fellowships. In Belfast College there were but 22 Catholics out of 508, notwithstanding the fact that in the Province of Ulster the Protestant and Catholic populations were almost equal. Why should Belfast College be practically a denominational College for Presbyterian purposes; and why should 22 Catholic students be compelled to listen to opinions like those of the Professor to whom the hon. Member for Dungarvan referred? The Chief Secretary for Ireland did not like to enter on the question. He said it was well to hear both sides of any question; but was it well for a boy of 14 or 15 years of age to hear one side of a question only, and that side at variance with his religious opinions? Could it be expected that any Catholic student in Ulster would be allowed by the members of his family to enter that College; or was it surprising that those who did so were few in number, as was proved by the facts? The Theological School was practically incorporated with the Belfast College, and 100 of the students were trained for the Presbyterian Church. Suppose the Cork or Galway College was used in the same way for denominational purposes, and put in connection with Maynooth, the question would not stand a moment's investigation in the eyes of English Members. But what was good for one College was good for every other, and if there was to be justice let there be justice all round. No reason had been given by the Government for the injustice of which they complained, and he knew very well there could be no answer given. In this particular everyone knew that the Irish accepted the Bill of 1879 under protest. They failed to carry The O'Conor Don's Bill, and it was a question of nothing or accepting the Act of 1879. They, therefore, took the one offered instead as an instalment. The people of Ireland were shut out from what should be their University, the University of Dublin, and they accepted the Act of 1879 as a kind of wedge by which they hoped to be able to work out the end. The present Bill proposed, not in very artistic language, he would admit, to place at the disposal of the Royal University the funds derived by the Queen's Colleges, to be appropriated as the Senate of the University thought fit, while the sum appropriated by the Queen's Colleges might be added to the £20,000 given for general University education in Ireland. There could be no difficulty about that on the part of the Government. It also proposed to hand over to the Senate of the Royal University the buildings of the Queen's

Colleges, not interfering with the Professors, Presidents, or other officers. The Chief Secretary for Ireland said that would be destroying and levelling the College without putting anything in its place. He (Mr. Synan) would admit that it had that aspect; but it could be changed in Committee, for he did not see any difficulty in making an alteration which would meet what the right hon. Gentleman said ought to be done in regard to Collegiate education. The Royal University was not solely an examining Board. It had the power of appointing Fellows, and of giving prizes and scholarships; and what the Bill proposed was to superadd to these the advantage of having Collegiate education by placing the existing Colleges at the disposal of the Senate. It was true the Act of 1845 prevented such a transfer, and the Act of 1879 preserved the Queen's Colleges intact from encroachment by the Royal University; but he saw no difficulty in repealing the clauses of the Acts of 1845 and 1879, so as to enable the Royal University to use these Colleges for educational purposes. What was the difficulty of putting a clause in the Act to allow the Royal University to deal with the Colleges as they stood? He saw no difficulty except the *non possumus* of the Government. The Government did not want to deal with the question of University education, nor did they want to deal with any Irish question in an Irish sense, and it was impossible for the Irish Members to do anything with these questions except what Ministers liked themselves. He would, however, have expected that a strong Minister like the Prime Minister would have decided that this was a question which ought to be dealt with. He would admit that the Act of 1879 did not deal with the question, and that the unsettled state in which this question was left increased discontent in Ireland; but that discontent would continue until the question was dealt with in a Catholic sense as well as in a Protestant sense, and until a system was established from which nobody would be excluded and by which all would be placed on an equality. Those were the grounds upon which he should support the second reading of the Bill before the House, defective though it was.

Colonel COLTHURST said, he wished to say a few words in support of the views expressed by the hon. Member for Limerick (Mr. Synan). All hon. Members of the House who approached the subject of Irish education admitted, in general terms, that educational equality ought in some way to be conceded to every section of the Irish people. It had been attempted to reach educational equality by many means, and, among others, by means of the Queen's Colleges; but the solution proposed by the late lamented Mr. Butt was the one that commended itself most to his (Colonel Colthurst's) judgment. In 1879, after the failure of The O'Conor Don's Bill, the University Education Act, which was passed, was not accepted by any hon. Member professing to speak on behalf of the Catholic population of Ireland as a satisfactory solution of the question. The O'Conor Don himself pointed out most clearly that the inequality would be more glaringly exhibited between the students of the endowed Queen's Colleges and the students of the unendowed Catholic and other Colleges in Ireland. Mr. Kavanagh, the late Member for Carlow, who was entitled to the gratitude of the Irish people for the pains he took to settle this question satisfactorily, and the hon. Member for Liskeard (Mr. Courtney), pointed out then that it would be impossible to resist the claim of the Catholics of Ireland to an endowed College, if the Bill before the House then passed. He (Colonel Colthurst) disclaimed any responsibility for the present Bill; but he did not say that the time might not come, if the present system was persevered in, when the Queen's Colleges would have to be totally disendowed. Neither was he prepared to say that the time had come when it was reasonable to expect the Government to come to a conclusion on the lines laid down by the hon. Member for Limerick. But his hon. Friend pointed out that upon those lines it was perfectly possible to concede some sort of equality to the Catholic students of the present Royal University. It was now in the power, and it would be next year in the power, of the Queen's Colleges to send their best men forward to compete for a share of the £5,000 to be allocated in prizes and scholarships by the Royal University, and to let the residuum fall back upon the £1,200 a-year now allocated to each of the Queen's Colleges for prizes. He asked, could anybody defend such a glaring injustice? He trusted that his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland might be persuaded to offer some hope that the Government would consider the question. He did not say they should accept the Bill, nor was he himself altogether in favour of all its details; but if the hon. Member for Wicklow (Mr. W. J. Corbet) should go to a division, he should vote for the Bill, not because he agreed with it altogether, but as a protest against the inequality and injustice to which the Catholic students of Ireland were still subject. If that injustice were to be removed, there was, in his opinion, no possible solution of the question but a general disendowment, if the convictions of the people of this country would not allow of the system of levelling up.

MR. DALY said, he was aware that the Bill was imperfectly drawn; but it had been put forward by the Irish Members from a desire to put before the English people the very great grievances under which the Catholic youths of Ireland lived. No matter from what motive the Queen's College in Belfast was started, it was plain to everyone that to-day it was a sectarian College. They claimed, as a matter of fact, that the Queen's Colleges were a failure altogether as they existed at the present day. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland said that it was too early to re-open the University question. That being so, he (Mr. Daly) did not expect the Bill to pass the second reading, and he believed the only practical result of bringing it forward would be to awaken the English mind to the inequalities under which Catholic students laboured, as compared with Protestant and Nonconformist students. By reason of the conscientious convictions of the Catholic youth, representing by far the largest majority of the Irish people, they were debarred from participating in the education given by the Queen's Colleges. In Cork the Faculty of Medicine was alone well attended for the sake of the qualification conferred; but the absence of Catholic students in Arts was sufficient of itself to condemn the present University system. No matter what hon. Members might say about Catholics having no right to abandon the Queen's Colleges on religious grounds, they could not shut their eyes to the fact that the Irish people as a rule rejected worldly matters for the sake of religious convictions; and the proposal of his hon. Friend (Mr. W. J. Corbet), simply to transfer the funds of the Queen's Colleges to the Royal University, which was approachable by all classes and religions, would not meet the question. It was therefore proposed to convey those sums which at present they had no chance of sharing to the University which was approachable by all. If the funds of the University were increased so as to make the prizes and scholarships more valuable, there was no reason why members of every sect should not enter it as well as the Catholics. It would be a question of no favour, but let the best man win. In the Queen's Colleges they had splendid consulting libraries, museums, and every aid to the acquisition of a knowledge of practical science; but, under the existing rules, the Catholic student was debarred from all those privileges, because his religious convictions would not allow him to enter those Colleges. In a report by the President of the University (Dr. O'Sullivan), he had referred to the want of several of these aids which were possessed by the Colleges, and he asked if that were not likely to produce in the mind of the Catholic student the idea that he was debarred from these advantages which were provided in part by his money, and were helping a man to take the prize out of his hands? He (Mr. Daly) thought that they should give all the students a chance of starting fairly. If the Motion did nothing else, it would be useful in enlightening public opinion, and it would bring to the mind of the English people the grievance under which the Catholic students laboured; it would show that part of their money went to provide educational advantages from which they themselves were debarred. By throwing open the prizes for scholarships in the Royal University to all denominations, injustice would be done to none.

MR. BRYCE said, the Irish Members, in his opinion, were fully justified in raising this discussion, which would do good service; but he was equally convinced that the attitude the Government had assumed towards it, both with respect to its principle and to its details, was the proper one, and he was glad they had made an unequivocal declaration of their opposition to the Bill. He hoped the Government would adhere to the declaration that had been made by his right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland, and refuse to move, by even one step, towards doing anything which would injuriously affect the Queen's Colleges. So far was he from agreeing with the hon. Members from Ireland that those Colleges were a hopeless failure, that he maintained they had been a distinct success. When they compared the population and prosperity of England and Ireland, the number of students attending the Queen's Colleges in Ireland contrasted favourably with the number attending the English Colleges and Universities. More than that, the Queen's Colleges had had to struggle against many difficulties, and the fact that they had withstood the constant opposition of the Catholic hierarchy was some testimony to their strength. Hon. Members from Ireland thought they had shown the Queen's Colleges to be denominational institutions, when they showed that the great majority of their students were not Catholics; but he (Mr. Bryce) could not admit the relevancy of the argument, not even with regard to the Queen's College at Belfast. Hon Members seemed to have forgotten that in Ulster the Protestants formed the wealthier class, and that the Catholics, unfortunately, were not, as a rule, in that prosperous worldly condition which would enable them to give their children an University education. An institution could only be called sectarian when its endowments and emoluments, or some portion of them, were exclusively reserved for the enjoyment of persons belonging to any one religious body. This was not the case with the Queen's Colleges, and, indeed, no proof of such a thing had ever been attempted. All their Professorial Chairs were open to Catholics as well as Protestants. If hon. Members showed that when Catholic and Protestant candidates of equal merit came forward for a Professorial Chair, the preference was always given to the Protestant, they might have some ground for their assertion; but that had never been shown. If any one of the Queen's Colleges was practically denominational, it could not be in consequence of anything connected with the institutions, but because a larger number of Protestants presented themselves as students. This did not imply sectarianism. It might be true that the majority of Professors in the Colleges were Protestants; but that was not in itself a ground of complaint. Dissenters in England could not complain of the English Universities, or refuse to send their sons there because 99 per cent of the teachers there were members of the Church of England. The largest number of wealthy persons in the neighbourhood of Belfast were Protestants, just as the largest number of wealthy persons accustomed to send their sons to the English Universities were members of the Church of England; and hence it naturally followed that the largest number of Professors and tutors were of the same religious views. The method of choosing a candidate, not from any particular denomination, but simply the candidate of the greatest merit, whoever he might be, had naturally resulted in the elections complained of. He should like to know why it was desired to destroy the Queen's Colleges? They were at present rendering very great services to a country where the means of promoting higher education had long been too scanty. Their existence did not injure any other Colleges which might seek a share in the prizes of the Royal University. Hon. Members opposite forgot that by the 4th sub-section of Clause 9 of the Royal University Act of last Session, students of the Queen's Colleges who had already got scholarships or prizes in those Colleges could not compete for such in the Royal University without dropping those emoluments. He did not, however, feel satisfied with the conduct of the Government in proposing their Irish University legislation of 1881; nor could they excuse themselves by alleging that they were merely following up the policy of Lord Beaconsfield's Government, expressed in the Act of 1879. He had pointed out the defects of the Act of 1881 at the time; but the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland was determined to press his measure. If the Queen's University had not been destroyed there would be no case against the Queen's Colleges—no pretext whatever for such a Bill as the present. The destruction of the Queen's University was another instance of the unsatisfactory way in which legislation on the subject of Irish education was effected by Ministers in that House. He did not think they could draw any distinction in that respect between Liberal and Tory Ministers. Both Parties alike seemed to have been actuated, not by any permanent principle, but by a desire to do the thing that would give them the least trouble at the moment; they had thought only of humouring the Roman Catholic hierarchy on the one side, and the Ulster Protestants on the other, not what would best secure sound education for the Irish people. The scheme was, like too many Irish Government schemes, a mere tinkering with the question—a mere sop to Irish dissatisfaction, to be received as such, and to be repudiated as soon as received, instead of an honest attempt to deal with the difficulties of the general question apart from present politics. The Government should take into consideration even now, when so much mischief had been done by the extinction of the Queen's University, not what would please one Party or another, but what would be the best for the whole of Ireland in the long run. He did not think the proposed Bill would bring them back to the true track. He admitted, and he ventured to think that many hon. Members around him also frankly admitted, that the Irish Members had a grievance, and they wished to see which was the best way to remedy it. The scheme for the Royal University provided scholarships and so forth, but did not provide for the teaching, or only in a secondary way, and gave no security that the teachers would be well chosen. It was not merely money that was wanted; money might be so used, and often was so used, as to injure instead of promoting education—it was teaching institutions, duly organized, and worked by capable men. If the Irish Members would bring forward some Bill which would provide for such institutions, the Government might perhaps regard it more favourably; and he would promise for himself, and he believed he might add for many hon. Members who took the same view of these questions, and had hitherto opposed anything savouring of denominationalism, that they would consent to forego their own special view on the subject, if, by doing so, they could give satisfaction to the Irish people. It was a question that should be settled upon a principle, and that principle should be one that should work right through, and be capable of future development.

Mr. THOMAS COLLINS said, he would give his support to the second reading of the Bill, because he thought it was very desirable that they should offer to the people of Ireland a system of education that the great mass of the people could avail themselves of. He had always advocated religious education for this country, and if a principle was good for England it was good for Ireland. He would like to see the Queen's Colleges which had been disestablished disendowed, and their endowments given not to a section of the people, but to all the people of Ireland. He thought that the Mover of the Bill would have done more wisely if he had made an attack upon the Queen's Colleges one by one. There was something to be said for the Queen's Colleges of Belfast and Cork; but nothing could be said in favour of the one at Galway, and on previous occasions he had both spoken and voted against any endowment being given to it, because he thought it was nothing more than a job from beginning to end. The number of Roman Catholic students in it was so few that it had no real *locus standi* as educating the West Country population of Ireland; and, looking to the numbers who ought to be educated in it, he must say that it had never given satisfactory education to the people of the Catholic Province in which it was placed. The Bill which very wisely disestablished the Queen's University did not satisfy the people of Ireland, leaving as it did the mass of the population excluded from a share of the educational emoluments which existed. The object was to set up in its place a new University, which should be undenominational in a certain sense, but which by means of payments by results would give equal advantages to all classes. That was getting in the thin end of the wedge, for it was not for a moment to be supposed that they could keep the Trinity College and the College of Belfast endowed and give no endowment to the Roman Catholics, who formed the great bulk of the population. There was no doubt that the Queen's College, Belfast, was practically a Presbyterian seminary, just as in old days Trinity College was substantially an Episcopalian University, and just as Oxford was a Church of England University. Practically, the bulk of the Nonconformists that went there conformed. No one could with justice say that the three particular Queen's Colleges should have an advantage over every other institution in Ireland of a cognate character. Such an idea would not hold water. Those who sought University education in Ireland must not be subjected to any special disabilities, and no particular privileges should be given to persons entering what were called the Queen's Colleges, unless they were preparing to open up a few more Queen's Colleges, and let Galway and Cork be purely Catholic Colleges, and Belfast purely Presbyterian. They must either do that, or adopt the other system of handing over those emoluments to a University which had the confidence of all sections of the people of Ireland. He should vote for the second reading of the Bill, although he considered it would require material alteration in Committee.

COLONEL NOLAN said, the Catholics of Ireland should be furnished with proper facilities for University education, provided they got the same. He did not wish to say that anything was wrong about the Queen's College in Belfast; but if hon. Members would like to know what the system of the Queen's Colleges really was they must go to Galway. The College building there was magnificent, and he believed some of the Professors were eminent men, and had attracted some Catholics; but he would like to see that building put to a proper use. But under the present system that was impossible. It was simply throwing out a salmon to catch a sprat. It was a case in which gross bribery was evident, for the Catholic students went there in spite of the feeling that they were doing something mean. The Roman Catholic youth must, of course, get their education, and would have it; but still they knew that it was forced on them on very unfair terms—namely, that they must leave religion in abeyance when they entered the College. It was all very well to say they could get religion outside. When Catholic young men entered the Queen's Colleges, a great many of them retained their religion, and a great many of them who lost it afterwards recovered it; but it must be allowed that the religion of the Catholics who went there was, on the whole, injuriously affected, for when young men found that religion was put in the lowest place they naturally began to think little of it. Many of them retained their religion, but it was in spite of the College training, and not in consequence of it; and Protestants must not suppose that the Catholic students who lost their faith came over to them; the fact was, they went in the direction of freethinking. He thought that no greater mistake could be made by a country than that public money should be paid for the training of the people without any sense of religion. He did not go so far as to say that they should actually keep money from people who might wish to rear up children without religion; but he thought nothing would be more unfair than to say to parents that they should have no choice—that they should either do without University education, or give up their religion. That was the system offered by the Colleges. As long as the English people continued to educate the Irish not upon the English, but upon the Irish system, they deserved to be held up to the derision of the whole world. Ireland only asked for a Catholic College; and if the Liberals brought in something to that effect, they certainly would give them every support, and they certainly would accept any scheme that would give Catholics as good an education as might be obtained in the Queen's Colleges at the present moment and under the present system. He did not think that could be a good government of any country which did not provide for the education of the people, and which did not provide that education in a systematic manner, and in a manner suited to the genius and to the religion of that country. He did not believe there could be any good system of education which totally ignored University education, by which means many persons were qualified to occupy the best positions. Under the present system the source of the whole of the educational system of Ireland was poisoned, and good government was rendered impossible so long as England insisted upon struggling against the principles of Ireland, and driving the people to be educated on a system which was contrary to their own religion. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland had objected to this Bill on the ground that it contained no provision for a grant of public money; but the right hon. Gentleman appeared to have forgotten that no private Member had power to bring forward such a provision, and that he as a Minister of the Crown alone had power to introduce such a provision into the Bill. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the Irish Members had accepted the concessions that had been made them in recent legislation, as at all events a settlement for the time being of the claims of the Irish Catholics in this matter; but he (Colonel Nolan) denied that they had ever looked upon those paltry concessions in the light of being even a temporary settlement of those claims. The Chief Secretary for Ireland said that he was unable to consent to this question being re-opened so soon; but that, he (Colonel Nolan) presumed, meant that the right hon. Gentleman thought the constituencies of Ireland were not in earnest on the subject, and that he would, therefore, wait until some great pressure had been brought upon him in the shape of outrages in Ireland or the suspension of a Member of Parliament before he yielded to their requests. The right hon. Gentleman advocated that young men should have an opportunity of hearing arguments used on both sides of a question. If that was the right hon. Gentleman's opinion, he was somewhat surprised that certain newspapers were denied to the Irish Members. Putting aside for the moment all question of Home Rule, the real point at issue was whether a matter that solely concerned the Irish people was to be dealt with according to English public opinion, or according to Irish public opinion. He (Colonel Nolan) held that it should be exclusively by Irish public opinion. Let England say how much money she intended to give, and then allow Ireland to determine how it should be spent. He did not object to the right of protecting a minority of Protestants in Ireland. He did object to Protestants being endowed to a greater extent than Catholics. Roman Catholics in Ireland had scarcely any educational endowments of any value, and he, therefore, contended that his countrymen were being unfairly treated from a pecuniary point of view. There was not the slightest intention on the part of the Irish Catholic majority to interfere with the education of the Protestant minority; all they asked for was that they should have a sufficiently endowed Catholic College.

MR. GIBSON said, he did not think it right that this discussion should close without making a few short remarks upon the subject. He feared that many Members of the House had not yet realized all the difficulties and complications of the present position, and of the history of the Irish University question. Undoubtedly the question was a very difficult one, and hon. Members might be excused if they failed at once to see all the points that arose out of it. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce) said that this question should be settled upon an abstract principle of what was right. That was, no doubt, a very good and a very high-sounding sentence.

MR. BRYCE denied that he had used the expression. He said the question should be settled upon a principle, and that that principle should be one that would work right through, and not merely upon considerations of what would give least trouble at the moment.

MR. GIBSON said, he should be very sorry to misrepresent the hon. Gentleman; but he went on to explain what he meant when he used the words. He had indicated that principle should be arrived at without any special reference to the wishes of the Irish hierarchy on the one side, or the Irish Protestants of the North on the other. He (Mr. Gibson) thought that anyone who proposed a settlement of the Irish University question on such a principle could not claim to have realized all the practical difficulties of the subject. He was very pleased to notice, in that interesting discussion, that the University which he had the honour to represent, and where he himself was educated, had not only not been attacked, but had been spoken of by both sides of the House in a manner which he very gladly and very proudly acknowledged. He could only say that the University had ever striven throughout its long and anxious history to be true to its mission. Long before the great English Universities of Oxford and Cambridge saw their way to open their degrees to their Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen, Dublin University, even before the close of the last century, had seen that it was right and in accordance with its traditions, to confer its degrees upon the Roman Catholics of Ireland. Very recently it had thrown open all its prizes, Fellowships, and scholarships, to everyone, regardless of their religion. It would be in the recollection of those who took an interest in University matters that not long ago a Nonconformist was elected to one of its Fellowships, and that still more recently a Roman Catholic had been similarly honoured, and within the last week a Roman Catholic Fellow had received the responsible Professorship of Moral Philosophy. He regretted that the Roman Catholics of Ireland did not themselves desire, in greater numbers, to resort to the University of Dublin; but if they did not, it was not owing to any ungracious, or unworthy, or ungenerous treatment they might receive within its walls. They did to some extent go there; and he was sure that those who looked after the interests of that University would be much better pleased to see a very much larger number of them there. The Act of 1845, by which the Queen's Colleges were founded, made something of a new start in the matter of University education in Ireland. Although the Act was not the foundation of the Queen's University, it was the prelude to it. Whoever was responsible for the drafting of the Bill now before the House, he (Mr. Gibson) might remind him that the Act of 1845 was not in the slightest degree repealed or purporting to be affected by it. These Queen's Colleges had been attacked from various points of view. He had had no connection with them himself; but he could speak highly of vast numbers of gentlemen whom he had met, and who had been educated within their walls, and he thought he would be wrong if he did not acknowledge that they had attained a great measure of educational success. The same might be said of the Queen's University, which had only ceased to exist within the past two months; and the point most lost sight of in this discussion, on the part of the hon. Member who introduced the Bill, was not so much the historical aspect of the question as its position at the present moment. The Royal University was only called into existence in consequence of an Act passed in 1879; while the Supplementary Act of Parliament, which was to give it vitality by giving it funds, only passed the House last August. It was, in his view, quite a misnomer to say that the grant of £20,000 made under that Act was a petty grant, having regard to the functions it had to fulfil, and the duties imposed upon it. It was far and away more than the Dublin University had to apply to the purposes for which the Royal University was chartered. The Royal University was not a teaching or a Professorial University; it had only to conduct examinations and distribute prizes; and for fulfilling these duties £20,000 a-year was amply sufficient. The present position of the Royal University was not adequately represented to the House by referring to the Act of 1879, because that would appear to indicate a history of three years; whereas the position it now held was this—it had only got into working order within the last four or five months. The first matriculation examination had only been held within the last couple of months, and that examination was such as to promise success to the University; and, considering that it had been so recently established, he thought there was every prospect of a substantial success—at all events, enough to indicate that it should be allowed to go on in its own way, without any such violent interruption as was provided by this Bill. Would it not be unreasonable that before the Royal University was right on its legs it should be disorganized by a Bill involving such changes as that before the House? Besides, the present Bill almost altogether ignored all the practical difficulties that underlay the question of University education in Ireland. It left the Act of 1845 untouched; it left the Act of 1879 on the Statute Book unreformed and unamended; sections 7 and 8 of the Act of 1879, having reference to residences and Queen's College property required to be taken into consideration in any new law on the subject; and the present Bill did not deal at all with these matters. Supposing it were to pass, what was to be done with the buildings of the Queen's University? Were they to be turned into barracks, or what was to be done with them? The Royal University under its Charter could not prescribe residence in them, or could not prescribe teaching in them; it had no power, in fact, to utilize them. These matters might be dealt with in Committee; but the omission perhaps showed that the Bill had been framed rather for discussion than for legislation. He was far from making a charge against the hon. Members who introduced the Bill; but it should be remembered that the Order to bring in this Bill was made by the House on the 9th February, and the Bill was printed practically only on the 17th March. They were discussing a Bill which affected the very existence of the Queen's Colleges almost before the Queen's Colleges themselves could know anything about it. Until the Bill was printed and circulated, nothing had been said or done to indicate the character of the Bill, or the course it proposed to take; and it was not until yesterday or to-day that the heads of the Colleges, the Professors, the students, and all those interested in the Colleges, had any means whatever of learning the smallest particle about the Bill. If this were a Bill that, in the nature of things, was likely to be heard of again he would say, without hesitation, that that was not a reasonable way of treating the Colleges, and would suggest that every possible notice should be given them in order that they might make their case. He was sure, however, that anything that had been overlooked in making out the case of the Queen's Colleges would be amply made up by his hon. and learned Friend the Solicitor General for Ireland, who was himself one of their most distinguished students. He could not himself support the second reading of the Bill.

MR. THOMASSON said, that, as a strong opponent of denominational education, he generally concurred in the views expressed by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Bryce), for he felt that as long as we gave aid to denominational schools in this country, we must do so in Ireland also. The difficulties of the case arose from the prejudices of the English people; and as an illustration of the disgraceful partiality which existed on this question of denominational education, he complained of the Church of England Party, who advocated denominational education of their own particular order in England, whilst, on the other hand, they strongly objected to anything like a corresponding system being permitted in the Roman Catholic Colleges of Ireland. He must repeat, that so long as denominational education was given in England the Irish people would have a right to complain of the system now pursued in that country; and he thought, therefore, that the only solution of the question was the granting of State aid for the endowment of Roman Catholic Colleges.

MR. LYON PLAYFAIR: Sir, the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan), who generally expresses the opinion of Irish Members in this House with great clearness, has said that their only wish is to have a Roman Catholic College similar to the essentially Presbyterian Queen's College in Belfast, in order to give them systematic education. Now, if that was the measure which was before us, we would have a constructive Bill to construct a College, in order to give Roman Catholics a good secular education on proper principles. But it is not a constructive Bill we are asked to consider. It is entirely a destructive Bill. Its object is to destroy an educational system which exists, and which has existed for some time in Ireland. I sympathize, and have always sympathized—and I may refer hon. Members to speeches I have made for many years—I strongly sympathize with the Roman Catholics in their endeavours to get a system of education in Ireland which will meet their educational requirements. I admit, further, that the systems of education which exist in Ireland have failed to enlist the confidence of the Roman Catholics. I am, therefore, entirely in sympathy with their efforts to construct; but I am not at all in sympathy with their efforts to destroy an existing system of education. What is a University? A University, except in modern times, has not been a mere examining Board. We have had the London University as an examining Board, starting a sort of Chinese system in this country, and trying to promote education through examinations; but Universities, properly and efficiently constituted, are teaching Bodies, which, by means of well-regulated examinations, give degrees to the students whom they have taught. Well, what do you wish in Ireland? Do you wish to promote that system of education as the means of educating the Roman Catholics of Ireland? [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Well, that is precisely what you are proposing by this Bill to do. You propose to take away £25,000 a-year from the Queen's Colleges and pass that sum over to the examining Board of the Royal University, and thus to extinguish three out of four of the teaching Colleges of Ireland. Let us consider in what state higher education is in Ireland. You have Trinity College, of which even Roman Catholics are proud. You have the Queen's Colleges, which the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) says ought to be destroyed, because they have failed, and the proof of their failure he states to be that they have few Art students. I do not admit this as a fact. The Art students amount to 27 per cent of the whole number. In the University of Edinburgh, which is a much older College, the proportion is only 33 per cent. The hon. Member for Dungarvan despises professional education, and thinks it unworthy of a University. Excepting Oxford and Cambridge, where the Arts Faculty has always been predominatingly strong, the other ancient Universities arose out of the desire of Professions to obtain culture and scientific education.

Mr. O'DONNELL: No, no. You cannot say to which of them that applies?

Mr. LYON PLAYFAIR: The hon. Member asks me which? Well, Salerno arose out of Medicine; Bologna out of Law.

Mr. O'DONNELL: And Paris?

Mr. LYON PLAYFAIR: Paris arose out of Theology and Law. The Arts Faculty in Paris was originally a mere preparatory school, in proof of which I may remind the hon. Member that an edict was passed to prevent any student from becoming a Master of Arts before he reached 12 years of age. Professional education is admirable for enlarging the faculties, and cultivating the mind. As regards medical training, I know no sort of education equal to it, for, by the rules of the Medical Council, evidence of liberal culture must precede scientific training. Education may come through sciences, as well as through philology. It is not, however, the question which is the best, but which is the most suitable to poor countries like Scotland and Ireland? Scotland, until recent years, could not boast a large number of Art graduates; but, nevertheless, her Universities have moulded the character of her people, and laid the foundation of her prosperity. Scotland has in one corner mineral wealth; but her soil is naturally more sterile than that in Ireland. Her education has, however, compensated for her natural poverty, and made her rich and contented. But now Irish patriots actually propose to destroy three systematic Colleges, without substituting anything for them. They have now 1,059 students admirably taught, and they are to be deprived of all means of systematic education which they now have in Arts, Medicine, Law, and Engineering. The Bill, after destroying these Colleges, hands over £25,000 a-year to the Royal University, which already has £20,000. As the fund of a mere examining Board, I quite agree with the right hon. and learned Gentleman (Mr. Gibson) that the latter is a very large sum. It is a great deal too much to scatter as prizes for cramming. You may do much harm by the unwise use of money in education. At present the Royal University scatters its money among small Roman Catholic seminaries, which are not properly provided with teaching appliances. To put more money at its disposal would, I think, do infinite mischief to education, and elevate "cram" above systematic teaching. I think we ought very carefully to watch the growth of examinations in this country. The Public Services have fostered them, and I look with much anxiety to their multiplication. They force intellect too rapidly forward in youth, and stunt it in manhood. I, for one, would be very glad to see any constructive system presented for promoting higher education amongst the Irish Roman Catholics; but a destructive system, such as is proposed by this Bill, is one which, I think, the House ought to resist, and, as this Bill proposes to destroy most useful Colleges, in order to promote an examining system which I much distrust, I intend to vote against it.

Mr. MITCHELL HENRY said, that in his opinion Irish Members, without exception, would be much gratified at the tone of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down (Mr. Lyon Playfair). The very liberal and most excellent views expressed by the right hon. Gentleman went to show that the great bugbear of the religious difficulty would not, if he could help it, stand in the way in the future of giving effect to the desire expressed over and over again by the Irish people that the

Roman Catholics should be allowed to have the advantages of resident teaching in Colleges of their own. When the right hon. Gentleman spoke of the great evils of an examination system, under which it was not cared where the pupils examined obtained their training, he should bear in mind that that was one of the principal objections urged by the Roman Catholics since the question was first brought forward. Eight or ten years ago this was a burning question, and the present Government would never forget what happened to them and to the Liberal Party because they absolutely despised all the demands of the Roman Catholics. The Government was destroyed upon the very question that the Irish Members speaking on behalf of the Irish people asked—not to be put off with mere opportunities for examination and the taking of prizes, but that something should be given them like that conceded to the Protestants—namely, resident Colleges and Universities in which the young men might receive their education. When there was a question of teaching the Chinese language in one of the Universities, the House might probably recollect that Dr. Johnson said a University was a place in which everything ought to be taught, not a place for examinations, and in former days there were no examinations in the Universities. Now, the Roman Catholics of Ireland had no place in which their young men could be taught. It was true that a Catholic University in Dublin had been founded by the exertions of the Roman Catholic Body, who in Ireland were really very poor, but who did more and made greater efforts on behalf of their education and of their religion than any other people in this or any other country with which we were connected. For it must be remembered that the Catholics supported their own ministers, built their own churches and chapels, and contributed everything out of their own pockets, except for the education of priests at Maynooth, which was an endowment that had been given long before the Union. But a Catholic University had always been refused, and the Irish Catholics had always been frowned upon in that House. The Catholic Body asked in the most modest way that a grant should be given to enable them to construct buildings of their own; but it was refused with contumely. And then, when one great Government had ceased to exist, and the Liberal Party had been put out of Office for six years, their Successors made it a so-called University which was nothing else than an examining College. To suppose that the question of University education in Ireland was to be settled in that way was absurd. The Roman Catholics never would, and never ought, to be content until they had exactly the same advantages for education in their own way that the Protestants had. It was all perfect rubbish to talk about the liberality of the University of Dublin. Trinity College, it was true, rather than lose some of its emoluments and prestige, threw over the religious character of the education given at that institution—the very thing that was prized by Protestants, and respected by Roman Catholics. That step, however, did not attract to the College the suffrages of the Roman Catholic people of Ireland; while, on the other hand, it rather alienated their sympathy, because they contended that education to be real should be founded on religion. He should like to know what the Roman Catholics were to do? He was not speaking on their behalf, because he was not a Roman Catholic. But he felt bound to ask the question. This Bill was brought forward, he presumed, not as a proposition for education that would be acceptable to the Catholic Members or to the Catholic people, but as a pilot balloon to ascertain the feelings of the House, and to show the dissatisfaction of the Roman Catholics with the present state of things. He should think it most unjust to disendow the Queen's Colleges in Ireland, which were for mixed education, provided they gave opportunities for denominational education for Roman Catholics. The Roman Catholics to his mind were perfectly just and fair when they said—"Endow all or disendow all; but do not mock a people who love education, who desire to have it, and who have made such great exertions to obtain it, by pretty speeches now and then." Hon. Members in that House seem to say—"Oh, we should be delighted to assist in a constructive scheme, but we will not assist in a destructive one." The Roman Catholics did not wish to destroy any system; but they insisted on their rights, without which they would never be content. He must again ask what were they to-do? He was sure that this Government would never bring in a Bill on the subject. The Government was not strong enough —was not strong enough in their convictions. They had no sympathy with denominational education, and they were afraid. [Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY: Hear, hear!] His hon. Friend aimed to be an advocate of justice; at the same time he kept all the plums in the pudding to himself. Denominational education did exist in Ireland, but it was entirely Protestant. [Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY: Where?] He was almost startled at being asked such a question. He should say in Trinity College, Dublin. The whole notion and idea of education there was Protestant, and he hoped it always would be. Trinity College, of which he desired to speak only with respect, had greatly lowered itself by throwing off, under the Bill of his right hon. Friend the Member for Hackney (Mr. Fawcett), for a purpose of its own—in his (Mr. Mitchell Henry's) opinion not the most creditable—the religious character which it had formerly held. The Queen's Colleges were also Protestant; and, although one of them had a Roman Catholic Principal, that did not alter the general character of the Colleges. The Roman Catholic Hierarchy and the Roman Catholic people were opposed to any education which was not founded upon religion, and he maintained that they were right, and that their feelings ought to be respected. The fact was, that the Protestants of this country were still as full as ever of the old bigotry and the old prejudice. He spoke as a Protestant himself, and regretted that it was so. The Roman Catholics did not want to destroy; but he should like to know what assistance would be given to them if they did come forward with a constructive system? Would the House grant to them the sum of £25,000 a-year which had been spoken of for Queen's Colleges on a denominational basis? Of course, they knew perfectly well the House would not. But what they might do, and what he believed would eventually have to be done, would be to make the University of Dublin a University of more than one College, and to affiliate to it a Catholic as well as a Protestant College. If that was done, the Roman Catholics would feel that they were getting a fair share of the emoluments, and would be able to provide a training for their students; for they could not be expected to be content with merely an examination and a series of processes, which, in the long run, might be almost said to degrade, instead of to advance, the intellectual development of young men. He was greatly delighted to hear the tone of the debate; but he did not think they ought to make too much of it. Honeyed words had been frequently made use of in this House on the subject of education; but they always found that whenever it came to the question as to whether they had overcome their prejudices against Roman Catholics, they found that they had not done so. The Protestants had all the emoluments in their own hand, and they would keep them. That was what it always practically came to; and until the feeling was altered in some way or other, so long, in his opinion, would the Roman Catholic people of Ireland retain the feeling that they had an injustice to overcome, the continuance of which would make the rule of this country distasteful to them.

MR. MACARTNEY said, that the statements of his hon. Friend who had just spoken (Mr. Mitchell Henry) were hardly consistent with each other. He had found fault with the University of Dublin for having changed its religious character; but it was impossible to please the hon. Member. He blamed it for being exclusively Protestant, and then he blamed it for having parted with its denominational character. They could not both be true, and which did the hon. Member want? He also said the Presbyterians had a denominational College of their own. Where was it? Did he mean the Queen's College, Belfast? There was also the Academical Institution, which was founded by Presbyterians; but they did not demand that the University should alter its standard for the purpose of adapting itself to their opinions. They had also the Magee College, which had recently acquired the right to confer degrees of a particular kind—namely, to the clergy of the Presbyterian Church; but when the Irish Church was disestablished, a large slice of the property of the Church was conferred for ever upon Maynooth College, which also had the right to confer degrees. Was not that endowment an endowment to an exclusively denominational College for the purpose of instructing Roman Catholic priests? And now, the Roman Catholics claimed to get the funds either of the Disestablished Church or of the University College of Magee, for the purpose of establishing for themselves a University which should be under the exclusive control of the priesthood of the Church of Rome. That, he thought, was what was foreshadowed in the speech of his hon. Friend. His hon. Friend had also spoken of honeyed words being too frequently employed as concerned this question; but he (Mr. Macartney) was not in the habit of putting much honey into his words. Perhaps he was more prone to put in a little vinegar. But he would have the hon. Member understand that if the Government of Great Britain abandoned the position it had hitherto maintained of holding the balance equal between the religions, and gave to the Roman Catholics the advantages of exclusive denominational education, the feeling of Protestants in Ireland would be considerably exasperated. They would feel that they were to be deprived of an exclusive privilege which they had enjoyed for 300 years to make all things equal among all men, and then to re-establish those who had assisted in despoiling them, and give them the very advantage for their own benefit of which the Protestants had been deprived. That would not be either justice or equality. In reference to the Queen's Colleges, the Roman Catholic priesthood had said to the people—"If you send your children there, you are not real Roman Catholics." But, in spite of all this, and other influences brought to bear, hundreds of Roman Catholics had been educated in those Colleges at Cork, Belfast, and Galway. It had been over and over again said in this House, that among the College-going population in the districts where those Colleges were established, there were in proportion as many Roman Catholics as of any other denomination. [*Cries of* "No, no!"] Of course, very poor people could not send their children to the Universities; but they could afford to give them sufficient education to enable them to enter into the competitive examinations, though they could not send them into training in a University where they would have to reside, and be clothed and fed in addition to being educated, unless that University was very largely endowed. He was himself educated at a University in a Roman Catholic country, and he wished to say there was no such thing as denominational education there. Education was open to all without restrictions. As to the books out of which the Professors were to take their lectures, that very point was the stumbling-block which upset the Bill of the right Gentleman who was now at the head of the Government. According to that Bill, it would have been open to the students to object to the lecture or Professor, and if such objection was taken, the lecturer was bound to submit himself, as far as that went, to the judgment of the students attending his class. Now, if that was to be the system on which Fellowships were to be appointed in Dublin or elsewhere, it would be a lamentable thing for the country. The larger, wider, broader education was provided for, the Professors not being allowed to teach that which was contrary to the belief in God, the better it would be. But how were they to act in the present age? Was everybody to be subjected either to the assaults of infidelity or the influence of superstition? They had the one on one side and the other on the other. He was told that he was too severe. [*Ironical cries of* "No, no!"] Well, he was glad to find that hon. Gentlemen below him, at any rate, were not inclined to think he was using unhoneyed words. He did not wish to give offence to anybody. He submitted his opinions earnestly, openly, and frankly; and he was sure that nothing worse could happen to Ireland than to destroy the Queen's Colleges, and hand over their endowments to the Royal University for the purpose of creating, he presumed, a large number of scholarships. If they afterwards made an assault on the only remaining University in Ireland, which would be the University of Dublin and Trinity College, and despoiled it also, and brought all down to one uniform level, men getting in from all parts of the country for examination before a certain number of Professors who were bound not to ask questions which would be displeasing to any of the students, Ireland would be in a worse state than she had ever been, and she was bad enough now. He lastly objected to the present Bill, because it sought to carry further the prevailing idea that, no matter what they dragged the property of other people from, they must get it somehow.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. PORTER) said, that the matter under discussion was one in which he took the deepest interest, having been a student at one of the Colleges referred to. The debate had taken a singular course. It was now admitted, he thought, by all the speakers in favour of the second reading of the Bill, that the means which the Bill provided for carrying out their object were not justifiable. It was avowed that it was not desired to put an end to the Queen's Colleges. It was avowed they were doing a work, which, if it were not as much and as good as might be desired, was yet a practical and useful work. Again, it was avowed that the end which would be accomplished by that Bill was not the end that the promoters of it had in view, because it had been made plain in the course of the debate that the object which that Bill would accomplish would be the transference of the funds of the Queen's Colleges to the Royal University, in whose hands they would necessarily be held not for the purpose of promoting academic teaching in any shape or form, but simply for the purpose of affording additional scholarships and prizes in a non-teaching and merely examining University. It seemed to him that, dealing with the Bill as a Bill on which the House might seriously vote, there was nothing to be said in favour of a second reading of it, as the only way in which its end was to be accomplished was by the destruction of the Queen's Colleges. There was nothing otherwise for the Bill to operate upon. The only fund to be got was the endowment which the Queen's Colleges possessed, which consisted of £21,000 a-year, which, by the Colleges Act of 1845, was charged on the Consolidated Fund. There had been some Parliamentary grants of not very large amounts; but the amount stated was in the main the public endowment of the Queen's Colleges. That endowment was at present administered by the three Colleges, and what were the results of that administration? He would point out to the House that the teaching in the Queen's Colleges was a real and actual fact, and that they had been a marked success. At present, or rather, as the latest Report showed, in the Session of 1880-1, there were between 1,000 and 1,100 students attending lectures within their walls; and in order that the House might appreciate the significance of that figure, he would draw attention to the fact that no student could pass through the classes there without regular attendance on the lectures during the entire term of his course. One would naturally suppose that by the side of that ancient, distinguished, and renowned seat of learning, Trinity College, so splendidly endowed, the Queen's Colleges would make but a very indifferent comparison; but, if he was not mistaken, the number of those really or nominally on the books of that College did not exceed by more than 100 or 150 those in connection with the Queen's Colleges, while a large number of them were not compelled to attend any lectures, so that they had got 1,000 to 1,100 young men actually receiving an academic training which would culminate in their taking a degree. It seemed to him that, as regarded mere numbers, the students in attendance on the Queen's Colleges indicated marked success on the part of these institutions. As regarded the character of the teaching, he spoke with diffidence; but it appeared to him that these Colleges and the University which recently terminated had had an honourable career, and honourable results to show. As to the Medical School which had been so largely spoken of, as if it ought to be excepted from the general account of the work done by the University, it seemed to him that during the debate that argument had been answered conclusively. There was no more important portion of the work of the College than that to which medical education was confided, and there was no medical degree in the Three Kingdoms which stood higher than that of the late Queen's University, with the single exception, he believed, of that of the London University. In all departments of public work, in all branches of service, in every region where the British Government extended, the students of the Queen's Colleges had been doing good and useful work, and had been reflecting credit upon the institution. The technical character of the education had also been remarked upon, and it seemed to him that in a country like Ireland they would expect to find the number of those receiving a professional education largely preponderate over those receiving a mere Arts training. It was not a country like England, in which a large number of people could look forward to a life of cultured ease; and what few there were of such persons resorted, as a rule, either to Trinity College, Dublin, or to the English Universities. It seemed, then, that the Queen's Colleges had been doing principally, though not exclusively, the work of training men for professional life; and he should like to know what more useful work could be done in such Colleges? It was alleged that they had been teaching men who afterwards went to the ministry of the Presbyterian Church. That was quite true; but was it said that those who were to be educated for that Church were not to receive an academic or Arts training? That was an important part of the educational work of the country. Several times it had been said that the College at Belfast was practically a denominational College, and that it was largely a College resorted to by members of the Presbyterian Church. The latter statement was quite true. The students on the books numbered about 500, of which 300 were Presbyterians, and the remaining 200, or nearly 200, were divided amongst a number of different denominations, none of them disentitled to the advantages of the educational establishments of the country. Although the Presbyterian students preponderated, it was in no sense a Presbyterian College, and in no sense open to the charge of being a sectarian institution. It was also quite true that only one of the Professors happened to be a member of the Roman Catholic Church; but he had heard of no complaints of interference in the selection of Professors, and had never heard it alleged that an appointment in that College or in any of the other Queen's Colleges was ever made on a sectarian basis. Sectarianism had nothing to do with the appointment of Professors in that College. As regards the working of the College itself, it was a very considerable number of years since he left its halls, and ever since he had taken the deepest interest in it, and was in a position to judge of its working, having been long a member of the Senate of the Queen's University, and he might say that during his whole undergraduate course, or since, he had never heard the slightest complaint from anyone in reference to the teaching of the Belfast College, on the ground that it was in any degree sectarian. The hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) had explained a difficulty under which he was placed when he was attending the College at Galway, by being obliged to attend the lectures of a Professor of History, whose views he did not agree with. The hon. Member also quoted extracts from a work published by another gentleman, Professor Young; but Professor Young's publication never was a text-book, and it had not been alleged that any opinion of a controversial character had ever been introduced by Professor Young in the discharge of his duties as Professor. On the contrary, it was perfectly well known that the teaching of that Chair was particularly guarded, so as to avoid any controversial matters. It must also be remembered, although the hon. Member himself appeared to be ignorant of the fact, that by a rule of the Queen's Colleges History was one of the Chairs the teachings of which were not compulsory on any student. No student was under any obligation to attend such lectures. The Queen's Colleges were said to have been a marked failure as regarded the attendance of Catholics. It should not be forgotten that the number of Roman Catholics in the Province of Ulster, although large, did not include many of those in a position to take advantage of a University education, and those who were able to do so were generally the sons of country farmers, who did it with the view of becoming clergymen. With regard to these last, they got their education under public endowment at the College of Maynooth, so that so far as that class was concerned it could not be alleged that they had any grievance. They would find that in the Colleges of Cork and Galway combined of the numbers of students actually upon the books more than one-half were Roman Catholics. A distinction had been drawn between the other Colleges and the College at Galway, and a suggestion had been made that that College ought to be thrown overboard; but he dissented entirely from that proposition. It had been placed in very exceptional circumstances in a poor and thinly-populated district and in a declining town, and he was surprised to find that under the circumstances such a number of students were attending it. It was surprising to note that the number of its students at present was as great as that of the students of Belfast for the first 10 years of its existence, and that as regards the quality of its teaching it compared favourably with its fellow-institutions. It deserved the warm support of all who had at heart the interests of Ireland. It had been urged that the numbers were to some extent a fallacious test of the utility of the Colleges, and that there had been a spasmodic increase of students in consequence of the dissolution of the Queen's University; but he maintained that the Colleges had grown gradually, and that there was nothing spasmodic about their development. Even as regarded the number of Roman Catholics, it seemed to him that the case against the Colleges had failed. Another observation which was made was that it was an unfair thing that the students of Colleges which had been so largely endowed should be allowed to compete for the prizes of the Royal University. At the time the Royal University Act was passed the Queen's University was destroyed, and there was no place where the students of the Queen's Colleges could obtain a degree, unless they were admitted to compete in the Royal University. It could not be said that it would have been right now to establish a University from the honours and prizes of which one class, that probably the largest that would seek University education, should be excluded. But, according to the constitution of the Royal University, no student of a Queen's College could gain a prize in that University unless he gave credit for the amount of any prize he possessed in his College. That was to say, if he held a prize of £50 from the Queen's College, Galway, and gained a studentship of £60 from the Royal University, he only obtained £10, the other £50 being left in the University for other persons. Therefore, however the argument might stand with respect to the establishment of an independent College for Roman Catholics, he maintained that no hardship existed in the present management of the prizes of the Queen's Colleges. The hon. Member for Cork City (Mr. Daly) fell into an error when he was referring to the feelings of mortification which he conceived Roman Catholics who did not attend the Queen's College in that city would hear of the extensive grants to that College for the remarkable appliances at the service of the students there. But the hon. Member had not observed that President Sullivan, in his report, mentioned that the cost of these had been borne by a local gentleman who did much for the private endowment of the College. President Sullivan had with great zeal and industry striven to develop from private funds the resources of the College over which he so worthily presided. It seemed to him (the Solicitor General for Ireland), therefore, that there was no reason why the Queen's Colleges should be destroyed, and even on the part of the promoters of the Bill that appeared to be conceded. If the Queen's Colleges were not to be destroyed, there remained the consideration whether anything should be done for the purpose of conferring additional funds upon the Royal University. The Queen's University only terminated last month, and the Royal University had only just come into existence; it had only held one matriculation examination. It was founded on a principle questionable in itself, a principle which, at least, did not recommend itself very largely to some important classes in Ireland; and the time during which it was in operation was too short to form any opinion as to its efficiency. The idea, therefore, of transferring bodily the funds of the institutions that were doing good work to this institution, for the purpose of their being applied to questionable ends, appeared to him to be very wild and absurd. What was to be done with the buildings? It was contrary to the constitution of the Royal University to establish a College. It could not render attendance in any school an essential preliminary to obtaining its degrees. It would probably be obliged to sell its Colleges—as had been remarked—for barracks, and apply the funds to the same profitless objects it pursued at present. It seemed to him that a Motion for Inquiry would have attained all the ends that hon. Members had in view by the introduction of the Bill, if indeed they had not been attained already by the discussion. The

Queen's Colleges had gathered around them the good wishes, not only of those who had been connected with them, but those who had examined that work. There had been large private endowments associated with the Colleges of Galway, Cork, and especially Belfast. They had been acquiring these endowments on the faith of an Act of Parliament, and discharging honestly and loyally the work appointed for them to do. A cessation of their existence, then, would be a wrong not only to the students and Professors, but an outrage to the donors who had placed funds at their disposal. The old argument which he thought had been long since abolished had again cropped up about those Colleges being "Godless Colleges," a description applied to them long since, and he even believed up to the present time by some persons. There were no Colleges in the United Kingdom to which that description less applied. So far from religious teaching being banished from their walls, as was commonly supposed, absolutely the reverse was the case. Instead of a prohibition of religious instruction, there was absolutely a statutory requirement binding upon a student in every case, if those connected with his Church would only afford it to him, to receive religious instruction within the College walls; and in the College with which he (the Solicitor General for Ireland) was connected not only was religious instruction not banished, but it was strictly enforced, and given by the heads of the Churches with which the students were connected, under the penalty of rustication or expulsion, if the students did not attend that religious instruction. It might be right or it might be wrong to have such a system of education as was established in the Queen's Colleges; but as regarded the results on the character and lives of the students, he could only say he had never heard an allegation that the students, whether Catholic, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, or Methodist, were not as well conducted, as moral, and as religious as those of any other Colleges in the country. For those reasons, it seemed to him that there was no ground whatever for either the demolition of these Colleges, or the appropriation of their funds. His view differed widely from those of the Irish Members opposite on the question of denominational education. At the same time, he recognized their right to entertain their views, and he entirely sympathized with their honest and sincere expressions of opinion on these matters. But, while that was so, it seemed to him that that was not a fit and proper opportunity for discussing the subject. The straightforward way for hon. Members to try to attain their object was to openly bring forward proposals for the establishment and endowment of a Catholic College, and thus fairly raise the question, leaving the Queen's Colleges, which were admittedly doing good work, to do it unharassed and undiscouraged by such discussions as had been going on to-day.

MR. METGE said, the speech of the right hon. Gentleman who represented the University of Edinburgh (Mr. Lyon Playfair) was one that would give universal satisfaction in Ireland, inasmuch as he had thrown the weight of his influence into the scale in favour of University education on the system of concurrent endowment. The right hon. Gentleman told them that the greatest blot in the present Bill was that it endeavoured, by destroying the Queen's Colleges in Ireland, to transfer the endowments by which they were supported to what was merely an examining Body. He (Mr. Metge) felt quite as strongly as did the right hon. Gentleman the inefficiency of the Royal University for the purposes of education. But, as it existed, it was not so entirely a mere examining Board as had been represented, provision being made in its constitution for Fellowships on the Board, those Fellowships to be held by gentlemen who were actually teachers and Professors in Colleges throughout Ireland. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say that the College in Belfast, if for no other reason, should be maintained on the ground of its usefulness as a Professional Institution. That might be very desirable, but it was not the object for which the Queen's Colleges were established. According to the evidence of Sir Robert Kane before the Queen's Colleges Commissioners, they were simply established to develop the Faculty of Arts on a large scale. The right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland seemed to think that the great difficulty of doing away with the Queen's Colleges would be that the Protestant students of these Colleges would have no other means of obtaining a Collegiate education; but he

(Mr. Metge) thought that was rather a weak argument, and would ask hon. Members to consider what was the position of the Catholic students at present. All the endowments for Catholic education, with the exception of Maynooth, were supplied from private sources. The Catholic students had to obtain Collegiate education at private institutions, except so far as they could avail themselves of Maynooth. Surely the Protestants were as well able to endow Colleges for themselves as were the Catholics. It was an outrage to put forward the difficulty of dealing with the buildings as a reason for not redressing a grievance. He did not see how a Bill which proposed to transfer the emoluments of a University which was obnoxious to the people of Ireland, and which had practically failed to be of any use, could be regarded as one for destroying an established system of University education. They were told that the question was not ripe for settlement; but that was a statement they had heard so often that it was time to take a lesson from it, and to advise their constituents to make it ripe for discussion by agitating outside, and for the House to pay that attention to it which the paltry pressure of 12 or 15 Members could never extort. The Irish people must, therefore, take great care in the future to thoroughly agitate every subject, and then the pressure would be brought to bear.

Mr. CORRY denied that the Queen's College at Belfast was in any way a sectarian College. It was in a Presbyterian district, and therefore it was natural that it should be resorted to by Presbyterian young men desirous to be educated for the Ministry. He was sure that if the accommodation were better, they would have a still larger number of young men resorting to that College. He hoped they would find in the Estimates that there was a considerable grant made to that College. It had been a very great success, and his constituents would be annoyed if they thought that College was to be interfered with in any way, and he should therefore vote against the Bill.

Sir JOSEPH M'KENNA said, he considered the principle which underlay the Bill was one that the House ought not lightly to cast aside, and, as it was likely to be defeated by a very large majority if they went to a division, he would move the adjournment of the debate.

Mr. METGE formally seconded the Motion.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned."—(*Sir Joseph M'Kenna.*)

Mr. MACARTNEY said, this was an extraordinary proceeding——

Mr. BIGGAR rose on a point of Order, and said, his hon. Friend (Mr. Metge) had spoken on the Main Question, and he (Mr. Biggar) would like to know if it were in Order for him to second the Motion for Adjournment?

Mr. SPEAKER said, as the hon. Member had spoken on the Main Question, he would be out of Order in seconding a Motion for Adjournment.

There being no Seconder, the Motion was not put.

Question put, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

The House *divided*:—Ayes 35; Noes 214: Majority 179.—(Div. List, No. 57.)

BURGLARY BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Thomas Collins, Bill to make Burglary an offence triable at Quarter Sessions, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Thomas Collins, Mr. Hinde Palmer, and Mr. Paget.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 109.]

METROPOLIS (RATING OF FOOTWAYS) BILL.

On Motion of Mr. Torrens, Bill to amend the seventy-eighth section of "The Metropolis Local Management Act, 1855," as to the Rating of Footways, *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Torrens, Sir Andrew Lusk, Sir James Lawrence, Mr. William M'Arthur, Baron Henry De Worms, and Mr. Boord.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 110.]

House adjourned at five minutes before Six o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Thursday, 23rd March, 1882.

MINUTES.]—Public Bills—*First Reading*—General Police and Improvement (Scotland) * (48).

Second Reading — Parliamentary Declaration (32), *negatived.*

Third Reading — Pilotage Provisional Order (Tees) * (33), and *passed.*

SOUTH AFRICA—THE TRANSVAAL—THE BOERS.—OBSERVATIONS.

THE EARL OF CARNARVON: My Lords, I wish to call the attention of my noble Friend opposite, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, to a matter which has come under my notice very recently, and of which I have given him private Notice. I have just seen some information from the Transvaal in reference to a great festival which has been held there with a view, it seems, of celebrating the independence of the Transvaal Republic. The Landdrost of Pretoria was in the chair, and many were present whose names are familiar to us in this country, and amongst them were M. Joubert and the English Resident. Now, I observe that on this occasion there were four toasts proposed — 1st, "The Independence of the People of the South African Republic;" 2nd, "The Volksraad as a Legislative Authority;" 3rd, "The Triumvirate and the Executive Council;" and, 4th, "The Queen, as Suzerain of the State;" and I notice that M. Joubert, who proposed the last toast, very judiciously said that he did not know what the word Suzerain meant. I beg your Lordships to observe that of the list of toasts the first was "The Independence of the Republic," and the last was that of "Her Majesty the Queen." I do not think it possible to infer anything else than that an insult, I may say a gross insult, was intended—a sarcasm was used in reference to the Suzerain, but it was an insult as it was used in regard to Her Majesty as an exalted Lady in that capacity—but in the arrangement of the toasts an insult was no doubt intended. I do not know what course my noble Friend has taken; but I wish to call his attention to the fact that the British Resident was present—and the British Resident, if the newspaper reports are correct, humbly and deferentially accepted that insult, and made answer to the toasts as the Representative of the Queen for the Queen. I am afraid that my noble Friend will have no power to deny the accuracy of the statement which I have just made; but, at all events, I do hope that my noble Friend will be able to tell your Lordships that his attention has been called to the event, and that he had expressed his sense of the very gross impropriety of such a proceeding.

THE EARL OF KIMBERLEY: My Lords, I do not believe that an insult was intended by the Boers, less do I believe that it was intended to be a gross insult; but it was a most unbecoming proceeding, and certainly not a proceeding at which the British Resident should have taken part. As soon as my attention was called to the circumstance, I sent a message to the British Resident that he was not to attend any public meeting in the Transvaal, unless he first learned what was proposed to be done, and that due respect would be paid to his Sovereign whom he represents there.

MARRIAGE OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE LEOPOLD, DUKE OF ALBANY.

Her Majesty's most gracious Message of Tuesday last *considered* (according to order).

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, this is the second time I have had the honour and, I may add, the pleasure of asking your Lordships to agree to an Address of congratulation to Her Majesty on the occasion of a Royal Marriage. On these occasions the ready and cheerful loyalty with which your Lordships have associated yourselves with the Addresses makes me feel how very satisfactory it is that the anticipations then formed have since been so amply fulfilled, to the additional comfort of Her Majesty and the increased happiness of the Royal Family. It is the less necessary for me to use many words now, because your Lordships had an opportunity, upon the debate on the Address, of adverting to this subject; and the manner in which your Lordships were pleased to receive the announcement and the observations that were made by several of your Lordships on this particular point showed how ready your Lordships were to concur in a proposal of this kind. Allusion was then made to the remarkable character and intellectual qualities inherited from his illustrious Father by the Bridegroom on this occasion, and I took the liberty of stating that what I had heard with regard to the qualifications of the Princess satisfied me that the Princess would win the love and admiration which had been obtained by the other foreign Princesses who had adopted this country as their home. Since that time Her Serene Highness has visited this country, and I can appeal to many who are present whether she does not possess all those qualities which will endear her to the British people, as they have already done to the Royal Family. I beg to move—

> "That a humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, to thank Her Majesty for the most gracious communication which it has pleased Her Majesty to make to this House respecting the approaching marriage between his Royal Highness Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, and Her Serene Highness Princess Helen of Waldeck and Pyrmont, and to assure Her Majesty that this House, always feeling the most lively interest in any event which will contribute to the happiness of the Royal Family, will concur in those measures which may be proposed for the consideration of this House to make such a provision for His Royal Highness as may be suitable to the dignity of the Crown."

The Marquess of SALISBURY: My Lords, I am sure that your Lordships will give a ready assent to a Motion calculated to express the deep loyalty you feel to the Crown, and the confidence which your experience and the character of the Prince and Princess justify you in entertaining that this event will add to Her Majesty's happiness, and that it will increase the number of those to whom this country and this people look up with affection and regard. The noble Lord has justly referred to the high qualities which distinguish His Royal Highness and the exertions which he constantly makes to place his abilities at the service of his country. In the admiration which the noble Earl expressed your Lordships will, I am sure, all readily join, and you will feel no small satisfaction in being able, at the same time, to look forward to his union with the illustrious Princess about to become his bride—a Princess who is fitly chosen to share his exalted position. Such sentiments are properly associated with an occasion of this kind; but the Address your Lordships are asked to concur in does not in itself indicate your warm attachment to the Throne or your admiration of the illustrious Personages about it, because such a provision is called for from you to support the dignity of the Crown, and it is imposed upon you as a matter of duty arising from the understandings which took place when this Reign opened. But though the provision in which you may concur is not necessarily a proof of the feelings with which you regard Her Majesty and her Family, yet it may properly be associated with the warm and earnest expression of the loyalty which I am convinced every Member of your Lordships' House feels, not only to Her Majesty, but to all the Members of the Family, who have done so much to adorn the Throne.

Address ordered *nemine dissentiente* to be presented to Her Majesty. The said Address to be presented to Her Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

PARLIAMENTARY DECLARATION BILL.—(No. 32.)

(*The Earl of Redesdale.*)

SECOND READING.

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Earl of REDESDALE (Chairman of Committees), in moving that the Bill be read a second time, said, he wished shortly to call attention to the circumstances under which it was introduced. They were all aware of what had taken place in the other House on this subject. On several occasions the other House had most properly, and he was sure with the general approval of the country at large, refused to allow a person who was an avowed Atheist, and who had declared himself to be so, to take the Oath as required by Parliament before he took his seat. They felt justly that it would be a degradation of the Oath, and they, therefore, refused to allow him to take it. They were all aware of the embarrassment which had arisen from this, and it was a serious question what was to be done. If nothing was done, Mr. Bradlaugh might again appear and occupy the time of the House, and again put it to trouble and inconvenience, and bring on another painful discussion. So far as he was aware, the only course proposed as an alternative to that which he suggested by this Bill—which provided that before a person could sit in either House of Parliament he should declare his belief in an Almighty God—was that a Bill should be introduced to allow, in the circumstances of this case, that an Affirmation should be taken in lieu of the Oath. However that Bill was to be worded, it was impossible to deny that the purpose for which it would be brought in would be to enable an Atheist to sit in Parliament. He held that any such proceeding by Parliament would be most objectionable. From the earliest time it had been a principle of the Law and of the Government of this country that they should be conducted in accordance with the Christian religion. It was a mistake to suppose that it was not so in the proceedings of other countries. A Return had been made to the Foreign Office of the forms of Oath used in foreign Legislative Assemblies, and it appeared that in Bavaria, in Denmark, in Greece, in Holland, in Prussia, and in many other countries, Oaths were administered in which were used the names of God, of the Holy Gospels, or of the Trinity. It would be a sad thing if, with these examples before it, this country should be the first to take an active step with the view of admitting Atheists into Parliament. He did not say that they might not now come in and take the Oaths which were proffered them; but it was the deliberate intention of the countries to which he had referred that the person who came in should be a believer in Almighty God. An objection taken to what he proposed was that this was a new form of declaration. Certainly the declaration was one which was not required to be made at the present time; but in substance it was not new, for the effect of it was already in the Oath that was taken. This Bill was not proposed for the purpose of making a change, but it was brought in to prevent change, and to enable Business to be conducted in Parliament without a repetition of those offensive scenes which had lately troubled the other House. He really did not know what objection could be fairly taken to the measure. It was very simple, and it did not require anything new to be done; on the contrary, it protected that which was already required. It would be of the greatest advantage that relief should be given to the other House of Parliament in the matter. It was said that the difficulty had arisen in the other House, and that the measure of relief ought to be proposed there. He had not the slightest objection if it were done; but, as it was not, it would be a kind action on the part of this House towards the other, and it would be judicious, as regarded this House, to prevent anything of the same sort occurring. They were not free from the possibility, after what had occurred in the last election of Peers for Scotland, when one was not returned in the usual manner, on account of its being known that he held opinions similar to those of Mr. Bradlaugh. The great principle of the Bill was this, that the man who made the declaration could not escape the result. If he took it, and then said he did not believe in an Almighty God, he declared himself, in face of Parliament and the country, a deliberate liar, and no man could do that without debasing himself to the greatest possible extent. He might have no scruple about taking an Oath which he did not believe, but he would care for what men thought of him in the society in which he lived. The Bill would, therefore, in his opinion, operate in a manner to prevent people making false declarations. No doubt, an Affirmation was at present allowed, but it was confined to people who declared themselves Christians, and who believed in the Affirmation they made, and the same might be said of the Jews. There was no doubt that they believed in the same God, the same Supreme Being, as Christians themselves. The real question was whether it was the deliberate desire of Parliament that Atheists should take part in the political deliberations of their Lordships' House and of the other House of Parliament? All the associations and all the proceedings of Parliament were based upon the supposition that they entertained a belief in Almighty God. Every Speech from the Throne, and every Reply thereto by that House most distinctly acknowledged and avowed such belief. To take only a recent instance, Her Majesty's Most Gracious Speech at the opening of Parliament ended with an appeal to God, and the Address of their Lordships invoked the guidance and blessing of the same Power. Certainly for a long time this country had enjoyed the favour of God—whether it enjoyed it at the present moment he had very grave reasons to fear. It seemed to him that the present time was peculiarly suited to the adoption of the course he proposed, because there never was a period when the country exhibited to the world a state of circumstances so alarming. Was this a time in which they ought to declare themselves indifferent to receiving the assistance of God? Was this the moment to add to their difficulties by the encouragement of irreligion by admitting Atheists to Parliament? In his opinion, the admission of Atheists to either House of Parliament would be to degrade the dignity and impair the usefulness of the Legislature, and he trusted their Lordships would never agree to such a proposal. But what were they to do? Were they to allow the present state of things to continue? If some noble Lord had proposed a better mode of meeting the difficulty, he would gladly have supported it; but under the circumstances he thought the course proposed in this Bill was the wisest the House could adopt. In moving the second reading of the Bill, he ventured to express a hope that the House would come to such a determination upon it as would be pleasing to God and useful to the country.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Redesdale.*)

The Earl of SHAFTESBURY: My Lords, in rising to oppose this Bill, I cannot but express my belief that many of your Lordships will feel with me that more regard will be shown for the honour of Almighty God by abstaining from legislation such as this than would be the case if it were passed without a dissentient voice in this great Assembly. The noble Earl admits, and there is no doubt of it, that he proposes a new declaration and a new form of words, such as have never been used in this or in the other House of Parliament. Your Lordships, perhaps, in all your experience, have never had under your deliberations a subject more solemn and more painful than the one now before you. It must be solemn and painful even to those who are disposed to support it, for they admit thereby the awful character of the times in which we live, and the terrible necessity that something should, if possible, be done to resist the strong and rapid tide of infidelity that seems ready to overwhelm us. But if it be solemn and painful to those who are prepared to support the Bill, how much more solemn and serious it is to those who, heartily praising the noble Lord for his generous intentions, and deeply sympathizing with his sentiments and feelings, are yet unwilling—nay, unable—to add a new test as a preliminary to the discharge of Parliamentary duties! My Lords, had it been a form of ordinary character, I should not have hesitated for a moment to say "No." But the gravity of the words is so impressive, and the belief in itself so necessary and so true, that one is compelled to think, and to think deeply too, on the course that ought to be pursued. I wish to be as brief as possible, because, on a subject so solemn, our words, I think, should be wary and few. But however solemn, however religious, may be the motive and the act to which it leads, surely my noble Friend will allow that, even in these things, some regard must be had to times and circumstances. What might have been theoretically and practically good 300 years ago is neither the one nor the other in the present generation. A law of this kind passed in our day would be in absolute and unqualified discord with all the opinions, feelings, and tendencies of the men around us, and, as such, would be opposed and evaded in every possible manner. The great current of opinion seems to be running against all tests and promissory Oaths altogether, and, by attempting to impose a new test, we shall run the hazard, perhaps incur the certainty, of losing the only one that we now possess. For observe, my Lords, the course of legislation on these points. We need not go through a long historical narration; a single instance will suffice. In the 10th year of George IV., the Oath of Allegiance was amended and passed, bearing at the conclusion these solemn and emphatic words—

> "And I do solemnly, in the presence of God, profess, testify, and declare, that I do make this declaration and every part thereof in the plain and ordinary sense of the words of this Oath, without any evasion, equivocation, or mental reservation whatsoever."

But in 1866, so entirely had the public mind changed as to its belief that these words were either necessary or effective, that the Oath was changed, and demanded no more than the simple declaration of "So help me, God." Moreover, so entirely did your Lordships approve it, that the Bill effecting this change was carried without a division, and, indeed, with scarcely a debate, in your Lordship's House. My noble Friend (the Earl of Redesdale), in suffering it thus to pass, assented to its principle; and when a protest, signed by two Peers, was inscribed on the books, the name of my noble Friend was not appended to it. Now, does my noble Friend really believe that it would be possible, and, if possible, that it would be expedient, for the House of Lords to travel back some 50 years and revive, both in form and spirit, declarations and tests that have been abrogated by common consent as needless and ineffective? During the last 50 years of my life I have from circumstances been very conversant with the people, and have marked their progress. Few characteristics are more manifest among them than the great and growing dislike of all authority in matters of opinion. The imposition of a new test would make the nation believe that others were behind it, and that the Bill in truth intended much more than was expressed in the enactments. Distrust would be created, and even religious persons, I am sure, would be among the first to take the alarm. Besides, what would be gained were the measure carried? The Oath that we now have, and its consequent securities, if noble Lords will examine it, is far more stringent and penetrating than the new adjunct proposed. The adjunct, if read by itself, is feeble, but if read along with the Oath, it takes something from its stringency. It adds nothing of strength to the great purpose my noble Friend has in view; but, if passed, it would add much to public irritation, and give rise to storms of hatred and blasphemy. My Lords, I feel very reluctant to thrust on your Lordships serious and solemn considerations; but your Lordships will bear in mind that there are very many pious and good people in this country who, with the deepest convictions, hold that it is sufficient to announce a good principle, and then a duty to press it without any regard to times or circumstances. They will urge, no doubt, and very conscientiously, that in such an exigency as this there must be no regard to temporal or secondary considerations; that the movement is right, and that we must go forward in spite of all difficulty, and reckless of consequences. But, my Lords, must judgment, experience, and common sense be allowed no part in such discussions as these? Were we to turn this debate into a theological discussion, we might adduce many Scriptural proofs to the contrary; but your Lordships, I am sure, do not need to be convinced, and I will reserve that part of the argument for those who will contend with me out-of-doors. But let us for a moment consider what we are called upon to enact. Here are the words—"I, A B, do solemnly, sincerely, and truly declare and affirm that I believe in an Almighty God." I maintain that this declaration imposes, in fact, little or nothing. It would be utterly ineffective. The indefinite article leaves us with the notion of something ideal. It is a declaration that might be made by Mahomedans, Buddhists, and the followers of Epicurus. I know not how your Lordships would be affected by such an expression; but I confess that though, no doubt, I should obey the law were it passed, I should do so with the greatest reluctance. The definite article, or even the omission of the article, gives a very different meaning. Almighty God, or The Almighty God, means that Great Being, as revealed to us in Holy Scripture, who concerns Himself with the affairs of men, and is the Dispenser of rewards and punishments. The assertion of such a belief without the assertion of an accompanying belief that He exercises a moral government over the world is of no value at all. Some professed Atheists would, I dare say, reject it, and so make capital out of the new test. Many would accept it, for the arch-representative of their opinions has avowed his readiness to take the Oath, which is far stronger, for in the terms "So help me, God" we express the belief that there is a moral Providence, a Rewarder of good, and an Avenger of evil. Now, why should his followers be more scrupulous than himself? And if not so, what, then, should we have gained? My noble Friend limits his form entirely to Atheists. They are formidable, no doubt, but they are few. The pure, simple Atheist who admits nothing but force and matter is a being of rare occurrence. Those, however, who allow the existence of a First Cause, but deny His intervention in the affairs of man, who admit no revelation of a future state or any system of rewards or punishments, may be counted by myriads. In numbers they are more dangerous than all the Materialists put together, and in principles of action they have no more sense of the higher responsibilities than the followers of Hobbes or Epicurus. My noble Friend will not allow that there is anything additional or new in his proposition; it is simply, he asserts, explanation and development. But this explanation and development have already excited fresh hopes and more extended aspirations. While I was thinking on this point that had occurred to my own mind, I received a letter stating that to operate on the Representatives only was a waste of energy, that the test should be applied to the constituencies, and that every elector, before he was allowed to vote, should make the declaration prescribed in the Bill. Observe the restlessness we should create, and desire of further and stronger measures. My Lords, had we not better remain content with what we have got? It is as effective as anything can be in the present day and in the state of men's minds. In this sense only, and with this view, have I undertaken to move your Lordships to accept the Previous Question. It is more respectful to the noble Earl, whose motives we must, all of us, commend, and more reverential, so to speak, to the proposition before us. We shall thus be spared much public wrath, agitation, and profanity, and avert an increase of that feverish excitement which is disturbing the peace and threatening even the safety of the country itself. I move the Previous Question.

Previous question *moved* (*The Earl of Shaftesbury*).

The Duke of ARGYLL: My Lords, I should have been very glad if my noble Friend who has just sat down had concluded by a direct Motion that this Bill be read a second time this day three months. I will vote with him if this Motion is pressed to a division; but I should have voted with greater satisfaction for a direct negative, as it would have shown that there was no desire on the part of the House to avoid or evade for a moment the question that is placed before us. My Lords, I hardly know whether to say that I am very glad or that I am very sorry that my noble Friend has raised this question in this House. I am sorry in so far as it raises a question accompanied by incidents of the most painful nature, and I am glad in so far as it gives an opportunity to Members of this House who have devoted their attention to the subject, and are willing to deal with it fearlessly and logically without reference to sentiment, to say something to guide and direct the public mind and the public conscience upon a question by which both have been painfully tried. Now, my Lords, my first objection to the Bill of the noble Earl is this—that it distinctly implies that, as the law now stands, there is no legal impediment in the way of an Atheist taking his place in Parliament. My noble Friend did not intend that conclusion to be drawn from his Bill. The measure, however, implies that the existing law makes no provision of that kind, and it is to supply such a provision for the first time. Though I disagree with my noble Friend as to that, I agree with that portion of his speech in which he alluded to the circumstances which occurred in the other House, and said that that House was right to vindicate its honour by refusing to allow an Atheist to take his seat. I agree with my noble Friend on that point; and had I been a Member of the House of Commons I should have voted without a moment's hesitation with the majority in the case of Mr. Bradlaugh, and if a similar case were to come before this House—and my noble Friend has alluded to the fact, which we all know to be the fact, that such a case is quite possible in this House—I should vote against allowing that Peer to take his seat, and I will explain to your Lordships for a moment why I think he ought not to do so. Under the present law, every man who takes his seat in either House of Parliament is bound to take an Oath concluding with the words, "So help me, God." Now, let me put a hypothetical case exactly analagous to the case which has happened in the other House. Supposing that the Crown were to call to the Peerage a man who was a known and avowed Atheist, and supposing that he came to this House and asked the Clerk at the Table to administer to him, not the Oath, but an Affirmation, the Clerk would naturally ask upon what ground he based his refusal to take the Oath, and the answer would very likely be this—"I have been in the course of my life several times before the Courts of Justice in this country as a witness, and under the Evidence Amendment Act of 1869 and 1870 I have asked to affirm, and I have explained to the Judges that, being an Atheist, I could not conscientiously take the Oath, or, in the words of the Statute, that an Oath is not binding upon my conscience. Under these circumstances, the Judges have admitted my right to affirm, and under similar circumstances I ask you to allow me to affirm at this Table." Now, that question has been tried before the Courts of Law, and it has been found by the Judges that a man has no right as a Member of Parliament to make an Affirmation instead of taking the Oath. What, I ask, would a Peer confess who made such a request at the Table of the House? He would confess that in the Courts of Law he had satisfied the Judges that an oath was not binding upon his conscience. Now, supposing that your Lordships refused to allow that Peer to take his seat in the House, and supposing he turned round and said—"Very well, it does not matter to me; I will take the Oath," would the majority of the House in that case allow such a man to take his seat? Certainly not. It has been argued that the House of Commons has been pursuing an illegal course in preventing a man taking the Oath under identical circumstances; but the argument cannot be sustained. The mere repetition of the form of words is not taking the Oath, when repeated avowals have been made that the Oath is not binding upon the conscience. I must say I am astonished that any Member of the House of Commons, or that any Member of this House, could argue that this House should place itself in such a degraded condition as to stand round this Table and deliberately see a Member take the Oath, in the sanction of which he did not believe. There was a trial the other day with regard to the culpability which is involved in men attending and seeing a prize-fight; and the Lord Chief Justice of England, together with a considerable minority of the Judges, argued that any man who stood by and looked on at a prize-fight might be held to be guilty of taking part in a demoralizing spectacle. The majority of the Judges were against that view in the case of the particular individual then tried; but, supposing that a number of men were to make and keep a ring for a prize-fight, I believe that all the Judges would hold them guilty of immorality. But what is the degree of immorality involved in looking at a prize-fight compared with that of seeing a man take an Oath in the sanction of which he does not believe? Yet many Members of Parliament have argued that a ring should be kept to enable an Atheist to take an Oath at the Table of the House of Commons. We have nothing to do with the proceedings in the other House with regard to this question. The House of Commons is the guardian of its own honour. But I think it due to those who have objected to allowing Mr. Bradlaugh to take the Oath to say that we entirely approve the course which they have taken. Now, I pass to the very different question of what is our real position in regard to Atheists. I feel under no compulsion to speak with particular reserve, and perhaps I may speak more freely than those who are trammelled by the cares and responsibilities of Office. I am sorry to hear the noble Earl who moved the Previous Question indicate the opinion that the present Oath is a security, such as it is, which we ought not to evade. The spectacle which we have seen in "another place," and the arguments in favour of allowing Mr. Bradlaugh to take the Oath, have disabused my mind of the superstition—if I ever had it—that the imposition of an Oath is any security whatever against the admission of Atheists into Parliament. The remedy, however, is not in the direction suggested by my noble Friend. The remedy will be found if we take the course of saying that we have no power, even if we had the will, to secure a real and effective test of religious faith at the present moment in this country. But the attempt to impose a new test has been put into words by my noble Friend—perhaps few other men would have attempted it—and as to the effect of the proposed declaration and affirmation that the Member or Peer believes in an Almighty God, it is clear that that declaration might be made by a Mahomedan or a Bhuddist; and I might go further, and say that it might be made by a Red Indian, who believes in the Great Spirit, and by the heathen tribes of Africa, who, it has been discovered almost to a certainty, generally believe in a Supreme Being. It has been said that the Jewish religion is a pure Theism. That is so; but it is not an abstract Theism. The Jews do not believe in "an Almighty God;" they believe in their own Almighty God—the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob; the God whose character and dealings with mankind is to them known or believed —the God of purer eyes than behold iniquity. But for a man to say that he believes merely in the existence of "a" Supreme Being, but knows nothing of His attributes except almighty power—of His goodness, of His wisdom—with no belief in the manner in which He is to be served, or as to the kind of tribute which is to be given to Him—my Lords, we must all feel that that would be absolutely worthless. I say, then, that the only course is to allow every man to undertake the political promise which you may choose to demand from him under that sanction, whatever it may be, which is binding on his conscience. That is the remedy to which, depend upon it, we are coming; and it is better that the religious world, and that men whose feelings are deeply wounded by the recent occurrences, should see that that is the course to which we are driven, and that it is the one most consistent with a sincere worship of Almighty God. Nothing, to my mind, can be more odious than the doctrine preached in "another place" that Members of Parliament are to keep the ring for Atheists when they are willing to take the existing Oath. I have no reason to believe that Mr. Bradlaugh personally is a more dishonourable man than other Atheists; and yet we now see that he has no objection to take the Oath, though he has said that its sanction is no more to him than a set of unmeaning words. I shall vote against the Bill on two grounds—first, because it implies what I think is not true—namely, that under the present law Atheists may legally take the Oath, and that we or the other House, in resisting their so doing, are perpetrating an illegal act; and, secondly, because the test which my noble Friend supplies is a test of no value whatever. I believe the only remedy for the difficulty in which we find ourselves, and the only way to escape such odious and disgusting scenes as have been enacted in the other House of Parliament, is to allow an Affirmation to be made instead of making the Oath compulsory.

Lord BALFOUR said, he should not have taken part in the debate but for what fell from the noble Earl (the Earl of Redesdale) in regard to the election of Representative Peers for Scotland at the commencement of the present Parliament. He was one of those who voted upon the occasion; but he desired, for himself and for some other noble Lords, to say that the reason they voted against the re-election of the noble Lord in question had no connection whatever with any theological opinions which he held, or was supposed to hold. The true reason was that the noble Lord's attendance in that House had not given him the impression that he cared to retain his Membership. He desired to say, also, one word in regard to the remarks of the noble Duke (the Duke of Argyll). The noble Duke said that it was not possible to take any security for the opinions which a Member of Parliament or noble Lord might hold before admitting him to the privileges of Parliament. He thought if that were admitted by both sides it afforded a strong argument against allowing Parliament, so constituted, to legislate on spiritual matters connected with the Church of England. He did not desire to say more than this—that the existence of this admitted fact afforded a strong argument for giving a larger amount of power to regulate its own internal affairs, more especially on spiritual matters, to the Church of England. If the Bill was rejected by a large majority, he thought it would prove conclusively that the time had come when such a proposal as he suggested might be received with favour by both Houses.

The Bishop of LONDON said, he rose with great reluctance to offer a few remarks on the Bill before their Lordships; and he desired to say that in what should fall from him he spoke only for himself, and not for the Bench of Bishops, with some of whom he had had no communication. But he thought he spoke the mind of all of them when he said how deeply they honoured the high principle, courage, and sense of duty which had led his noble Friend to bring forward this Bill and discharge a task which could not but be distasteful to him. They would also, he was sure, agree with him that the admission of Atheists to the Legislature would be a national calamity, and might be a national sin. Having said this much, he must frankly add that, while he could not bring himself to vote against the Bill—that would be painful—he could not vote for it. He did not believe that the Bill would keep out those whom the noble Earl wished to exclude; while, on the other hand, it would keep out those whom they hardly wished to exclude. The Bill was one to exclude Atheists from taking part in the Legislature of the country. Well, an

Atheist was one who said, "There is no God." Johnson defined him as one who denied the existence of God. He was not prepared to say that every Atheist was necessarily a dishonest man, or one deficient of a sense of veracity; but they must admit that the Atheist had lost some of the strongest motives which operated on most men to perform their duties honourably and honestly. And it was possible to conceive a man smarting under what he might consider the injustice of exclusion by an Act like this, and might think himself justified in claiming his right to an admission to Parliament by making the declaration prescribed. There were others, Pantheists, equivalent to Atheists, who would not have any difficulty in taking this declaration, for they believed in an Almighty God, a Spirit of Nature diffused through all matter, all space, of which they themselves were part. Then there were others who were hardly Atheists, but who could not take the declaration. Blank Atheism was not very prevalent, at least, among those who were likely to obtain admission to Parliament, yet he feared there were many men of keen and able intellects, pure and honest lives, who, though they did not disbelieve in God, would not say that they believed in Him—men who, not being able to find proofs of His existence—such as they were accustomed to require in scientific inquiries—considered the question not capable of demonstration—believed that, in their present state of knowledge, the point was insoluble; that it was beyond the limit put to human powers. They did not disbelieve a God; there might be a God; they hoped there was; but the fact was not demonstrated. Now, these men would be excluded by the Bill of the noble Earl. They could not come forward and say, as honest men—"I do solemnly and sincerely believe in an Almighty God." That was not the class of men whom they desired to exclude. He had another scruple against the Bill. He doubted whether Parliament had the right to impose any measure of this sort. Of course, he must admit that Parliament had power to impose any qualification upon the Members of it; but it was a principle not only of Christian charity, but also of law, to assume that men were what they ought to be, unless some reason to doubt it existed with regard to them. It was desirable that all men should be honest; but they did not require a declaration from a man that he was an honest man. There was something in the proposal against which men's minds would rebel. It was not agreeable to conceive the Affirmation of belief in an Almighty God required of every Peer admitted into this House, and of every Bishop who took his seat on this Bench. A more favourable consideration, no doubt, would be given to the noble Earl if he brought in a Bill enacting that if any man publicly proclaimed by word or writing the opinion that he did not believe in God, he should be disqualified from sitting in Parliament; but he could not support the present Bill, because it would exclude those whom they did not wish to exclude, while it would admit those whom they did not wish to admit. He was therefore glad the noble Earl had moved the Previous Question.

The Earl of GALLOWAY said, he had come down to the House with the intention of supporting the second reading of the Bill; but after the debate, to which he had been listening attentively, he would venture to express the hope that his noble Friend (the Earl of Redesdale) would withdraw his Bill. He was very sorry to find that his noble Friend (the Earl of Redesdale), who moved the second reading of the Bill, had thought it politic to refer to the fact that a representative Scotch Peer was not re-elected on account, he would not say of his religious opinions, but because of his open avowal that he had no religious opinions. He would not, however, have thought it necessary to address their Lordships, had it not been for the words which had fallen from his noble Friend (Lord Balfour of Burleigh). But, as he himself happened to be one of those present on the occasion referred to at Holyrood, he now boldly avowed, speaking only for himself, that, unlike the noble Lord (Lord Balfour of Burleigh), his reason for not voting for the re-election of the Peer in question was because he had publicly stated his utter want of religious belief.

The Marquess of LOTHIAN said, he also was present on the remarkable occasion just referred to; and he expressed an opinion at that time which might have had the result of that noble Lord's non-election. He rose now to ask the noble Earl who had brought in the Bill not to press his Motion to a division, because he felt, as other noble Lords did, that it would place them in an awkward position. If they voted for the Motion and carried the Bill they might be doing that which would be likely to bring about the very object which they desired to counteract. He agreed with every word that had fallen from the noble Duke opposite (the Duke of Argyll), and thought that the only way of proceeding would be to introduce a Bill allowing an Affirmation, as the name of God was dishonoured by the scenes which were enacted in public places. For these reasons he hoped the noble Earl would not press his measure.

LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE said, he thought that the real matter at which the House ought to look was whether the Bill was right or wrong, and not whether it was expedient or the reverse. There might be objections to the declaration as it stood; but half a loaf was better than no bread, and it was better to pass that declaration than none at all. He admitted that it was unfortunate that each Member could not have a form of Oath suited to his own religious views; but it did not, therefore, follow that there should be no Oath at all. The noble Earl (the Earl of Shaftesbury) said that many of the people would dislike the Bill because it contained an authoritative declaration by Parliament touching religion; but he (Lord Oranmore) feared that in these times many were inclined to repudiate all authority, whether Divine or human: but he did not think the House had any sympathy with this feeling, or would be influenced by it, to sanction the belief that they would admit anybody into Parliament who did not acknowledge the existence of the Almighty Being. He thought expediency was carried too far. Was it not a farce that public documents should begin with the statement that the Queen sat "by the Grace of God," and that Parliament should open its proceedings with prayer, while such a declaration as this was rejected? Her Majesty's Government were divided upon the subject, some supporting, others opposing, Mr. Bradlaugh's admission to the House of Commons; but it appeared that the Prime Minister had agreed to support a Bill brought in by Mr. Bradlaugh's Colleague for the purpose of substituting an Affirmation for the Oath. If no other arrangement could be made, the noble Earl might modify his Bill by applying it only to that House. For 25 years their Lordships' House had resisted the attempt to admit Jews to Parliament; and, whether that was right or wrong, it was done in defence of the Christian principles of the country. He thought the present was the time to assert a sense of obligation to the Divine Being, for he believed that the blessings which this country had so long enjoyed were due to the influence of pure Christianity upon the people and Government of the country, and that these blessings would be withdrawn if they forgot the first principles upon which the Government was founded. He was always much impressed by the promise that that God would deny those in the world to come who denied Him here; and he therefore would bear witness, as a humble believer, in favour of the proposed Bill.

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN said, he agreed with all the observations which had fallen from the noble Earl who moved the Previous Question; but he could not agree with him that moving the Previous Question was the best way of getting rid of the difficulty entailed by a question of this kind. He thought the Bill raised exclusive issues, and that the noble Earl who moved it was entitled to an expression of the opinion of the House upon them. It was to apply, not only to that, but also to the other House of Parliament. Whether or not it was advisable to interfere with the other House was a matter of a very peculiar character, about which he thought their Lordships' opinion should be taken. The noble Earl could see nothing new in the Bill he had introduced. His own view was that it was entirely without precedent in the annals of Parliamentary history. There had been many forms of Oaths and various declarations made by Members of Parliament at different times. They had often been directed against some religious system; but invariably the system had been one supposed to be identical with, and inseparable from, some political faction held to be highly dangerous to the Crown and Commonwealth. Invariably the faction had been struck at through the religion, either because the religion was supposed to necessitate allegiance to some temporal power, other than the Sovereign of the United Kingdom, or because the members of it were thought to form an association of great political danger to the State. The imposition of a declaration or test for purely religious motives, unconnected with any political faction promising imminent peril to the State, was absolutely unknown in their history. It was an innovation, and he believed an innovation entirely contrary to the whole spirit of their laws and to the best instincts of the people. No man, he was confident, could feel more strongly than he did that those who made and those who executed the laws should be animated with a deep conviction of their moral and spiritual responsibility. But he held that that House was not within its rights, and was transgressing its legitimate sphere, in assuming inquisitorial functions. Supposing that this Bill became an Act, and was operative and successful, on what principle was it confined to Members of the two Houses? If that declaration was necessary for those who framed the laws, it was, at least, equally necessary in the case of those who carried out those laws. It must be made by every Judge, by every magistrate, or other functionary, by every executive officer in the country. And if that declaration was a necessary prefix to an Oath of Allegiance to the Sovereign, surely it must also go before the Oaths by which the Sovereign swore allegiance to the Constitution of the country. If the declaration was necessary, it could not be confined to Members of Parliament. The Bill, however, would have no good effect. It would not necessarily exclude any of those persons whom it was designed to exclude. The noble Earl desired that before taking an Oath the individual making it should declare that he believed in an Almighty God. How did the noble Earl propose to guard against falsehood or equivocation, or against the various interpretations which might be placed upon his words? Would he append another declaration to the effect that the person making his declaration was speaking the truth? And, if so, how far back was the chain of declarations to go? Would he leave the words of his declaration undefined? If so, they could be used without difficulty, with the help of mental reservations, by anyone; and the only effect of the Act would be to create the most painful scandal, to throw obloquy upon religion, and to outrage the most sensitive and sacred feelings of human nature. Without an interpretation of the meaning of the words, the Act would be useless, scandalous, and distressing. Would persons making the declaration be liable to have their views challenged, and could some definition of what the words meant to them be demanded? Had their Lordships considered the difficulties of definition? It was an unwise and, he thought, an irreligious thing to introduce these vast and sacred mysteries as a subject for debate in a Legislative Assembly. But the meaning of the words must be discussed, or some authority must be set up to define their meaning. One of two things must happen. Either the Houses of Parliament would be engaged in constant and fruitless discussion on religious and controversial matters, and the Business of the country would be brought to an absolute deadlock and Parliamentary government become impossible, or a tribunal must be instituted to decide such cases. It would open out an unlimited field for the obstruction of Business. It would inevitably require some authoritative—he should, perhaps, say some infallible—tribunal to define the exact meaning of the words contained in it. Such an Act as that could do no good, and might do infinite harm. It would fail in its object. The declaration might be made by anyone, it might be objected to by anyone. It would cause endless discussion, lend itself to Obstruction, and paralyze the Business of the nation. It would be a new thing in the history of our Parliament. It would be contrary to the whole spirit of our laws and customs. It would bring Parliament into disrepute, and cast contempt upon religion; and he hoped their Lordships, on these grounds, would distinctly refuse to give it a second reading.

EARL GRANVILLE: My Lords, I shall vote on this occasion with the noble Earl who has moved the Previous Question. At the same time, I am not quite clear that I can give a very logical answer to the complaint made by the noble Duke (the Duke of Argyll) and the noble Earl behind me (the Earl of Dunraven) that your Lordships' House has not taken a more decided course to-night in reference to this matter. To the noble Earl the Chairman of our Committees (the Earl of Redesdale) everyone has paid a just and well-merited tribute to his feelings and his object in bringing forward this Bill. The noble Earl made a strong appeal to this House not to allow the question to assume a Party character; and I may say, for myself, that I desire it should be made no Party matter, and no summonses have been issued to the supporters of the Government with regard to this Bill. If I had great doubt as to what the decision of your Lordships would be, although as representing the Government we on this side are aware how far we are in a minority, I should have thought it my duty to have taken more active steps; but we sent out no summonses. One or two Peers consulted me as to the course which they should take; but I declined to give any advice on the subject. The noble Earl (the Earl of Redesdale) could not possibly have expected any support from Her Majesty's Government, or at least from many Members of it, on this subject. Her Majesty's Government, owing to a very deplorable accident, have been called upon to assert in the strongest way what I hold to be two great principles—the non-imposition of religious tests in political matters, and the giving of freedom to all constituencies in the choice of Members they return to Parliament. Advantage has been taken of this policy to try to identify Her Majesty's Government with Mr. Bradlaugh and the principles which he professes. But, my Lords, I do not desire to discuss that question further than to say that I utterly repudiate the construction which has been put upon our policy; and I must say that I regret that one in the position of the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury) should, in a series of letters the most inconceivable I ever read from one in his high position, and one of the two Leaders of the great Conservative Party, have tried to stimulate this sort of prejudice against Mr. Gladstone and his Colleagues in a matter of this sort. I am very glad to vote for whatever course may appear most convenient to your Lordships' House; but I want to guard myself in one respect, in voting for the Previous Question, from being supposed to agree with some of the reasons put forward in support of this question. Everybody must admire the manner and the tone of the noble Earl (the Earl of Shaftesbury) in bringing forward the Previous Question; but, though I do not agree with the noble Lord on the Cross Benches (Lord Oranmore and Browne), I do agree with him in this matter—that there is a right or wrong in this question; but certainly I do not vote for the Previous Question on the argument which the noble Earl (the Earl of Shaftesbury) put forward—namely, the expediency of not passing this Bill in order to preserve intact the present mode of admitting Members to the Houses of Parliament. My Lords, I think the introduction of this Bill and the debate will be of great use. I lay some weight on the fact that the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Shaftesbury) has shown that, in his opinion, a declaration is not a bad substitute for an Oath in these matters; and I do say this—that however clear the case of the noble Earl was in favour of the substitution of an Affirmation for the obligatory Oath now required, and however eloquent the noble Duke (the Duke of Argyll) was on this subject, it appears to me that almost every word said by the noble Chairman of Committees in favour of his Motion and of the noble Earl (the Earl of Shaftesbury) against it—and, indeed, of the very liberal speech of the right rev. Prelate (the Bishop of London)—all went to show how strong are the objections to the Oath in its present shape. I do hope that what has taken place may have some good effect in the future. I beg pardon for having trespassed on your Lordships' House for a short time; but I thought it right to explain the manner in which I intend to vote on this Bill.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: My Lords, I have no doubt that the noble Earl is quite sincere in saying that he desires to keep this question clear from all Party matter; but, if that was his desire, the manner in which he endeavoured to execute it was not very successful, for he projected into the middle of his speech an indignant protest on behalf of himself and his Colleagues in the House of Commons as to their conduct in the matter of Mr. Bradlaugh, and a severe condemnation of myself, because, in corresponding with some of my political friends, I had taken an opposite view.

EARL GRANVILLE: I said that the tone in which the noble Marquess had referred to one of the most eminent statesmen of this country was of a most unprecedented character.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY: As to the conduct of that most eminent statesman, and of the Government generally, on the Bradlaugh question, I shall be ready to meet noble Lords opposite on that matter on any fitting occasion, if they think it is desirable that it should form the subject of a debate in this House. But I much demur to the introduction of that question in reference to the Bill now before your Lordships. I have risen not for the purpose of discussing how far the Government was or was not justified in the course which it has actually taken with respect to Mr. Bradlaugh. I have rather risen for the purpose of trying to restrict a debate which, in some respects, as it appeared to me, had shown a tendency to wander from the real issue before the House. I think that the noble Duke himself (the Duke of Argyll), with many of whose remarks I concur, somewhat gave the impression that one of the subjects which we are now assembled to discuss was whether it was or was not expedient to substitute, in a form which the Members of either House of Parliament should subscribe, an Affirmation in the place of an Oath. I merely desire to mention that reference of the noble Duke's in order to indicate that it is not a matter which is raised by the discussion before us; and I must not be held to be expressing any opinion on the question of substituting an Affirmation for an Oath by the vote which I feel it my duty to give on this occasion. Some of my noble Friends behind me seemed to infer from the course of the debate and the decision that is likely to be arrived at that there was something indicating an opinion on the part of the House that it was not expedient to exclude Atheists from Parliament. I wish to guard myself against admitting that any such deduction can be drawn from the vote that we are about to give. My Lords, this Bill of my noble Friend, which I join with all who have spoken to-night in attributing to the lofty motives on which we know that he has acted, has in it peculiar circumstances which, whatever our opinions on the larger question might be, would make it impossible for me to give it my assent, and which certainly would induce me to vote against its being put to the House, however earnestly anxious I might be to keep up the character of the two Houses of Parliament in this respect. The first consideration to which I would ask attention is this—if there is an evil or a difficulty in this case, it has not arisen in the House of Lords. It has arisen altogether within the walls of the House of Commons. If it is desirable that a remedy should be brought forward to that evil, and that that difficulty should be solved, surely it would be more consonant with the practice of Parliament that the House within whose walls it has arisen should itself provide the remedy. Are we not assuming a somewhat ungracious attitude if we go to the House of Commons and say to them—"You are in a great difficulty as to your proceedings, and we have got a remedy that will set everything right for you?" If the House of Commons took any measures towards us of an analogous character, that would not be regarded as consistent with the ordinary courtesy of one House of Parliament towards the other. Again, I am much impressed by the point mentioned by the noble Duke and others—the indefinite character of the belief which Members of Parliament are invited to express. We are called upon to express our belief in "an Almighty God." Supposing our Oath of Allegiance ran in the same form, and we were to promise our allegiance to a "Sovereign," would that be thought a very sufficient or a very loyal form of expression? And if we substitute "an Almighty God," it seems to me that we shall not be doing that which I know is the object of the noble Earl—we shall not be promoting the recognition of Almighty God in this land. Again, two or three noble Lords have told me that they cannot vote on this Bill, and that they could not have taken that Affirmation if it was put into an Act of Parliament, because it would have been a restriction of the belief which they hold. All of us constantly repeat the formula of my noble Friend, "I believe in God," when we repeat the Creed; but we also say a great deal more. If this declaration is to be held to have a great effect on public opinion, then I say you cannot take one out of the many articles of belief, however momentous and important it is, and give to that separate and exclusive recognition without to some extent, in the popular mind, weakening the importance and reverence which is attached to the other articles of belief. My Lords, these grounds seem to me enough to make me certainly not wish that this Bill should pass into law. I confess I entertain another wish with respect to it, and that is that it should not be the subject of a division. I feel sure that my noble Friend, having heard the course of the debate, and the opinions expressed by noble Lords on all sides of the House, must have come to the conviction that he will not serve the cause he has in view by forcing us to go into the Lobby. If I am compelled to vote, I shall vote with my noble Friend below me (the Earl of Shaftesbury); but I earnestly hope that we may not be called upon to divide.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES) said, he had listened with great attention to what had fallen from the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Salisbury), and to the speeches which had been made by their Lordships; and he certainly felt from the tone of the debate that he should not advance the cause which he had in view were he to go to a division in opposition to the Motion of the noble Earl behind him. He must, however, express his deep regret that the House had not thought fit to meet the question in a more decided manner, by proposing to provide in some other way the security he desired to give. He denied altogether that he proposed any new test; the Oath already contained the words, "So help me God;" and he only wished to provide a means of showing that a person who used these words really did believe in God. He would not, however, trouble the House to divide.

Previous question put: Whether the said question shall be now put?

Resolved in the *negative*.

House adjourned at Seven o'clock, till To-morrow, half past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, 23*rd March*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered—First Reading*—Public Offices Site [111].
Second Reading—Referred to Select Committee—Arklow Harbour [96].
Committee—Report—Consolidated Fund (No. 2)*.

QUESTIONS.

RUSSIA AND PERSIA—THE FRONTIER QUESTION—SARAKHS.

MR. JERNINGHAM asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs,

Whether Her Majesty's Government have taken any notice of the fact that Sarakhs, which Baron Jomini stated to Mr. Wyndham on the 20th July 1881 to be a "disputed point," is a Persian fort, which, in the words of Mr. Thomson, our representative at Tehran (1st Sept. 1881), belongs as much to Persia as Kelat or Kuchan, or any other town governed by Persian officials and held by Persian troops?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Her Majesty's Government have not thought it necessary to take any notice of the opinion expressed by Baron Jomini as to Sarakhs, otherwise than by presenting to Parliament the despatch from Mr. Thomson to which the hon. Member referred, which shows clearly that Baron Jomini was in error.

RELIGIOUS DISSENSIONS (GIBRALTAR)—DR. CANILLA.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the steps taken by the Governor of Gibraltar to instal, under protection of the troops, the Vicar Apostolic in the Church of Santa Maria Coronada, were so taken by instructions from Her Majesty's Government, or on the initiative of the Government; and, whether, in either case, the respective claims and rights of Her Majesty's Government, of the Vicar Apostolic, and of the Roman Catholic community, were previously submitted to a competent legal tribunal; and, if not, what steps were taken to ascertain the legality of the proceedings taken by the Governor?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, the Governor was instructed to protect Dr. Canilla from molestation in going to and from the church, and in the performance of Divine offices there. The particular steps to be taken were left to his discretion; but his conduct has been entirely approved. The respective rights of the Crown, the Vicar Apostolic, and the Roman Catholic community were ascertained many years since; but it is, of course, open to anyone affected by the action of the Governor to test its legality by proceedings at law.

SIR H. DRUMMOND WOLFF: When will Papers on the subject be laid on the Table?

MR. COURTNEY: They are in an advanced state of preparation.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—THE ARTILLERY VOLUNTEERS—THE PERMANENT STAFF.

COLONEL **WALROND** asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that, non-commissioned officers being required for the permanent staff of regiments of Artillery Militia, it has been determined to transfer all those of twenty-one years' service who are at present employed with the Artillery Volunteers; and, whether those non-commissioned officers who are not available for the Militia Artillery are to be brought forward for discharge; and, if so, how is it proposed to fill up the vacancies which will be thus caused in the Volunteer Force?

MR. **CHILDERS**: No, Sir; I have heard nothing of any such proposal.

INDIA—THE INDIAN COUNCIL—THE VACANCY.

MR. **ONSLOW** asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether it is his intention at once to fill up the vacancy in the Indian Council, owing to the resignation of Sir Erskine Perry, or whether he will wait till the return of Sir Ashley Eden from India?

THE MARQUESS OF **HARTINGTON**: Sir, I think it hardly necessary that I should state to the House the reasons which have caused the delay in the appointment of the successor to Sir Erskine Perry. I hope shortly to be able to make the appointment.

ARMY—ARMY CHAPLAINS ON BOARD TROOPSHIPS.

MR. **HEALY** asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether it is true that, while Church of England chaplains are always provided on board Her Majesty's troopships, however small the number of Protestant soldiers, Catholic chaplains are never so provided, however great the number of Catholic soldiers; and, whether he will take steps to ensure that, in providing for the spiritual wants of soldiers on board ship, all denominations shall be put on a like footing, as far as possible?

MR. **TREVELYAN**: Sir, Army chaplains are in no instance embarked in any of Her Majesty's troopships for the purpose of doing duty. On the five Indian troopships and the three larger of the Imperial troopships, one Naval chaplain is borne on the complement of the ship, who does duty both for the crew and for the troops when embarked. He belongs to the Church of England, as do all the Naval chaplains for service afloat. It would be a matter of extreme difficulty to provide accommodation for clergymen of more than one denomination; but the existing arrangement provides for the needs of the majority of both Services. The shortness of modern voyages under steam has diminished the inconvenience, if I may use the word, of a state of things which the Admiralty would gladly remedy if they could.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT.

MR. **ARTHUR O'CONNOR** asked the Attorney General for Ireland, Whether, and why, persons detained in Limerick, under the warrants signed by the Chief Secretary for Ireland, are not allowed to receive the "Leinster Leader" newspaper?

THE **ATTORNEY GENERAL** FOR **IRELAND** (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, persons detained under the Protection Act are, by the rules of the prison, allowed to receive the Dublin daily papers, and papers from their own localities. No person from Leinster is at present detained in Limerick Prison.

CRIMINAL LAW (IRELAND)—CASE OF PETER DUNNE.

MR. **ARTHUR O'CONNOR** asked the Attorney General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been drawn to a report, in the "Leinster Express" newspaper of the 18th instant, of the trial, before Mr. Justice Fitzgerald, and acquittal of one Peter Dunne, on a charge of manslaughter, which report concludes as follows:—

> "The jury retired, and after a very brief absence, returned to their box, and handed in a verdict of 'Not guilty.' The verdict was received with great applause in court?
>
> "His Lordship—In consequence of that display I will order the prisoner to be kept in custody to-night. If there is any such conduct in this court again, I will keep all the prisoners in custody until the close of the Assizes;"

whether the report in question is correct; and, whether Mr. Justice Fitzgerald acted within his right in detaining in custody, for an offence committed by others, a man already declared to be innocent of the offence charged against him?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, I have seen different reports of this case in *The Irish Times* and *Daily Express;* and I am, therefore, not prepared to admit the accuracy of the report as stated in the Question. I must entirely disclaim any right on the part of an Attorney General to review, in reply to a Question, the judicial action of a Judge; but at the same time I may, perhaps, be permitted to add that there is every reason to conclude that in what actually took place the learned Judge acted quite legally.

MR. SEXTON asked whether, as an act of law, a Judge was entitled to punish a prisoner for a demonstration in Court?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, the Question was based upon an incorrect assumption. The Judge did not punish an acquitted person. An acquitted person was detained until the Judge ordered his discharge. It was not certain whether another charge might be against him, or that his release would cause a breach of the peace, against all of which it was the duty of the Judge to guard.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked whether a Judge had any right to detain an acquitted person for either one or two days?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) repeated that he was not prepared to abide by the accuracy of the report referred to.

STATE OF IRELAND—THE CITY OF WATERFORD.

MR. R. POWER asked the Attorney General for Ireland, If his attention has been called to the charge of Lord Justice Fitzgibbon to the Waterford City Grand Jury, in which he complimented them on the peaceful state of the city, and in which he stated

> "that the bills to go before them were very few in number, and there was not one of them which required any special directions from him;"

and why he still considers it necessary to keep so peaceful a town under the provisions of the Coercion Act?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, the Executive in Ireland have reason to know that the City of Waterford cannot at present be withdrawn from the operation of the Protection Act.

BOARD OF NATIONAL EDUCATION (IRELAND)—MR. BOYLAN AND CAPTAIN L'ESTRANGE.

MR. REDMOND asked the Attorney General for Ireland, Whether he has taken any steps in reference to the assault alleged to have been committed upon Mr. Boylan, National School Teacher, by Captain L'Estrange, R.M.; and, whether he will order an independent inquiry into all the circumstances of the case?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, the Board of National Education has directed an independent inquiry into this case; and, therefore, the Chief Secretary for Ireland must defer further consideration of the subject at present.

LAW AND POLICE (IRELAND)—CONSTABLE MOLLOY.

MR. REDMOND asked the Attorney General for Ireland, Whether the inquiry into charges made against Constable Molloy, of Fahy Police Station, King's County, instituted by the county inspector, has yet concluded; and if he will state the result?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, the Inspector General has caused the necessary steps to be taken for this inquiry; but it has not yet been disposed of.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—JUDICIAL RENTS.

MR. SEXTON asked the Attorney General for Ireland, Whether Returns of "Judicial Rents" will be continued; and, if so, at what intervals; and, whether, in Returns of Sales, a column giving the gross tenement valuation will be given?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON), Sir, the hon. Member asks me whether Returns of "Judicial Rents" will be continued, and, if so, at what intervals; and whether, in Returns of Sales, a column giving the gross tenement valuation will be given? and I have in reply to inform him and the House that Returns of judicial rents will be continued. The next one, I believe, will be issued after the Easter Recess, and include the rents fixed up to the 10th of April next. With reference to the last inquiry in the hon. Member's Question, the Chief Secretary for Ireland will see whether it can be complied with.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—CASES OF MESSRS. RYAN AND EGAN.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Attorney General for Ireland, Whether the Irish Executive have reconsidered the case of Mr. Joseph Ryan, of Cappancur, Tullamore, arrested under the Coercion Act on the 2nd November 1881, and still detained in prison; whether there is anything in the condition of the Tullamore district, lately visited by him, to account for the continued incarceration of Mr. Ryan; and, whether the release, some three months since, of Mr. Henry Egan, of Tullamore, who had been arrested a few days before Mr. Ryan, is to be taken as evidence of the undisturbed condition of the Tullamore district?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, the case of Mr. Ryan is before the Executive at the present time. Mr. Egan's case was considered and disposed of on its individual circumstances.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Attorney General for Ireland, Whether it is true that, on or about the 15th ultimo, Mr. John M'Cormack, a prisoner under the Coercion Act in Clonmel Gaol, submitted to the Governor of that gaol a letter addressed to the Member for Sligo, and the Governor brought the letter back to Mr. M'Cormack, informing him that he could not take it upon himself to forward it, "as it contained charges against the police in Tipperary," but that he would send it on to Dublin Castle, and the authorities there would decide if it should be forwarded or not; what became of the said letter; whether it is the determination or wish of the Executive that letters addressed to Members of Parliament, and containing complaints against the police, shall not be delivered to the persons to whom they are addressed; and, whether the Chief Secretary for Ireland has considered the propriety, in every case in which a letter written by, or addressed to a "suspect," is detained by the prison or Dublin Castle authorities, of informing the writer of the fact?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, Mr. M'Cormack submitted to the Governor of Clonmel Prison a letter addressed to the senior Member for Sligo, and was informed that the Governor could not take on himself to forward it; but would send it on to the authorities at the Castle. Accordingly he did so; and they still have the letter, I suppose. It certainly is not the determination or wish of the Executive that any letter addressed to a Member of Parliament, or anyone else, whether containing complaints against the police or any other complaint, shall not be delivered to the person to whom it may be addressed. Each case must be, and is, considered and determined by its own circumstances. The last inquiry in the Question of the hon. Member is addressed to the Chief Secretary for Ireland personally; and I must request him, therefore, to put it to my right hon. Friend when he is in his place.

Mr. SEXTON asked if the right hon. and learned Gentleman would inquire where the letter addressed to him now was?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, the case is governed by the prison rules. I will make inquiries respecting the letter, and communicate with the hon. Member.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—TELEGRAPH OFFICE SUPERINTENDENTS.

Mr. MACFARLANE (for Mr. Gray) asked the Postmaster General, If it is a fact that the Superintendent of the Belfast Telegraph Office is about to be appointed to the vacant superintendentship of the Dublin Telegraph Office; whether such appointment is not contrary to the regimental system of promotion hitherto observed, by which the vacancies at the respective offices were filled up by the appointment of officers attached to the staff in which the vacancy occurred; whether a similar violation of that system of promotion did not also recently occur by the promotion of a clerk from Newcastle-upon-Tyne to the post of technical officer at Dublin, thereby depriving the Dublin Telegraph Office of three promotions; whether the contemplated promotion of the Superintendent at Belfast to Dublin will deprive them of four promotions; whether it is a fact that on several occasions the Dublin telegraphists have received the thanks of the London Secretary for the creditable manner in which they have performed their duties; and, if he will state to the House why they are now punished by depriving them of their legitimate promotion?

Mr. FAWCETT: Sir, in reply to the hon. Member, I have to state that it is the case that the Superintendent of Telegraphs at Belfast has been appointed Superintendent of Telegraphs at Dublin, in the room of an officer transferred from Dublin to Belfast. There is nothing unusual in such an appointment, and the Dublin officers are not prejudiced by the change. The appointment of technical officer was recently created at Dublin, and a clerk from Newcastle-on-Tyne was promoted to it. I consider it of great importance in the interests of the Service that no strict line of demarcation should be laid down; but that there should be freedom of transfer, not only between office and office in the same part of the Kingdom, but between one part of the Kingdom and another. In several instances officers have been brought from Scotland and Ireland to fill appointments in England; and, in the same way, I think it desirable to have an opportunity of sending officers from England to Ireland and Scotland, when, as in the recent case of the clerk detached from Newcastle-on-Tyne, the interests of the Service appear to be promoted by it. I am pleased to be able to state that on more than one occasion within the last year or so the Dublin telegraphists have received thanks from headquarters in London for the creditable manner in which they have performed their duties.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—CARLOW COUNTY.

Mr. MACFARLANE (for Mr. Gray) asked the Attorney General for Ireland, Whether it is a fact that of thirty-eight magistrates for Carlow county thirty-four are Protestant and four are Catholic, while the enormous proportion of the population is Catholic; and, whether it is a fact that all the magistrates are either landlords or land agents?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, there are 46 magistrates in the Commission of the Peace for County Carlow. Of these, 40, I understand, are of the Protestant, and six of the Catholic persuasion. Most of these magistrates are landlords, and some few are agents; but I am not able to ascertain whether there are any who are neither landlords nor agents. If this Question of the hon. Member is meant to suggest that any competent person has been excluded from the Commission either on religious or any other ground, I can only say that the names of the late and present Lieutenants of Carlow County, the late Lord Bessborough and Mr. Kavanagh, are sufficient guarantee that no such unworthy motive ever influenced them in their nominations to the Lord Chancellor for the Commission.

STATE OF IRELAND—SEIZURE OF IRISH NEWSPAPERS.

Mr. MACFARLANE (for Mr. Gray) asked the Attorney General for Ireland, Whether it is a fact, as stated in the "Irishman" of the 11th instant, that the police at Ballybunnion lately seized a placard and copy of that paper on the ground that they were illegal, and returned them the next day on the ground that they were not illegal; and what, if any, instructions have been issued to the police on the subject?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, a sub-constable at Ballybunnion took possession of a copy of *The Irishman* newspaper and placard on the 6th of this month at the shop of Mr. Lavery. He submitted them to his constable, who directed him to pay for the paper. He did so the following morning, and Mr. Lavery took the money. No special instructions have been issued on the subject.

TUNIS—TREATY RIGHTS.

Mr. MACFARLANE (for Mr. Gray) asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is a fact, as stated in "Vanity Fair" of the 11th instant, that the French Agent at Gabes has secured for a French house the monopoly of all the Esparto grass in the district; and, if so, whether this involves any infringement of English Treaty rights with Tunis?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Her Majesty's Government have received information to the effect that a concession of portions of the esparto districts of Tunis has been granted to a French house. As such a concession would probably be a virtual grant of a monopoly of the sale of the article, and, therefore, an infraction of the rights secured to this country by the Treaty of 1875, Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris has been instructed to call the attention of the French Government to the report.

POST OFFICE (IRELAND)—THE POSTMASTERSHIP OF BOHERMEEN.

Mr. METGE asked the Secretary to the Treasury, If he will state the grounds upon which Mary Malinn was deprived of the office of postmistress to the district of Bohermeen, in the county of Meath, she having held that office for the last six years with the sanction of the Secretary to the Post Office, Ireland, no charge having ever been brought against her in her official capacity, her father having held the same office for a period of between thirty and forty years, and her brother being at present in the service of the Post Office; whether it is not the case that she had received certificates of character from her parish priest, and also from a neighbouring magistrate; and, whether any influence had been brought to bear on the Secretary of the Post Office, in order to have her removed from the said office, and, if so, the nature of such influence?

Lord RICHARD GROSVENOR: Sir, I can add very little on this subject to what was stated a few days ago by the Postmaster General. The post office in question was reported to the Treasury as being vacant by the death of John Malinn, and in due course the vacancy was filled by an appointment which was duly approved by the Post Office authorities. As regards the latter Question, I am unable to say what influence has been brought to bear on the Secretary of the post office; but, as I before stated, the vacancy was caused by the death of John Malinn, and the post office was never held by Mary Malinn.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. KENNEDY.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Attorney General for Ireland, Whether the time has arrived when Mr. William Kennedy may be released from prison, seeing that he has been there more than a year on a charge of being suspected of having committed an offence which the prisoner undertakes to prove could not possibly have been committed by him?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, on the 8th of this month Mr. Kennedy applied to be released, on the ground that he was about to quit this country, and His Excellency ordered his release accordingly.

NAVY—GREENWICH HOSPITAL SCHOOL—REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE.

Sir MASSEY LOPES asked the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, Whether important changes are contemplated in the administration and management of Greenwich Hospital School; and, if so, whether he would lay the Report of the Committee upon the Table of the House before these recommendations are carried into effect?

Sir THOMAS BRASSEY: Sir, considerable difficulty having been experienced in obtaining suitable employment for boys educated at Greenwich School, a Committee of Inquiry was appointed to investigate the matter. Their suggestions as to dietary and training in seamanship have been adopted. There are other suggestions of a more organic character which have not as yet been considered. The Report shall certainly be laid on the Table before any final action is taken.

LAW AND JUSTICE—BLASPHEMOUS PUBLICATIONS.

Sir HENRY TYLER asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to a series of articles recently published in the "National Reformer," of which the Junior Member for Northampton and Mrs. Besant are the editors, under the heading of "The Christ of Dr. Aveling," and over the signature of W. J. Birch, and in particular to a passage in the "National Reformer" of March 5th

1882; and, whether he will refer to the Public Prosecutor the question of preferring an indictment for blasphemy against the editors of the "National Reformer?" He had intended to give extracts with the Question; but the Speaker, in the exercise of, no doubt, a wise discretion, had ordered them to be struck out. That being so, he had sent to the Home Secretary complete copies of the journal referred to, in order that the right hon. and learned Gentleman might judge as to whether those pernicious publications should not in some way be suppressed.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I have answered more than once Questions of a similar character. In my opinion, a Government prosecution of this character will do more harm than good. If the hon. Member will take the trouble to read the celebrated case of the prosecution of Hone, I think he will come to the same conclusion.

Mr. HEALY asked why the paper was not seized in the same manner as the *United Ireland* had been?

Sir HENRY TYLER gave Notice that he would ask a further Question of the right hon. and learned Gentleman on Monday, and hand to the right hon. and learned Gentleman some further Papers of the same nature, which he (Sir Henry Tyler) thought would convince him that it was very desirable that some steps should be taken in the matter.

NAVY—GUNPOWDER HULKS IN THE MERSEY.

Mr. CAINE asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If the recommendations of the Committee appointed to inquire into the safety of the Gunpowder Hulks on the Mersey, as embodied in their report dated August 1881, are to be carried into effect; and, if so, when?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, it has been decided to carry out the recommendations of the Committee, and on the 24th of February a final letter was addressed to the manager of the powder hulks, who represents the owners of the magazines, pressing for a definite reply as to the date when the owners will be prepared to carry out the conditions. A letter has recently been received from the manager, promising to give attention to the matter, and stating that he is in communication with the various owners, who reside in various parts of the Kingdom.

STATE OF IRELAND—EVICTIONS, &c. (VISCOUNT GORMANSTON'S ESTATE) —VISCOUNT GORMANSTON'S AGENT.

Mr. METGE asked the Attorney General for Ireland, having regard to the fact that Mr. H. McDougall, agent to Lord Gormanston, did a few days ago set fire with his own hands to the houses of a number of tenants whom he charged with having taken forcible possession, but which charge he failed to substantiate, Whether such action, taken without legal decree, was a criminal action punishable by Law; whether, even if a legal decree had been obtained, it was an illegal action to take possession by means of firing the houses over the heads of the tenants; whether such action on the part of the agent, being likely to lead to a breach of the peace, would come within the provisions of the Protection of Life and Property Act; and, whether he intends to take such steps in the matter as may tend to a maintenance of Law and order in the district?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, it appears that these tenants were evicted for non-payment of rent last year, and the period for redemption expired last December. The holdings thenceforth became the property of the landlord, discharged of the tenancies, and the tenants were merely trespassers by re-entering, even though they did so peaceably and without force. They were, I understand, then dispossessed without breach of the peace and without excitement; and the agent, being in absolute possession of the houses, was entitled, if the landlord thought fit, to destroy them without committing any breach of the Criminal Law. Under these circumstances, it is not proposed to take any step in reference to the matter.

AFFAIRS OF EGYPT—THE PAPERS.

Mr. BOURKE asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Why the Egyptian papers promised some time ago have not yet been presented, and when they will be in the hands of Members?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, there has been some unavoidable delay, owing to the necessity of communicating with Her Majesty's Embassies; but the Papers are ready and will be distributed forthwith.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT—THE NEW EDUCATION CODE.

Mr. J. G. TALBOT asked the Vice President of the Council, Whether, in view of the very large powers given under the new Education Code to Her Majesty's Inspectors, the Education Department will frame definite instructions for the Inspectors, so as to secure equal treatment, and, in particular, to protect managers and teachers from an exercise of power at variance with the avowed intention of the Code to show special consideration to schools labouring under special difficulties; and, whether provision will be made for an appeal from any decision of an Inspector which is alleged to be unjust?

Mr. MUNDELLA: Sir, I stated to the House, on laying the "Proposals" for the Revised Code on the Table, the measures the Department proposed to take to secure the fair, uniform, and impartial application of its provisions. We intend to re-organize the inspectorate, and to frame definite instructions to Her Majesty's Inspectors, calculated, as we believe, to insure these results. The Department can always be appealed to by any persons conceiving themselves aggrieved. We hope, however, that the occasion for appeals will be much less frequent. The facilities for ascertaining and promptly remedying any case of harsh or unequal treatment of managers or teachers will, under the new system, be much greater than heretofore. As soon as the scheme is complete, the particulars and the instructions to which I have referred shall be laid on the Table.

RUSSIA—PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS.

Baron HENRY DE WORMS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been drawn to the following statement from the Moscow Correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph," and which appeared in that paper on Wednesday March 22nd,—

> "Less than five days ago, 500 Jewish families were expelled from here. They were taken out of bed in the middle of the night, neither young, nor old, nor sick being spared, and driven straight to the Railway station, and ordered to leave Moscow immediately. Even women who had recently been confined were thus torn away from their homes. There was no show of humanity or consideration of any kind; and no time was allowed for the victims of this cruel and arbitrary measure to dispose of their goods;"

and, whether Her Majesty's Government have received any confirmation of this statement from Her Majesty's Consul at Moscow; and, if not, whether Her Majesty's Government will instruct him to inquire into and report on the alleged outrages, and will place such report upon the Table of the House?

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, we have not heard of this particular outrage. We cannot undertake to call upon Her Majesty's Consuls by despatch to report specially on each outrage mentioned in any journal; but the Consuls themselves report them without being told to do so, and it is highly probable that we shall receive a Report if the circumstances occurred as stated.

GIBRALTAR—APPOINTMENT OF GOVERNOR.

Mr. BIGGAR asked the Secretary of State for War, Whether there is any foundation for the report circulated in the military newspapers, that Sir Charles Ellice, the present Adjutant General, is to succeed General Napier, of Magdala, as Governor of Gibraltar, the present occupant?

Mr. CHILDERS: No, Sir; I have heard nothing on this subject. Lord Napier does not vacate the government of Gibraltar until next October, and Lord Kimberley has not spoken to me about the choice of a successor.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—"ADAMS *v.* DUNSEATH."

Mr. HEALY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether, in the case of Adams v. Dunseath, which recently came before them on a case stated by the Land Commission under the Land Act, Her Majesty's Court of Appeal in Ireland have decided that, as regards improvements made by tenants prior to the Act of 1870, the Land Court, in fixing a fair rent, must regard the mere enjoyment of such improvements by the tenant as to some extent compensating him for them, and must accordingly to that extent assess rent on them; whether the Government did not give express assurances, during the progress of the Land Act through the House of Commons, that no such construction could be placed on any of its provisions; whether the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, who was then Attorney General, did not come to a conclusion on this point directly contrary to that of the majority of the Court of Appeal; whether, having regard to the decision of the Court of Appeal, the Government intend to take action to give legislative effect to their express declarations made on the passing of the Act as regards improvements; whether he is aware that, as regards tenants' improvements other than those made prior to 1870, several of the Judges of the Court of Appeal, in the case referred to, expressed opinions, though the point did not arise expressly for decision, that a mere change in the nature of the tenancy under which the improvements were made, as from a leasehold tenancy to a tenancy from year to year, or vice versâ, might, if no change in the rent took place, amount to a compensation wholly or partially for such improvements, so as to oblige the Land Court to assess rent thereon; whether this view of the Law, if correct, would not also defeat the expressed intentions of the Government in passing the Land Act; and, whether, having regard to the enormous importance to Irish tenants of the issues involved, the Government will take steps to declare the Law on the subject by an amending Act, as was done in an analogous case after the passing of the Land Act of 1870, when one of the Judges of Appeal gave expression to a view of the Law which, if correct, would have jeopardised the interests of numerous Ulster tenants under their custom?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, as this is a Question which relates to a legal matter, I hope I may have the indulgence of the House and of the hon. Member if the answer to it be not so perfect as it would be if it had proceeded from my right hon. and learned Friend. With regard to the first part of the Question, which refers to what might be called the intention of the framers of the Act—I will not say the intention of the Act, for that is a judicial matter—it is perfectly clear, as correctly stated by the hon. Member, that it was not the intention of the framers of the Act, but directly contrary to their intention, that the interest of the tenant in his improvements, as understood and defined by the Act, should either lapse or be impaired by the enjoyment of them. With regard to the question mentioned in the second paragraph, I can only say that the Government could give no assurance as to the construction of the Act. If they did, they would have gone beyond their duty. With regard to the third paragraph, my answer to it is simply Yes. With regard to the fourth paragraph, of course it has been my duty to communicate with the Lord Chancellor of Ireland on this subject, and what I gather to be the case is this. Although he has differed in opinion from his Colleagues, and although it has been laid down that there are cases in which the enjoyment of the tenants should be taken into account, yet the opinion of the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, as a Member of the Government, and our opinion is that our wisest course would be to observe carefully what construction may be put upon that judgment, and what practical effect it may have, before arriving at any conclusion as to the course which eventually it may be our duty to take. With regard to the fifth and sixth paragraphs, I am not aware of any such expression of opinion as that to which the hon. Gentleman refers; but I do not hesitate to say that such an opinion would be quite at variance with the intention with which we submitted the Bill to Parliament. With respect to the seventh paragraph, which asks whether we are prepared in this instance to do as we did in 1871, and in a given case upon proof of necessity to propose an Amendment to the Land Act of last Session, I must remind the hon. Gentleman that our position is not the same now as it was in 1871; that the facilities for transacting Business are different from what they were then; and perhaps the hon. Member will not think it personal if I say that any resolution we might take would be materially influenced by the prospects we have of receiving assistance from Members of the House generally in forwarding Public Business, and not by the project of receiving any assistance from the hon. Member and his Friends.

Mr. HEALY: I beg to give Notice that on an early day I will call attention to the case of Adams *v.* Dunseath, and move a Resolution.

Lord ELCHO: With reference to the answer given by the Prime Minister, I gather that it was the intention of the framers of the Act that the tenants' interest in their improvements should not lapse or be impaired by the enjoyment of them. I wish to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether that was not directly contrary to the principle of the Act of 1870, and whether he is prepared to extend the principle to the tenants of houses under the Crown in London?

Mr. GLADSTONE: The hon. Member who put the Question, and who knew the Act so well, understands perfectly well that when I spoke of the tenant's interest, I spoke of his interest as defined by the Act. With respect to the Question of my noble Friend, I do not hesitate to say that the Act of 1881 distinctly differed in this respect from the Act of 1870. The Act of 1870 gave direct recognition to the principle that enjoyment by the tenant affected his interest in the improvements he might have made; but the Act of 1881 abrogated that.

LAND LAW (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—SECTION 21 (LEASES).

Mr. HEALY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, Whether his attention has been called to the language of Mr. Justice O'Hagan, reported in the "Freeman's Journal" of the 10th instant, when, in hearing an application to avoid a lease, under the twenty-first section of the Land Act, he remarked that "the section was a most difficult one to work;" whether it is the fact that over ninety per cent. of the applications made by tenants under the section have failed on technical grounds, with the effect of mulcting the applicants heavily in law costs; whether Judge O'Hagan has frequently similarly referred to the restricted scope of the twenty-first section; whether it is the case that the evidence given before the Land Commission on all applications under this section has been officially reported by shorthand writers; and, if so, whether there will be any objection to its publication as a Parliamentary Return; and, whether, having regard to the failure of the section in question, the Government propose to remedy its defects by legislation?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, with respect to this Question, which refers to the Lease Clauses of the Land Act, the state of the case, as I am informed, is this. Judge O'Hagan did not speak of the difficulty of interpreting the clause; but he spoke of its restricted scope as compared with the great number of applications made under it. With respect to the allegation that a large number of cases have failed upon technical grounds, that is not the opinion that has been given to me by Judge O'Hagan. What I understand to be the case is this. Unquestionably a very large number of cases have failed; but they have failed from the erroneous interpretation given by the applicant to the meaning of this section. Their failure has not been due to any technical consideration, but to the actual scope of the section as understood and administered by the Commissioners. In consideration of that fact, the Commissioners have been careful to be very moderate in the administration of that part of the law which relates to costs. With regard to the fourth paragraph of this Question, I am informed that the Commissioners think it would be quite needless to lay the whole mass of evidence taken before Parliament, but that it would not be difficult to select special cases and bring out the material points of them. If it is proposed and seriously desired, such special cases might, under the circumstances, be printed for the information of Parliament. With regard to the amendment of the law, I think I may say that there would be considerable reason for some amendment of the law in this particular. A tenant who is in actual enjoyment of a lease when he accepts a new lease, or a tenant whose lease just expires ought, I think, on principle, to be placed on the same footing as a tenant from year to year. With respect to giving effect to that opinion, I must again respectfully remind the hon. Gentleman of the difficulty of transacting Public Business at present, and of the fact that our resolution would be materially influenced by the decision we would obtain from the House.

Mr. HEALY: I beg to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether an amendment on the very point on which he now says legislation is necessary was pressed on the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, then Attorney General, during the last Session, and was, unfortunately, refused by the Government?

MR. GLADSTONE: That is a point which may be verified by a reference to the records.

INLAND REVENUE—LAND TAX REDEMPTION.

MR. ALDERMAN W. LAWRENCE asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, If he will consider the advisability of offering greater inducements and facilities for redeeming the Land Tax, especially by causing the amount to be paid for redeeming a charge of Land Tax to be calculated according to a certain number of years purchase without any reference to the price of consols?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE): Sir, there is a Bill now in preparation for consolidating and simplifying the law relating to the Land Tax, and, in all probability, some provision may be inserted in the Bill for the purpose of substituting a given number of years' purchase for the price varying with the price of the Funds; but the number of years must not at present be stated.

INLAND REVENUE—THE INCOME TAX.

MR. PULESTON asked Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Whether, if the Budget statement is not made before Easter, the right of banks and other corporations to deduct the Income Tax on dividends will be interfered with; and, whether any instructions will be issued to the officers of the Customs as to levying imposts on the expiry, on the 5th of April, of the Law now in force?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. GLADSTONE): Sir, the Board of Inland Revenue intend to advise the agents intrusted with the payment of dividends to retain from dividends payable immediately after the expiry of the current year the Income Tax at 5*d.* in the pound, the rate for the current year. This course will be recommended as much for the convenience of the recipient as in the interests of the Revenue. In the event of this course not being acquiesced in, it will be necessary to introduce a provision into the Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1882, similar (*mutatis mutandis*) to the provision in Section 51 (2) introduced into the Inland Revenue Act, 1880, imposing the whole Income Tax for the year 1882-3 on the quarter's or half-year's dividend paid after the passing of the Act in cases where the first quarter's or half-year's dividend may have been paid free of Income Tax. Parliament will also be asked to indemnify, as in 1880 (51, Section 3, 43 & 44 *Vict.*, c. 20), the agents, who may deduct the tax in anticipation of the Act.

BOARD OF TRADE—TESTS FOR SIGHT AND COLOUR-BLINDNESS IN SEAMEN AND RAILWAY OFFICIALS.

MR. GIBSON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether his attention has been directed to a Paper read on March 9th at the Opthalmological Society of the United Kingdom, by Dr. C. E. Fitzgerald, on a case of remarkable deficiency of acuteness of vision in a seaman, published in the British Medical Journal of March 18th; and, whether he would state the tests which are applied bythe Board of Trade officials to discover the visual acuteness and colour sight in seamen and Railway officials?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, my attention has been directed to the paper; but I am sorry to say that, in consequence of its being reported in technical and scientific language, I have not been able to ascertain exactly in what the defective vision referred to consisted. In regard to the second Question, I may say that all persons applying for certificates as masters or mates have to undergo examination for colour blindness, and ordinary seamen may undergo such an examination if they choose. The tests are made by means of coloured cards, coloured glass, and, in some cases, coloured wool; but no provision is made for testing visual acuteness. As regards the examination of railway officials, the Board of Trade have no power.

INDIA—THE NEW INLAND EMIGRATION ACT—LABOURERS IN THE TEA DISTRICTS.

SIR GEORGE CAMPBELL asked the Secretary of State for India, Whether, notwithstanding improved communications and great increase of free labour, he proposes to sanction the new Inland Emigration Act of the Government of India, by which, in supersession of the previous Acts of the Bengal Legislature, the term for labourers in the Tea districts, under the special Law, is extended from three to five years?

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON, in reply, said, the Act in question had been received from the Government of India, together with the Report of the Select Committee upon the subject, and very full Reports of the Legislative Council. These had been, and were still, under consideration, so that he was unable to give a positive answer at the present time.

MESSAGES FROM THE CROWN—RULE 298.

MR. LEWIS: I rise to a point of Order, Sir. It arises upon the Votes which were published upon Tuesday, the 21st March. It is necessary that I should remind the House in one or two words of what occurred on that occasion. It will be in the recollection of the House that during the time when Her Majesty's gracious Address was being read, I called attention to the fact that a right hon. Gentleman, sitting on the Treasury Bench, had sat with his head uncovered; and you, Sir, in answer to a Question put to you, said that it was not only the practice of this House for every Member to be uncovered whilst the Message was being read, but for an entry to be made in the Votes of the House stating the fact. I may say that I alluded to the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. John Bright), and not to the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), to whom I am happy to do this act of justice by stating the fact. Notwithstanding that I drew attention to the circumstance, I find this entry in the Votes—

> "48. Duke of Albany.—Message from Her Majesty, brought up and read by Mr. Speaker, all the Members being uncovered."

I should have taken no notice of the fact if the statement had not been intensified by the word "all." As a matter of fact, three other Members were covered—the hon. Member for Ipswich (Mr. Collings), the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. P. A. Taylor), the hon. Member for Falkirk (Mr. Ramsay), and also, I believe, the hon. Member for Stockton (Mr. Dodds). [*Murmurs.*]

MR. DODDS: I rise to Order, Sir. There is no foundation whatever for the statement. I was not in the House at the time.

MR. LEWIS: Sir, I venture to suggest that if there is any necessity whatever that the entry should be made seriously, and as a matter of course, and of propriety, upon the Votes of the House, it ought, at least, to correspond with the fact; and although it did not correspond with the fact, if——

SIR WILFRID LAWSON: I rise to Order. I wish to know whether the hon. Member is justified in bringing forward this question of hats without Notice?

MR. LEWIS: I am myself speaking to a point of Order.

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is calling attention to an entry in the Votes, and in so doing I apprehend that the hon. Member is quite in Order.

MR. LEWIS: I venture to put a Question to you, Sir, in these terms, and I do so most respectfully—Whether you can cause the necessary amendment to be made in the Votes and Journals of the House relating to the reading of the Royal Message on Tuesday, the 21st March, so as to make such entry correspond more nearly with the exact facts; if so, whether it would be in Order for me to make a Motion to that effect; and, if not, whether any course could be taken so as to make such entry correspond with the facts? I am all the more glad to take this course, because it will give the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster another opportunity of making a statement to the House if he should think fit to do so.

MR. O'DONNELL: Upon a question of Order, Sir, I wish to ask whether it is not an ancient and well-known custom that religious feelings and convictions are respected in this House, and that the convictions of the respected Society of Friends ought not, under cover of a Motion of this sort, to be offended and assailed?

MR. SPEAKER: In answer to the inquiry of the hon. Member for Londonderry (Mr. Lewis), I have to say that the entry is made in the Votes in the usual course, and under the assumption that if any hon. Member did not uncover, it was an inadvertence on his part. I am not prepared to indicate to the hon. Member any course that he can take.

NAVY—LAUNCH OF H.M.S. "EDINBURGH."

SIR EDWARD REED asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, If he could inform the House whether the newly launched iron-clad *Edinburgh* had sustained serious injury from grounding in Milford Haven, and whether there was sufficient dock accommodation for her if she required it?

Mr. TREVELYAN: Sir, by some oversight the report in the newspapers was not seen in the Comptroller's Office of the Admiralty. I took it for granted that I should find a telegram there before coming down to the House. On receipt of my hon. Friend's telegram I went to the office and ordered a telegraphic message to be sent to Pembroke. I am in momentary expectation of an answer. The dry dock at Pembroke has been enlarged to receive the *Edinburgh*, and is quite ready to receive her in case of an accident happening. From the Admiralty not receiving a spontaneous message, I should doubt very much whether the reported accident has occurred.

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—THE PROPOSED CALL OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. SEXTON asked the Prime Minister, Whether he would permit the adjournment of the Procedure Debate at midnight in order to give him an opportunity to bring on his Motion for a Call of the House?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, I am not master of the proceedings of the House, or of the particular moment at which an adjournment can be moved. At the time mentioned some hon. Member may be in possession of the House.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

—:o:—

MARRIAGE OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCE LEOPOLD, DUKE OF ALBANY.

Message from Her Majesty [21st March]—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Message from Her Majesty read.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I rise, Sir, to submit to the Committee, in the usual form, two Resolutions, the 1st of which provides that, in the opinion of the Committee, there ought to be supplied to Prince Leopold, for the maintenance of his marriage state, the sum of £10,000 a-year, in addition to the annuity now enjoyed by His Royal Highness under the Act of the 38th year of her present Majesty, towards providing for the establishment of His Royal Highness. That is a provision for his life upon his marriage. The 2nd Resolution provides for the case of the widowhood of the illustrious person who is now the bride. [*Cries of* "No, no! the betrothed."] It is customary, I believe, to call a person a bride when the marriage is approaching. The 2nd Resolution enables Her Majesty to secure to Her Serene Highness, in case she shall survive His Royal Highness Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, an annual sum not exceeding £6,000 during her life. In submitting these Resolutions to the Committee, I do not require to detain the Committee at any length, because the Committee is perfectly familiar with the topics that are applicable to the subject, from the recollection of other and similar occasions. Happily, we have only to vary in this instance by change of name the tones of congratulation with which we have heretofore approached Her Majesty, in regard to the character of the marriage itself. Her Majesty has been happy, almost beyond any other Sovereign known to history, in the nature of the matrimonial unions which have been successively formed by the Royal Princes. From time to time they have been spoken of by anticipation in sanguine terms on the part of responsible persons addressing this House, when proposing that provision be made for their due support, and these favourable and sanguine anticipations have on all occasions been completely sustained by actual experience. I believe, Sir, that on no occasion has there been better or more solid ground to anticipate happy results from a coming marriage than on the occasion which we have now to consider. The Duke of Albany, although young, has had sufficient opportunity of showing that he is possessed of an excellent understanding, and that he has likewise an excellent disposition to apply that understanding to the best use. With respect to Her Serene Highness, the Princess Helen of Waldeck-Pyrmont, she, of course, is less known to the public of this country. But, nevertheless, terms of equal confidence may be used in regard to the probable future of Her Serene Highness; for it is not to be questioned that Her Serene Highness is admirably endowed with natural gifts, and that those natural gifts have, under the care of her parents, and especially under that of an excellent and affectionate mother, been sedulously improved by the most careful training. Therefore, Sir, on this point, whatever may have been said on former occasions may now be justly repeated or taken for granted in regard to the happy prospects of the union which is about to be formed. Sir, with respect to the question of the income which is proposed as an endowment of this marriage, the Committee is aware that Prince Leopold, like the Duke of Connaught and like the Duke of Edinburgh, in each case before marriage, had already been provided with an income of £15,000 a-year, so that the Grant which is now proposed will raise his total income to £25,000. Now, Sir, this figure is not the result of any accidental circumstance or of any slight consideration. It was settled many years ago, in the earlier part of the second Cabinet of Lord Palmerston. It was made the subject of very careful inquiry by the Cabinet upon what basis provision ought to be made for the due support of the dignity of the Crown and the Royal Family in the case of the younger children of the Sovereign, first of all, on their coming of age, and, secondly, on their marriage. The amount which I propose has been, I do not hesitate to say, looked upon by all Cabinets generally which have had the opportunity of considering the case as a moderate amount. I am aware that it is a large sum to vote by way of annual allowance, but it is not a sum unduly large; on the contrary, I am of opinion it is a sum judiciously moderate, when we consider the position of the person for whom it is intended, and when we consider the nature of this country and the standard of wealth and enjoyment which prevails. There are a number of Gentlemen in this House of Parliament, and a very far larger number in the other House of Parliament, whose income exceeds, and in many cases greatly exceeds, the sum we now ask to be provided for a person of Royal dignity; while, upon the other hand, those larger incomes are in many cases free from a considerable portion of the calls and expectations which, as it were, predetermine a Royal income in certain modes of expenditure, and very seriously limit the choice of the possessor of it in its disposal from year to year. In fact, the number of times on which successive Governments have had this matter under consideration, and the very general and almost unanimous, though not quite unanimous concurrence, which has been exhibited when those occasions have arrived, give to the proposal such a weight of authority that it cannot now require to be expounded and supported in detail, easy as it would be, if it were necessary to give such support, by an appeal to the incidents of our previous history. I think, Sir, it will be felt that it is not too much to say that the proceeding which the House is now invited to take is a proceeding founded, not, indeed, upon a direct compact, but on an honourable understanding, and on a deliberate and well-considered policy. It is, I think, something like an honourable understanding when an arrangement of this kind has been fixed by a Cabinet before any of the occasions to which it was to be applied had arrived, and when, being so proposed by the Cabinet, it has not only once, but many times, in the persons and in the cases of other Members of the Royal Family, met with the assent of the House. I think anyone opposed to this Vote would be almost startled if he could entertain as a possibility the contingency or success of his own opposition, when he reflects that it is possible that such opposition could be adopted by the House, and that the effect would be that the House would then refuse to Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, under the very same circumstances, precisely the same provision which other Parliaments—not one, but more than one—have accorded with freedom, and almost with unanimity, in the case of the Duke of Albany's illustrious brothers, the Duke of Edinburgh and the Duke of Connaught. Well, Sir, this proposal, which is recommended by the wisdom with which these matrimonial unions are considered and the engagements for them contracted, which is recommended, I think, by the just moderation of the sum which we propose to Parliament to vote, and by the understanding which must be considered to arise after Votes of this kind have been many times repeated in cases analogous in every respect, is likewise, let me remind the House, founded on a deliberate policy. That policy rests upon this principle—that it is a wise course, and a course accordant with the principles of popular representative government, that instead of endowing the Crown upon the accession of the Sovereign with all the sums which may eventually be found necessary in case that Sovereign should be blessed with a numerous progeny—instead of making that large endowment which might prove to be superfluous—that proper course is first to endow the Sovereign, if unmarried, in reference to the expenses of an unmarried Sovereign, and then from time to time to enlarge that endowment, as circumstances may require such enlargement. Now, Sir, I can well understand that objection might be taken on one ground to this course of proceeding. It might be said that it was hardly using the Sovereign fairly to establish a state of things in which that Sovereign would be obliged to appear from time to time by Message before the Houses of Parliament, and again and again to reiterate requests for fresh grants of public money with a view to the maintenance of the Royal Estate by the different persons of her Family. But this I must say—that in the interests of Parliament—and it is an important reservation thus made—it has the double effect that, in the first place, a moral control is preserved on the part of Parliament over the conduct and proceedings of the rising branches of the Royal Family; and, in the second place, a valuable and salutary control is also preserved on the part of a wise and affectionate parent—the reigning Sovereign—over Her children, whose training and whose gradual advancement in life She has watched over and superintended. I may, perhaps, be justified in mentioning to the House one single circumstance which I think exactly illustrates the proposition I have now laid down. At the time that William IV. came to the Throne it happened that he became Sovereign at a period when, from a variety of causes, a strong principle of public parsimony prevailed. But the Civil List of King William IV. was fixed at a sum of £435,000 a-year. In 1837—seven years later—when her present gracious Majesty came to the Throne, Her Civil List was fixed, not at £435,000, but at £385,000. There was thus a diminution of £50,000 a-year; but it is perfectly plain that this was not because different views prevailed in 1837 from those which prevailed in 1830. It is quite plain that it was because King William IV. came to the Throne as a Sovereign having a Queen Consort, while Queen Victoria came to the Throne of this country as a youthful maiden, not having to maintain the double cost of State, which is incurred when a married pair are upon the Throne, or when the Queen, sitting on the Throne, has a Prince Consort; and, in consequence, when the Prince Consort happily became the husband of Queen Victoria, a new and separate application was made to Parliament for a special Grant, with a view to his support and maintenance, so that it is quite undeniable that Parliament has adopted as a principle this method of procedure. Nor do I think anyone will be disposed to deny that it is a principle well adapted to the spirit of representative government, and the maintenance of Parliamentary control. I hope, Sir, it will not be said that provision for these purposes ought to be made by the Sovereign Herself, from Her economies, in restraining the expenditure of her annual income, because it must be borne in mind that the income of the Sovereign is predetermined in separate branches and departments in such a way as only to leave the most moderate means for anything approaching accumulation—that accumulation, such as would even moderately provide for the Royal Princes and Princesses, on their arrival at man's estate, or on entering the condition of matrimony, is absolutely beyond the power of any Sovereign to attain; and that any attempt made by a Sovereign to attain such an end would only result in general dissatisfaction, and perhaps in popular complaint. If that be so—if the Sovereign has arrived at Sovereignty, with an understanding thus established and thus founded upon a personal policy—then I think I am justified in putting it to the Committee that the power which they possess ought to be honestly as well as loyally used, and that that which is about to be given ought to be given graciously and cheerfully. Nay, more; the Queen herself opens the door to our criticism, and remarks by the form under which, under the advice of Her successive Ministers, She has consented to take this provision. She conforms to the policy which Parliament has laid down, and which Cabinets have likewise concurred in, and She has been faithful to that policy. I hope, therefore, that we, on our part, will endeavour to act in a corresponding spirit; and, if we feel it to be true that there is nothing unreasonable in a control like this, in the endowment we are asked to make, that endowment will be made in the spirit which Her Majesty feels has always, in similar cases, distinguished the House of Commons, and we shall carry this gift, which is offered by the people through their Representatives, to the foot of the Throne, as a willing gift—a gift unrestrained and suitable to the circumstances of the case—a gift, further, which is certain to have the full and cordial approbation of the people of this Kingdom.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: I am aware, Sir, that it is technically unnecessary that such a Motion as this should be seconded; and I may go further, and say that it is not only technically unnecessary, but it must be absolutely and in every sense unnecessary that I should rise to express, on behalf of the great body of Gentlemen on this side of the House, our approval of the proposal that is now made. I only rise, therefore, in order that there may be no deficiency in the expression of loyalty and affection and attachment to Her Majesty with which we have heard the proposal that has been made, and has been so amply and so ably expounded by the Prime Minister. It was my lot, between three and four years ago, to make a similar proposal with regard to another Member of the Royal Family. I had occasion, from my connection with the Government at that time by the Office I then held, to look carefully into the question; and the conclusion at which we arrived was precisely that which, as the right hon. Gentleman has stated, had been arrived at by previous Cabinets, and on the grounds which he has laid before the House. The whole history of the Civil List of Her Majesty, from the time of Her accession to the time of Her marriage, and the time of the Votes which have been made to each of Her children in succession, completely bear out and illustrate the statements which the Prime Minister has made; and I am sure I am expressing the feeling of the great majority of this House in desiring the Vote we are now asked to pass may be given gracefully, harmoniously, and with—I venture even now to express a hope—unanimity.

(1.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the annual sum of ten thousand pounds be granted to Her Majesty, out of the Consolidated Fund of Great Britain and Ireland, towards providing for the establishment of His Royal Highness Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, and of Her Serene Highness Princess Helen of Waldeck and Pyrmont, the said annuity to be settled on His Royal Highness for his life, in such manner as Her Majesty may think proper, and to commence from the date of the Marriage of His Royal Highness with Her Serene Highness Princess Helen, and to be in addition to the annuity now enjoyed by His Royal Highness under the Act of the thirty-eighth year of Her present Majesty.''—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

MR. LABOUCHERE said, that, as these Votes had always been opposed, the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition must consider that it was only a pious opinion he expressed when he hoped that the present proposal would be received with unanimity. He did not rise with any idea of disputing the propriety of the laudatory terms in which the Prime Minister had spoken of Prince Leopold. He had no doubt that such praises were exceedingly well deserved. But they were not there that evening to join simply in an epithalamium. [*Laughter.*] Hon. Members might laugh, but they were not there for such a purpose, but rather for the very prosaic object of joining in a Vote to give to the Duke of Albany a very large augmentation to the sum already voted by the country as a dotation to Prince Leopold. He was not surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition support the Motion of the Prime Minister, because there was always a private understanding between the two Front Benches on the occasion of these Grants to Members of the Royal Family before they were brought before the House. Opposition, in all cases, had come from private Members, who had, on such occasions, to constitute themselves the guardians of the public purse. Had this not been essentially a private Member's question he thought there was no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Chamberlain), and the right hon. Gentleman the Postmaster General (Mr. Fawcett), and the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Charles W. Dilke), and the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Trevelyan), would one and all have opposed the Grant. It was possible that official etiquette might prevent them from taking an active part in the debate; but he had far too high an opinion of those Gentlemen to suppose they would have advocated, when in Opposition, what they were not prepared to stand by when in Office. He, therefore, entertained no doubt whatever that they would vote with him in opposition to the Grant. He had not risen for a moment to deny that the Crown ought to be maintained with sufficient dignity. That was a necessary consequence of the Monarchical system. Nor was he prepared to deny that the children of the Sovereign ought to receive some monetary provision from the State for their support. He opposed this special Grant upon three grounds, two of which were Constitutional and one economical. The first of his Constitutional grounds was this—and Mr. Fox took the same line when advocating a Grant or provision to the Duke of York in 1892. [*Laughter.*] He apologized for this *lapsus linguæ.* He meant 1792, and he hoped that by 1892 Grants of this nature would have ceased altogether. In 1792 Mr. Fox said—

> "The first question should be—'Is the Civil List adequate to the purpose of fully maintaining and supporting the children of the Crown?"

He (Mr. Labouchere) thought that it was necessary to meet this question before any provision was made for any Member of the Royal Family; and in order to do that it would be necessary that he should go into some details of the Civil List. He would, however, do so as shortly as he could, for he had no desire to detain the Committee. A species of legend had arisen in respect of the Civil List which was entirely out of accordance with the fact. Originally the Monarch received certain hereditary revenues, and these hereditary revenues were expended for the whole civil government of the country. When any money was required for a war, or for any other exceptional purpose, then the Government came to the House of Commons and asked for a subsidy; but all the expenses of the Government were met by these hereditary revenues. The Revolution of 1688 entirely swept away the doctrine of these hereditary revenues, which practically meant that the House of Commons and the people of England had no control or supervision over the ordinary expenditure of the Crown. In 1689 the first Civil List Act was brought in for William III. The Act said that—

> "In a just cause, and in acknowledgment of what great things His Majesty has done for this Kingdom, a sum not exceeding £700,000 be granted to His Majesty for His life in support of His Civil List."

The hereditary revenues consisted of the Revenues from the Crown Lands, and of various permanent taxes. The House would observe that in the Act there was nothing at all in the nature of a bargain and no surrender of any sort of hereditary revenues of the Crown, the sum being granted by the House of Commons of that day simply to maintain the Crown in fitting state and dignity. The Statute of Anne recited practically the Statute of William III.—he was speaking now of the Civil List Acts—so, also, did the Acts of George I. and George II.; but in George III.'s time first arose the extraordinary doctrine of a bargain between the Crown and the House of Commons. In that Act certain servile doctrines and expressions were inserted, probably by Lord Bute; and these were the first trace of any supposed relinquishment of the hereditary Revenues by the Sovereign. During the reigns of the Georges the Duchies of Cornwall and Lancaster formed part of those revenues; and it was only in the time of William IV. that a claim was made by the Crown to regard the Duchy of Lancaster as its special property. Sir Herbert Taylor, writing in the name of William IV. to Earl Grey, claimed the revenues of the Duchy of Lancaster as part of his separate personal and private estate vested in His Majesty by descent from Henry VII. in his body natural and not in his body as King. He need not say William IV. was not heir by Statute to Henry VII; but he would call attention to this fact with regard to the Duchy of Lancaster, because, from the circumstance of this distinction being made, the then Sovereign claimed it alone as his personal property; and he did not pretend to assert that the hereditary revenues of the Crown, inclusive of the rent of the Crown Lands, not derived from the Duchy of Lancaster, were the private property of the Sovereign, or that the amount granted as the Civil List depended on the amount of the hereditary revenues. Some hon. Members seemed to suppose that these hereditary revenues meant merely the revenues derived from the Crown Lands. But that supposition was incorrect. They consisted of a great many other items—hereditary, Excise, Post Office dues, wine dues, first fruits of the clergy, and so forth. It was estimated on the accession of King William IV. to the Throne that the hereditary revenues would amount to more than £3,000,000 sterling; but, of course, the charge upon them was the maintenance of the whole Civil Government of the country. It had often been stated that the country made a good bargain in respect of the Crown Lands. What they were valued at when Her Majesty came to the Throne he did not exactly know; but according to a Return lately published he found that in 1853 they amounted to £252,000. Therefore, it might fairly be assumed that the revenue from Crown Lands, at the time they were taken over and became part of the general Revenue of the country, did not amount to the sum of £385,000, which was voted to Her Majesty. He was aware that last year the Crown Land revenue was estimated to amount to £390,000; but then it must be remembered that there were special Votes for maintenance of Woods and Forests, amounting to about £20,000; so that, even at the present time, the Crown Lands did not amount to the annual value of the £385,000 voted to Her Majesty. At the same time, he would point out that if there were any relinquishment on the part of Her Majesty—and he denied that there was—it was but a relinquishment of the right to levy the whole of the hereditary revenues, which would, at her accession, have amounted to about £4,000,000 sterling, without the consent of Parliament. The Committee well knew, with all respect to Her Majesty, that it would be impossible to assert such a right in the present day. To all intents and purposes, the Civil List of Her Majesty was considered without any regard to the value of the hereditary revenues, or to the value of the Crown Lands. On the accession of Her Majesty the House of Commons appointed a Committee of 21 Members, who took the expenditure of King William IV. during the last four years of his Reign, and based thereon the amount of the Civil List that was required to maintain the Household of Her Majesty and the dignity of the Crown. The Prime Minister said there was an implied bargain. [MR. GLADSTONE dissented.] He had taken down the words of the right hon. Gentleman at the time; he said—"There was an honourable understanding when the Civil List was settled."

MR. GLADSTONE: I may have said that. But what I believe I said, also, was—that there was an honourable understanding between the Crown and Parliament with regard to the provision for the children of the Royal Family in consequence of the various Acts of former Parliaments.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he was coming to that. The right hon. Gentleman admitted that the view of the Government on this subject was, that there was an honourable understanding, when the amount of the Civil List was settled, that provision should be made by the country for any children of the Royal Family. But he was unable to find in the debates or speeches of the time, or in the Act of Parliament, any such honourable understanding. He had commenced by repeating the dictum of Mr. Fox—that it was necessary to show that the Civil List was inadequate to the maintenance of the children of the Crown before any new Grant were made. Well, what did the Civil List represent? Taking the expenditure on the Royal Palaces and the revenue of the Duchy of Lancaster into account, the Civil List at the commencement of the present reign amounted to the sum of £449,000. Of that sum £60,000 was voted for the Privy Purse. At the same time, £29,000 —the amount which the Duchy of Lancaster then produced—was also assigned for the personal expenditure of Her Majesty. If any hon. Gentleman would look into the matter, he would find that, before these sums were allocated to the Privy Purse, every species of expenditure was reckoned and a sum settled for it. Even the private charities of the Queen were taken into account, and the sum of £8,000, to which they were expected to amount, was voted to Her Majesty. He did not wish in any sort of way to pry into private matters, and he was not making any complaint; but it was obvious that the state and dignity of the Crown was not maintained at present in the same manner as it was maintained at the commencement of the Reign. If, then, the amounts allocated to maintain the state and dignity of the Crown were not insufficient at the commencement of the Reign, there must, at the present time, be a certain surplus. The House knew perfectly well that by the Act it was decided that if there was a deficit in any department and a surplus in another, that surplus should be taken to make up the deficit in the other department. But if there was a surplus in one Department and no deficit in the others, it was fully understood that the amount of such surplus should be paid into the Treasury. Now, he believed that no payments whatever had been made into the Treasury for any surpluses. But, assuming that there had been no surplus, still the sum of £60,000 per annum, in addition to the £29,000 for the revenue of the Duchy of Lancaster, had been granted to Her Majesty for Her Privy Purse; and he maintained that these Grants were made in order that Her Majesty might provide for any future children out of the sums in question. But there was another point in connection with this subject to which he invited the attention of the Committee. It was that, although the Duchy of Lancaster at the time referred to only produced an annual revenue of £29,000, he saw by the Return for the year 1880 that it was now producing £78,000.

Mr. GLADSTONE: That is the gross amount.

Mr. JOHN BRIGHT: The net sum paid to the Queen is £41,000.

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, at any rate, there was a considerable increase in the amount realized from the Duchy of Lancaster. So that, at the present moment, whilst the expenses of the Court were not so much as they were at the time of the allocation, the revenue of the Court had increased. He found, moreover, that the total dotations already made to the Members of the Royal Family amounted now to £221,000. Now, the question which the Prime Minister had not specifically met was, whether the total amount of the Civil List was expended by Her Majesty? Did Her Majesty rest the present demand upon the ground that the present Civil List was not sufficient for Her expenditure, inasmuch as it left no surplus which might be given to any children of Her Majesty who either married or attained the age of 21? That was the issue which Mr. Fox raised in 1798, and that was the issue which he (Mr. Labouchere) ventured to raise now. If it were asserted by the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister that there was no excess of revenue over expenditure, then he thought they would always be bound, and certainly so long as the Royal Marriage Act existed, to vote sums of money for the children of the Sovereign; but, as Mr. Fox said, they required, before they did so, a distinct statement that the revenues were not in excess of the actual expenditure of the Crown. The right hon. Gentleman, as he (Mr. Labouchere) understood, said that a bargain had been struck or implied with the Crown, that Parliament should always vote the sum of £25,000 a-year to any of the Royal children who might marry, and this because one Parliament had voted this sum on a similar occasion previously. That was a theory which he could not accept. The right hon. Gentleman said that the matter was discussed exhaustively by the Cabinet of Lord Palmerston. But he ventured to remark that they had progressed since that time, and that they were not bound by the views of Lord Palmerston's Cabinet, nor were they bound by the views of the Parliament of that time with regard to the amount required to maintain the dignity of Royal Princes. If they were so bound, this Motion would be a farce. If that were the case, why was not a Grant made at the commencement of the present Reign to give £15,000 a-year to each of the Royal children when they came of age, and £10,000 a-year more on their marriage? Surely the reason why that was not done was in order that each Parliament might have an opportunity to decide for itself on each particular case as it presented itself. They might, therefore, consider and decide for themselves whether the sum asked for was too large, without being prejudiced by anything that took place in previous Parliaments, and without being prejudiced by any dotation which had been granted to the elder brothers of His Royal Highness the Duke of Albany. The second Constitutional point he should take was this. It was held during the Reign of George III., when many of the offspring of that Monarch came to Parliament for increased dotations on their marriage, that, in order to obtain such increased dotations, it was necessary to show that the marriage had had a national object. In 1815, during the life of the Princess

Charlotte, a Grant was asked for the Duke of Cumberland, and it was refused. Sir Matthew Ridley—no mean authority —said—

> "On making a provision for the Duke of York, a view was had to the probability of the succession of his marriage. But a material change had since occurred (birth of the Princess Charlotte). With respect, however, to the marriage of the Duke of Cumberland, it was not one which ought to be looked at in a national point of view, or which rendered it necessary on this ground for Parliament to step in to vote a Grant for increasing the income of the parties."

That was to say that when the Duke of York asked for an increased dotation it was granted because there was no direct Heir to the Throne. But when application was made for an increase on behalf of the Duke of Cumberland on his marriage it was refused because a direct Heir to the Throne had been born. In 1817 the Princess Charlotte died. The Prince Regent then sent to the House of Commons a Message, saying that—

> "Treaties of marriage are in negotiation for the Dukes of Clarence and Cambridge. After the afflicting calamity which the Prince and the nation have sustained by the loss of the Princess Charlotte, His Royal Highness is fully persuaded that the House of Commons will feel how essential it is to the best interests of the country that he should be enabled to make a suitable provision for such of his Royal brothers as should have contracted marriages with the consent of the Crown."

Ministers asked the House to grant £10,000 for the Duke of Clarence and £6,000 for the Duke of Cambridge. The House replied by cutting down the £10,000 for the Duke of Clarence, and by refusing the grant for the Duke of Cambridge. The next year the Duke of Kent was married, and £6,000 was asked for on his behalf. This application was agreed to, although it was opposed by 51 Members, including Lord Althorp and Mr. Tierney. During the debates which occurred on that occasion, Lord Brougham said that—

> "While the House should not hesitate to vote some allowance to those members of the Royal Family whom it was desirable to see married, they were bound by their duty to their constituents to refuse grants to those to whom they were not necessary. It was understood that Her Majesty had very considerable property, and it was natural for those who had saved to help the other members of the family."

Lord Plunket said that—

> "The application rested upon the abstract principle—independent of time or circumstances —that on the marriage of any individual connected with the Crown his income should of necessity be increased. Where precedents were to be found for such a system he knew not, and he was sure that nothing in reason or in justice could be discerned to sanction it."

Mr. Canning, in his defence of the Grant, denied this, and said that the Duke of Clarence would not have thought of contracting this marriage had it not been pressed upon him as a public duty. He thought, therefore, that he was entitled to the support of the Prime Minister, because he did not think the right hon. Gentleman would contend for a single moment that there was any national object in the marriage now under the notice of the House. They were all exceedingly glad that his Royal Highness should marry; but there was no national object in his doing so. A national object in the case of the marriage of one of the Royal Family would be to insure that there should be sufficient sons and grandsons of the Sovereign to maintain the direct descent of the Crown. But they knew that the elder brothers of His Royal Highness were married and had children —some more than others. It could not, therefore, be asserted for a moment that there was any national object in the marriage of Prince Leopold. If there was not this national object in the marriage of His Royal Highness, then he contended that they would only be acting according to the precedent which had been set in the Reign of George III. if they refused to give any increase of income to His Royal Highness upon his marriage. Having gone through his Constitutional reasons for opposing the Grant, he now came to his third reason, which was an economical one. With the utmost respect, he considered that £15,000 per annum was quite sufficient for His Royal Highness. He was aware there were Gentlemen in that House who thought it small and paltry to get up and protest against the Vote of an additional £10,000 per annum. He, however, was not one of them. He abominated all taxation, and he should like to see the present taxation of the country reduced in every possible way. The question was often asked—"What do the working men of the country care about this; what will they pay towards the Grant? Perhaps half a farthing apiece." But the working men of the country did care a great deal for this Grant; and he had that day presented Petitions, signed by 13,000 or 14,000 persons—almost all of them working men—protesting against it. They knew that warrants were very often issued in connection with the Queen's Taxes; that the beds of persons were often sold under them, and their furniture seized, because they could not pay those taxes. This Grant, then, might make a great difference to the working men, for he ventured to say that the amount levied under the warrants referred to would be covered by the £10,000 they were now asked to vote. He maintained that it was not only unnecessary, but that it was undesirable, that this Grant should be voted. They lived in an age that was, to a certain extent, ostentatious; and, although it was the custom to laugh at Americans for their worship of the almighty dollar, he suspected there was no country in the world in which the golden calf came in for a greater share of adoration than it did in England. The followers of the golden calf in this country held themselves aloof from men of art and letters, and from those who had obtained a competency by means of trade or commerce. His Royal Highness Prince Leopold was a cultivated and refined gentleman; and he was about to marry a lady who came from a country where the mere possession of money was regarded as of little account. Therefore, he thought it would be but a poor lesson to teach that lady that it was absolutely necessary for a gentleman of refinement and culture in England, even though he were a Prince, to possess more than £15,000 a-year with which to maintain his position. The Prime Minister told them that they ought to be loyal, and vote this money without grudging it. But he (Mr. Labouchere) thought there could not be a greater mistake than to assume that the loyalty of the subject was to be measured by his readiness to grant at all times these excessive demands for the maintenance of the Royal Family. For the three reasons he had given—although there were plenty of others, with which he should not weary hon. Members—he asked the House to meet the Resolution of the Prime Minister with a respectful but unhesitating "No."

Mr. BROADHURST said, that, had he consulted his own personal feelings in this matter, he might well have been led to take no part in the discussion of that evening; but he felt bound to state that he intended to give his vote in opposition to the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman, from a deep sense of public duty to those whom he represented. The feeling throughout the country was that the Vote proposed was altogether unnecessary for the comfortable maintenance of His Royal Highness; and, if that were so, he contended that it was absolutely unwise to make this further call upon the nation's taxpayers. It was impossible to prevent the great mass of the working people of the country, who laboured from childhood to old age for a bare subsistence, comparing their incomes and conditions of life with those of the Members of the Royal Family, when proposals of this kind were brought under the notice of the nation. He found that the present income of His Royal Highness Prince Leopold was something like £280 per week. That was a considerable income in itself, and far more than many highly respectable men in the country received wherewith to maintain a family and discharge the duties of citizenship for a whole year. These Grants might appear matters of small moment to the class of gentlemen to whom the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister referred when he compared their enormous incomes with those which the nation chose to bestow upon the Princes of the Royal Family; but they were by no means trifling to the class whom he represented. He maintained that £15,000 a-year was quite sufficient to maintain the position of a Prince in this country. Luxury and luxurious surroundings would not add to the princely nature of His Royal Highness Prince Leopold, neither would moderate surroundings in any way detract therefrom; and he held it to be a false and vicious theory, and an evil example to the nation, to maintain that a Prince could not support his proper position in the country without this extraordinary sum of £25,000 per annum. He had only to add that there could not, and ought not, to be drawn any inference whatever with regard to the loyalty of any Members of that House, from the circumstance that they felt it their duty to oppose this Vote. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote), in the course of his speech that night, said that in supporting this Motion he regarded himself as representing the loyalty of Gentlemen who sat on his side of the House. He could tell the right hon. Gentleman that those who sat below the Gangway on the Ministerial side of the House, and who from the bottom of their hearts thought it their duty to oppose this Vote, did not yield one inch in the matter of loyalty to the Throne to hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. He hoped, therefore, that such an inference as he had alluded to would be the last to be drawn from the conduct of those who conscientiously and fearlessly discharged a public duty. These Votes were most unpopular in the country. ["No!"] An hon. Member denied that proposition; but he would ask him to take the case of any of the large popular constituencies of the nation, and he ventured to say that their vote would be against the proposal that was going to be carried that evening. He maintained the opinion he had expressed on this subject; and he invited the hon. Member for Preston to try the experiment of ascertaining the correctness of that opinion in some of the large towns in his district that he (Mr. Broadhurst) would indicate to him. In concluding his remarks, he wished it to be clearly understood that the people who were opposed to this Grant were not necessarily opposed to the Throne in any form. They wished, on the contrary, that the Throne should be maintained with all its necessary surroundings, comfort, and dignity; but they also held, and that by an overwhelming majority, that the sum asked for was an extravagant allowance; the Vote altogether unnecessary, and one which the trustees of the national purse should not allow to pass.

MR. HEALY said, the hon. Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst) appeared very anxious, while opposing the Vote, to get credit for loyalty. He did not know why it was that the hon. Member, in opposing the Vote, was so desirous of associating the vote he gave with his loyalty, because, as far as his (Mr. Healy's) acquaintance with the English working man went—and he had lived in this country now for some 10 or 11 years—he had never been struck by the extent of loyalty they betrayed, nor did he think that they would quarrel with the hon. Member for Stoke, if, when he had stated his intention of voting against the Motion, he had left out altogether his protestations of loyalty. For his own part, he did not care whether he was regarded as loyal or disloyal; but he intended to vote against the Motion on the ground that he was opposed to these people having anything whatever. ["Order!"] The right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister had stated that Her Majesty had been truly happy in the matrimonial alliances which had been formed by Her children; but he thought that happiness might consist, to a very great extent, of the £25,000 a-year which those children got. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "Divide!"] The right hon. Gentleman went on to point out that a great number of persons in both Houses of Parliament had a much larger income than £25,000 a-year, which Parliament was now asked to vote for Prince Leopold, in order to support his Royal state and dignity. He would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether there were not other positions of dignity which also required support? The Members of the House of Lords had a certain amount of state and dignity to keep up; but they did not come to the House of Commons for Grants of the public money in order to keep them alive. Hon. Members in the House of Commons had to work, and were supposed to maintain a certain amount of state and dignity, be the same more or less; but hon. Members of that House were not provided for by the Crown, or by money taken out of the public purse in order to maintain their state and dignity. The right hon. Gentleman said one thing about Prince Leopold which he believed to be perfectly true. The right hon. Gentleman said that Prince Leopold had an excellent understanding. Then he (Mr. Healy) thought the best thing that this illustrious Prince could do with his excellent understanding was to employ it in earning his living. [*Cries of* "Order!"] For his part, he had never seen a Royal Prince. He did not know what a Prince was like, and he certainly was acquainted with no reason why the Members of the House of Commons—who were the Representatives of the taxpayers—should be asked to vote away the public money, simply because a man happened to be a Prince. If the Duke of Albany was a Prince, he should set a good example and work for his living; and, therefore, as one of the

Representatives of the taxpayers, he (Mr. Healy) should oppose the Grant it was now proposed to make.

Mr. STOREY said, he wished to make one or two observations to the Committee after the speech to which they had just been treated by the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy). He thought the Committee would agree with him that the observations of the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere) left nothing to be desired as far as the tone and temper of them were concerned. It had often been his fortune in that House—and he did not think the fact had commended him to most hon. Gentlemen—to vote with the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy); but certainly he had no disposition to sit still now and allow the hon. Member to be the interpreter, in any way, of the sentiments which he held, and which were held by many hon. Members around him, and which would impel them to go into the same Lobby as the hon. Member for Wexford. He objected to this Vote, and he should not trouble the Committee by entering into the admirable historical disquisition which had been given by the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). He thought the hon. Member had stated the Constitutional position of the question very well; but he should give one or two additional reasons why the Radical Members of the House, at any rate, ought to feel themselves justified in objecting to make any increased Grant to Prince Leopold. He objected to the Grant on account of the Royal Princes themselves. He objected to it because he felt that the House of Commons had no business to apply the public money in order to keep any persons in the State in a condition of titled idleness. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "Divide!"] He did not intend to say a word—and if he did, he trusted the Chairman would correct him—he did not intend to say one word which could be personally objectionable to any Member of the Royal Family. He wished it to be clearly understood that he knew nothing about the Royal Princes, and that all he had heard about Prince Leopold led him to believe that what the Prime Minister had said of him was strictly within the truth. He had, therefore, not the slightest intention of saying anything that was likely to be offensive to Prince Leopold or his family; but he was going to lay down a principle which he should like the Committee to accept, with regard to the expenditure of public money. He held that no public money ought to be expended except in return for specific public services. That was a principle which he thought was held by hon. Gentlemen opposite, as well as by himself; and, at any rate, if it was not held by a large number of the Members of that House, he felt it had often been used to justify the expenditure of the public money. He would ask what were the public services which they expected to receive from Prince Leopold? [*Cries of* "Order!" *and* "Divide!"] He was sorry to have to say these things. [*Cries of* "Divide!" *and interruption.*]

Mr. DILLWYN rose to Order, and wished to ask the Chairman if he would endeavour to keep silence?

Mr. STOREY said, he had been simply asking what public services they expected to receive from the Duke of Albany. [*Interruption.*]

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR rose to Order, and begged to state that he had just heard an hon. Member propose to a neighbour that they should carry on an animated conversation with a view of drowning the voice of the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey).

Mr. STOREY said, that on the point of Order he should like to ask the Chairman whether, if the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) was good enough to name the hon. Member who had made the remark referred to, it would not become the duty of the Chairman immediately to punish such hon. Member for the offence?

The CHAIRMAN: I am sure that hon. Gentlemen have no wish to close the debate without hearing the hon. Member for Sunderland.

Mr. STOREY said, he was afraid they had just had an illustration of what might happen in that House if the *clôture* were adopted. He was asking what public services they expected from Prince Leopold in return for this extra amount of money? He could not himself discover what Prince Leopold was going to do. Were they to pay the money simply because Prince Leopold was going to marry and lead a respectable life? [*Interruption, and cries of* "Order!"] He had not the smallest doubt that the Prince would, to this extent, bear out the high eulogium which had been passed upon him by the Prime Minister; but if they were to expend the public money on every young man who got married and lived a respectable life where should they come to? He had been about to make another remark. [*Cries of* "Agreed!"] Hon. Members opposite objected to his observations; and as they were taking their time in interruption, he intended to take his. He had made up his mind to say certain things, and he intended to say them. What he would say first was that this practice of voting public Grants in Aid, curiously enough, only related to persons at the two extremes of English society. They made public grants of money to the Royal Family, and to a number of titled and untitled persons who were accustomed to move within the circle of Royalty, and they made public grants of money at the other end of the social scale to the poorest of the poor, who were left without funds in consequence of old age or the failure of their health. Now, what was the inevitable effect of making grants of money to the poorest of the poor? Did they not all admit that the effect was to deteriorate the character of these people; and was it for one moment to be doubted that the effect of giving public Grants of money to Princes of the Royal Family was also to deteriorate their character? It was because he did not want to deteriorate the character of the Duke of Albany that he proposed to vote against the Resolution. If he desired any proof that the effect of these Grants was to deteriorate the character of the gentlemen who received them he could find it in particular instances. When they made grants of money in that House it might be supposed that, having made them, they had done with the matter, and that they had no more calls upon them; but those who received money directly were not indisposed to receive it indirectly. The objection he had to these Grants was that when once a man had drank the blood of the public he invariably wanted more. [*Cries of* "Order!"] Having obtained money directly, the recipients of that money required additional sums indirectly. He would give an illustration. [*Interruption.*] He did not doubt for a moment that he was making himself particularly offensive to some hon. Members of that House. [*Loud cries of* "Hear, hear!"] He very much deplored it; but at any rate he had the courage to say what he thought, and he hoped the House would hear him. Why was it that he was so distasteful to a number of hon. Gentlemen in that House? He would tell the Committee. He was told on pretty good authority that no less than 126 Members of the other House of Parliament, and 110 Members of the House of Commons, were in the receipt of larger or smaller portions of the public money of the country. [*Cries of* "Name!" *and interruption.*] He had no doubt that a number of those Gentlemen honourably earned the money they received, and he had no objection to their receiving it when they did earn it; but he was sure that a large number did not earn it, and that many of them had sons and brothers and uncles and cousins. [An hon. MEMBER: And sisters and aunts! *Laughter*, which prevented the conclusion of the sentence being heard.] And there were many others who expected to be in receipt of these funds; and, therefore, he was perfectly conscious that when he was addressing the House of Commons, constituted as it was at present, he was addressing a huge syndicate that was interested in this wasteful expenditure of public money. He was not surprised that they should deny it; but he would give illustrations to prove that what he said was correct. They gave £25,000 to one Royal Prince, and £40,000 to another, and what followed? When a Royal Prince had been endowed by Parliament, at least in a manner equal to his deserts, he went away and was soon surrounded by parasites and sycophants.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must point out to the hon. Member for Sunderland that he is travelling beyond the Question, which is simply a proposal to make an allowance to His Royal Highness the Duke of Albany.

MR. STOREY said, that, in his own mind, he was very steadily following up the sequence of his argument. He thought he should be able to show the Chairman of the Committee that he was strictly following the argument with which he had commenced, and showing the basis of his objection to this Vote. He objected to the Vote, because as soon as a sum of money was voted, directly they had an indirect application for further funds from the country to these

Royal personages. He was instancing cases of certain Royal personages to whom large sums of money had been given directly, and who, immediately afterwards, were dressed up as soldiers and given additional sums of money indirectly. He wished to put this point to the House, and the House might be sure of this—that the opinion he was now expressing was held by tens of thousands and hundreds of thousands of the working men outside that House. They had the scarred veteran, who had served on 50 fields, and who, when he came home——[*Interruption.*] He did not wonder that some hon. Gentlemen did not wish to hear him; but he would repeat that the veteran, who had served his country abroad, when he came home reasonably expected from a grateful country a due reward for the services he had rendered. But when he came home what did he find? Why, that positions which he might most reasonably aspire to—positions of comfort and repose for his declining years—were filled up by Royal personages, who had never set a squadron in the field and who never meant to do; but who, by the advice of those who surrounded them, were induced to dress themselves in the uniform of a soldier, and take a colonel's pay.

Mr. PULESTON rose to Order. He wished to know whether the remarks of the hon. Gentleman had any bearing on the Question before the Committee?

The CHAIRMAN: I cannot say that the hon. Member is out of Order. I presume he is endeavouring to show that certain Royal Princes, who have received similar grants, have also received other public pay, and that, therefore, the sum now asked may be in excess of the requirement.

Mr. STOREY said, that that was his argument, and he was much obliged to the Chairman for having interpreted it to the hon. Member. He found that one Royal personage received £1,350 a-year indirectly in this way, which ought to have been given to a man who had really served his country in the field. Another Royal personage received £738 per year indirectly; a third received £394 a-year indirectly; and a fourth £109 10*s.* [An hon. Member: Monstrous!] An hon. Member said that it was monstrous. He agreed with the hon. Member. It was monstrously mean to take these small sums. [*Cries of* "Oh!" *and* "Order!"] He repeated that it was monstrously mean for these Royal personages to take these small sums for services which could not be rendered properly by them, and for posts which ought to be given as rewards to men who had really served the country in the field. Now, he did not blame the Royal Princes; he blamed hon. Gentlemen opposite who were cheering, and he blamed hon. Members and right hon. Members on the Front Government Bench quite as much. He did not recognize any distinction between them, except this—that when right hon. Gentlemen opposite came to propose these Votes they did it from a full heart; and he was not at all sure that many right hon. Gentlemen now upon the Treasury Bench were doing it with a full heart. That was his first objection to the Vote. ["Oh!"] He would relieve the House by telling them that he had only another objection to present; but it was equally disagreeable to that which he had already given. His second point was this—that it had not been at all shown, nor could it be shown, that the Civil List, as at present granted, was not equal to the support of the dignity of the Crown. He wished to show the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister how he might easily get the £10,000 a-year asked for in the Vote, without imposing the slightest taxation on the public, and without touching the Civil List of Her Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria. He did not deny that the Queen fulfilled her Constitutional duties, and that she was fully and fairly entitled to the sum which Parliament gave to her; but there were a number of officials attached to the Crown—such as Lords-in-waiting, Goldsticks-in-waiting, and noble Lords—who were not ashamed to be the flunkeys of the State. As Shelley said—

> "These gilded flies, that bask within the sunshine of the Court, what are they? They are the drones of the community that feed on the mechanics' labour."

Did anyone suppose that any of these Goldsticks-in-waiting administered to the dignity of the Crown. His own opinion was that the Crown would be much more dignified if it could get rid of a good deal of this mediæval pomp and silly pageantry, which only repelled men of sensible mind. For these reasons he contended that the money proposed to be voted by the Resolution ought not to be granted, especially when upon officers such as he had just referred to a sum far more than the £10,000 just asked for was annually spent, or rather annually mis-spent, not upon the Queen, but upon a number of titled and untitled persons who ought to be ashamed to take the public money without rendering fair services in return for it to the State. Under these circumstances, he, for one, could not pretend to vote for the Resolution. Before he sat down he asked the Committee to consider this point, which had a very important bearing upon the question of these grants. There was nothing which troubled Her Majesty's Government, either Conservative or Liberal, and indeed all Members of that House, more than the difficulty of meeting the ordinary wants of the country by drawing upon the taxes. He maintained that the pressure of that taxation was severely felt by every class in the community. It was felt by the common people, and even hon. Gentlemen themselves, he feared, had experienced its effect during recent years. There were many useful national projects and institutions that were in abeyance simply for want of the money necessary for carrying them out; and whenever these were pressed upon the attention of the Government, the Chancellor of the Exchequer was always obliged to express regret that it was impossible to find money for any new purposes. As an instance of this, he reminded hon. Gentlemen that it was only by immense efforts that they had been able to find the money required for teaching the people of the country, and making them intelligent creatures; and whenever any new proposals were made in connection with it, they were always met by the Chancellor of the Exchequer with the question, "Where is the money to come from?" It was not this £10,000 alone, which might, perhaps, appear a small sum in itself. It was one £10,000 added to another, and then a further £10,000 added to these, which prevented money being available when it was desirable to make an expenditure upon really national and important objects. The £25,000 a-year, which the Royal couple were to have, would enable them in the borough of Sunderland, which he represented—no mean borough, he could assure hon. Members opposite, for it had a population of 130,000—to give to the whole of the children of that town a free education; and he would sooner see the money spent in that way than that it should be applied to the support of Royalty. That money, again, which it was now proposed to spend upon one family, would be sufficient to support 1,000 decent couples with comfort in their old age. For his own part, in that House he recognized no distinctions between Royal personages and common personages—between rich and poor. The first principle which he had laid down was that the public money of the country ought not to be expended except in return for public services rendered. His second principle was equally incontrovertible—namely, that when money had to be spent and overburdened taxpayers to be drawn upon, it should be spent wisely and discreetly, and never wasted upon any object when it could be much better expended for nobler and better purposes.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, although I have no intention of attempting to criticize in their details the speeches which have been made upon the Resolution before the Committee, yet I really must, on my own part, enter a very strong protest against some of the language which has been used in the course of this short debate, and I believe I enter that protest also on the part of the enormous majority of the Members of this House. I think it my duty, also, to take very short notice of certain suggestions which have been made, and of certain allegations which appear to me to be destitute of any solid foundation. Let me, however, say, with reference to the speech of my hon. Friend the Member for Stoke (Mr. Broadhurst), that I am quite sure he need be under no apprehension as to any imputation upon his loyalty; and I say this not alone on my own behalf, because I venture to state that my right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition had not the slightest intention of conveying any such imputation with respect to any Gentleman who might feel it his duty to vote against this Resolution. Then, Sir, the hon. Member who has just sat down has made a suggestion, and it is that, by the abolition of the offices of a number of noble Lords and gentlemen who form the Court and Household of Her Majesty, we should save the money which it is now desired to obtain without it being necessary to have recourse to the taxpayers of the country. The opinion of the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) is that the maintenance of these noble Lords and gentlemen is no part of the dignity of the Court, and contributes nothing to the comfort of the Sovereign. I will not say whether or not the view of the hon. Member is an original one, or whether it deserved consideration at the commencement of the Reign; but I will point out that, by a positive engagement contained in the Civil List Act, the whole of this Royal state and the whole of these Court and Household establishments are distinctly recognized, and that we are not free to touch them during the lifetime of Her Majesty without a distinct breach of faith. I will now pass on to the consideration of some of the observations which were made by my hon. Friend the Member for Northampton (Mr. Labouchere). He stated, not with perfect accuracy, that these grants have been invariably opposed. I have had no opportunity, since my hon. Friend spoke, of going over the list of them; but I happen to hold in my hand the report of one of those cases, when it was my duty to propose a grant for the marriage portion of Her Royal Highness the Princess Louise, and on that occasion the grant was made without any opposition whatever. As far as I can trust my memory, I believe there are other instances of the kind.

Mr. P. A. TAYLOR said, he might, perhaps, be allowed to state that he opposed the Vote on the occasion referred to by the right hon. Gentleman, and was supported by two Members of the present Government.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I have cited the Parliamentary record of the case of which I speak, and I believe I have accurately stated the matter. Sir, my hon. Friend has founded his argument and his opposition to this proposal mainly on a reference to the declarations of Mr. Fox and the cases which occurred in the reign of George III.—cases with which I am and have been familiar, and with regard to which I venture to state that, in any reasonable view of the case, they have not the smallest application to the proposal now before us. At that time the whole basis of the Civil List was completely different. But my hon. Friend did not refer to the Civil List of George III. What was its amount? If I remember rightly—for I have no opportunity of referring—it was about £1,000,000, and that fact of itself might seem to indicate to my hon. Friend that it was a grant on a totally different basis, and entailed totally different obligations. No doubt, as I believe, Mr. Fox was quite right in saying that at that time, before any demand was made in Parliament, it was right to inquire whether the Civil List was sufficient, and whether any deficit could be shown. But our contention is, that upon the accession of William IV. to the Throne we passed into an entirely different state of arrangements; that since that time the amount of the Civil List has been regulated and its purposes defined by Committees of Parliament; and that the bulk of the money is necessary for the purposes set forth. My hon. Friend said that every description of expenditure was provided for by the Civil List. Sir, that statement is as far as possible from being accurate. My hon. Friend said that the charities of Her Majesty were provided for in the Civil List. I assure him that such is not the case, and that the small branch of the Civil List to which he has referred has no connection whatever with the charities of the Queen, but was, almost the whole of it, applied to purposes essentially public, and, moreover, not even within the ordinary personal discretion of Her Majesty. My hon. Friend says that Her Majesty has £100,000 a-year after every branch of possible expenditure has been provided for. Sir, that is entirely wrong. There are very large branches of expenditure which are totally unprovided for under the three great branches of the Civil List—namely, the offices of Lord Steward, Lord Chamberlain, and Master of the Horse. It would not be becoming in me to enter into detail upon this subject; but I will point to one branch of the expenditure with regard to which my hon. Friend will feel the force of what I say. The entire expense of the education of every Member of the Royal Family, of the staff connected with that education, and the whole personal expenditure of every one of the Royal Children, except the Prince of Wales, has been provided for by the Queen from her own personal resources, until the time when, in the event of marriage in the case of Princesses, and coming of age in the case of Princes, application has been made to Parliament for a grant. My hon. Friend says that the savings of the Sovereign ought to provide for these endowments. But, Sir, that is totally impossible. There are no savings, and never have been, and never could be, which would be adequate to meet a tenth part of them. The savings of the Sovereign have never amounted to any inordinate sum, nor have they ever been considered a matter of Parliamentary investigation. I have had some knowledge of them in various contingencies of official life; but never have they seemed to me to amount to more than might be well called for by the emergencies connected with the position and duties of the Queen. Were it only the very considerable inequality in the position of the various Children of the Sovereign with respect to wealth, it is quite obvious that it would be most undesirable that Her Majesty should be wholly deprived of the means of mitigating, should she think fit, that inequality. But my hon. Friend said that we were not bound by the proceedings of previous Parliaments; that the Parliament of Lord Palmerston might have granted £15,000 to a Member of the Royal Family, but that this was no reason why we, under altered circumstances, should not re-consider the amount. But, Sir, what is the force of that argument, taken in connection with the analogy of the times? We have been considering a great many things since the time of Lord Palmerston's Cabinet, and our re-consideration goes to the augmentation of the expenditure of public money, and not to its diminution. My hon. Friend knows quite well that all the pleas which tend to govern these decisions are pleas which, sometimes extravagantly, sometimes reasonably urged, would go to make it very doubtful indeed whether it is desirable for us to begin this matter as if it were one that had never been decided at all, or, on the contrary, whether we should not do much more wisely to adhere to and to tread in the footsteps of those who have gone before us. But that upon which I most of all dwell is this. I claim that the cases quoted by my hon. Friend, of the Duke of York, the Duke of Clarence, and the Duke of Cumberland, and particularly his reference to Mr. Fox, are entirely excluded from our view, because they applied to a Civil List of comparatively very large amount, perfectly undefined and free in its application; whereas the Civil List we are now dealing with is distinctly devoted, defined, and applied under the authority of Parliament, and the margin that would remain to the Queen is a narrow one, out of which it would be absolutely impossible to draw the means necessary for the Royal Princes on their marriage. I admit my hon. Friend did not misunderstand my meaning when I stated that there was an honourable understanding that the provision should fall upon Parliament. Undoubtedly, in my opinion, it is impossible to separate that from the whole history of the fixing of the Civil List on the two great classical occasions of the Accessions of Her Majesty and of King William IV. Therefore, I say, that this honourable understanding has become much more defined by the course of proceedings on many different occasions when Parliament has had to deal with proposals either identical or analogous to this; and the proposal of my hon. Friend amounts exactly to this—that in the case of the Duke of Albany, (Prince Leopold), the last of the Royal Princes, Parliament shall, by refusing this Vote of £10,000 a-year, place him in a position essentially different from that of the other young Princes, and leave him with little more than half the provision which preceding Parliaments have made for the other Sons of the Royal Family.

MR. P. A. TAYLOR said, he had for the last 10 or 15 years opposed every grant to the Royal Family. Perhaps, on the occasion referred to by the right hon. Gentleman, he might remember that he severely rebuked him for not taking a division at the proper time. The right hon. Gentleman said the Resolution had been passed, and it was out of the question to attempt to stultify the House by opposing the grant on the Bill. He did not know whether he would also recollect, but it was a fact nevertheless, that on the next occasion he again rebuked him for taking the opposite course, and said it was a very unusual thing to oppose the Resolution, and that the opposition should have been taken on the second reading of the Bill. It was quite true that the opposition on the occasion referred to was not nearly so numerous as it was that day. Still, the right hon.

Gentleman would acknowledge that if not so numerous it was, at least, highly respectable, inasmuch as two hon. Members who voted with him on that occasion now enjoyed the honour of sitting by the side of the right hon. Gentleman. His hon. Friend the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Sir Charles W. Dilke) acted as Teller with him on that occasion; while the present Postmaster General had to wander through the Lobby as he best might.

Question put.

The Committee *divided:*—Ayes 387; Noes 42: Majority 345.—(Div. List, No. 58.)

(1.) *Resolved,* That the annual sum of ten thousand pounds be granted to Her Majesty, out of the Consolidated Fund of Great Britain and Ireland, towards providing for the establishment of His Royal Highness Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, and of Her Serene Highness Princess Helen of Waldeck and Pyrmont, the said annuity to be settled on His Royal Highness for his life, in such manner as Her Majesty may think proper, and to commence from the date of the Marriage of His Royal Highness with Her Serene Highness Princess Helen, and to be in addition to the annuity now enjoyed by His Royal Highness under the Act of the thirty-eighth year of Her present Majesty.

(2.) Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That Her Majesty be enabled to secure to Her Serene Highness Princess Helen of Waldeck and Pyrmont, for the support of her dignity, in case she shall survive His Royal Highness, Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, an annual sum not exceeding six thousand pounds during her life."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

Mr. LABOUCHERE said, he thought it hardly necessary to put the Committee to the trouble of dividing again. It might be taken for granted that the 42 Members who had opposed the first Resolution would oppose this; but he did not think it necessary to divide the Committee upon it.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am exceedingly glad that the hon. Member is satisfied with having testified his conviction upon this subject, and that he will abstain from dividing the Committee again. I may take this opportunity of saying that I was perfectly accurate in what I stated in regard to the proposal of an annuity for the Princess Louise. The opposition of the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. P. A. Taylor) was on a subsequent occasion and upon another part of the grant—namely, the Vote of £30,000; but the Vote for the annuity passed without any opposition.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolutions to be reported *To-morrow.*

PARLIAMENT — BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (PUTTING THE QUESTION).

RESOLUTION. ADJOURNED DEBATE.

[THIRD NIGHT.]

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendment proposed to Question [20th February],

"That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, to be the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, he may so inform the House or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members."—(*Mr. Gladstone.*)

And which Amendment was,

To leave out from the first word "That," to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "no Rules of Procedure will be satisfactory to this House which confer the power of closing a Debate upon a majority of Members,"—(*Mr. Marriott,*)

—instead thereof.

Question again proposed, "That the words 'when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker,' stand part of the Question."

Debate *resumed.*

Mr. BERESFORD HOPE: We have now reached a stage in the debate when we can consider the proposals of the Government as presented in different lights by the two leading Members of the Government—the Prime Minister and the noble Marquess the Member for North-East Lancashire (the Marquess of Hartington). We have also the advantage of the independent judgment of one who, though not on the Treasury Bench, is looked upon as one of the Leaders of the Liberal Party—my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon (Mr. Goschen). In reference to the Prime Minister's speech, I shall chiefly deal with two points, which I may call external arguments, offered by him in favour of the proposed change. The first of these is the argument derived from the practice—not the uniform practice, but the frequent one—of certain foreign Parliaments. I confess I set little value on such precedents. I refuse to accept as guide for this Imperial Assembly the action of those miscellaneous Bodies whose Members sit down to play at lawmaking at 2 o'clock and rise to eat and to drink at 5. Very likely they have the *clôture* in the Servian Parliament; but they have something else in the Servian Parliament. We have lately read that in the Servian Parliament they have made a great discovery in the art of obstruction, which I admire very much. It was made by the Radical Members there, and I respectfully recommend it to the Radicals of this House for their imitation. The Radicals of Servia have thrown up their seats in a body, and so stopped the work of the Session. Seriously speaking, I am sorry and indignant that England, the "Mother of Parliaments," the country from which all others have derived their lessons of Parliamentary Procedure—all except the ancient, Constitutional countries of Sweden and Hungary, where the *clôture* does not exist—should condescend to borrow this undesirable system from such mushroom imitators. I have been in the House many years, and during that time have heard many things that have surprised me, and some which have pleased me, but have been seldom more surprised than on hearing the strange passage at the latter end of the speech of the Secretary of State for India, in which he condescended to personalities; and I asked myself, Is it dignified for a Leader, and within the laws of fair Parliamentary fighting that, unprovoked, and without rhyme or reason, but simply to furnish an epigrammatic argument, and to raise the feelings of the House *ad invidiam*, hon. Members who had not uttered a word, but who cared for particular questions, should be picked out and held up—they and their favourite subjects—to ridicule by the Indian Secretary, with the implied argument—"Give me the *clôture* and I will put down these four bores." The Minister invoked the House to give him the *clôture* so that he might crush and suspend the four Members whom he thought unpopular on his side of the House. That was unfair and ungenerous, and, what was worse, it was very unwise, for it revealed his hand. Even more unwise was that threat of a resignation with which the noble Lord shotted his ridicule. The noble Lord ought to have seen he was recommending a proposal that we certainly do not love on this side of the House, and which, I believe, is very little loved on the other side. If he had shown judgment as well as vigour; if he had not given way to that "unruly member" of his; if he had not loosed rein to that steeplechase helter-skelter, he would not have taken the House into the confidence of the scorpions that are being prepared in the Government menagerie to scourge us with. With regard to the *clôture*, since that speech all the rose-coloured anticipations of the right hon. Member for Ripon are passed and gone. There is, as the noble Lord told us, a budget of promises upon which the present Government came into power after the last General Election still unredeemed, and these can not be carried out except by the *clôture;* so he brandished it before our eyes, that if we do not accept the Resolution in all its details we are to have the unfortunate calamity of a Ministerial resignation. What consistency is there in that? How can Government partizans say that this measure is raised above the range of Party politics, when they are told they must accept it under such a menace as that uttered by the noble Lord? He has said, in effect, that if they do not give him the power of crushing any Member who might fall under his displeasure, they must expect to see the resignation of the Treasury Bench. But, forewarned forearmed. We have been told that obstruction, delay, and all that sort of thing, have become so intolerable that something drastic must be done. The truth is, however, that the solid debates on successive stages of large Bills are not those which waste and extend a Session. They may seem tedious to the casual reader, for he finds his paper for four or five days crammed with columns of close printed-speeches, when he was looking out for the last murder at Wimbledon, or the newest swindling conspiracy at Birmingham. It is, as I shall show, the miscellaneous Business, and the intermediate stages, which are chiefly responsible for delay. Even for these lengthy debates, much blame lies at the door of the loose habit which Ministers have fallen into of speaking at any time in a debate, and of jumping up when they are least expected. If a little more attention was paid to the time-honoured etiquette of the two Leaders always closing the debates, it would be far more manageable. That was the true *clôture;* and I myself am for this old-fashioned *clôture* of the English Parliament—the *clôture* of a close understanding and friendly communication between the two Parties. No doubt, when the Leaders had sat down, we should, from time to time, see some irrepressible orator trespass on the course, like the dog on the Derby day; but the House, if true to its old traditions, could easily deal with that obstruction. I must now turn to the second of the external arguments of my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister against what he termed "artificial majorities," when he insisted that grave historical events had been shaped in this House by the narrowest majorities. This argument breaks down at the very point at which, to have any value, it ought to be particularly strong. Of such divisions two things can always be predicated. They are the ultimate result of a series of events which have worked up to the final stage, and they are reached at the moment when some conclusion has become inevitable. Also the result of any division is a result proportioned to the largeness or the narrowness of the majority. Both these conditions are distinctly reversed in the use of the *clôture.* It is intended to be like a night ambush in some Irish lane sprung upon the wayfarer when he least expects it. The *clôture*, moreover, is simply the question of "Divide," or "Not divide;" and, therefore, necessarily devoid of any variety and gradation of results, such as the variety and gradation attaching, as I have shown, to the results of a division on the subject-matter of a question, according to the relative proportions of the two sides. What is the case—to quote from my right hon. Friend's instances—when a Ministry goes out, from being beaten by a narrow majority, and then comes in again? The very narrow majority was strong enough to turn out the Government, but it was not strong enough to keep it out. When my right hon. Friend resigned for a few days after the division on the matter of University education in Ireland, there the narrow majority led to his temporary resignation, but it did not lead to the destruction of the Government. In the *clôture* there is no gradation and no difference; so the analogy breaks down at a point where it ought to be most strong and most reliable. My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister dealt with the matter with great zeal, and no doubt with the utmost sincerity, in his desire to remove it from the arena of Party politics. He went so far as to express his desire that the *clôture* might not be regarded as one of the triumphs of his own Government; and my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon was fairly captivated and carried away by the statements of the Prime Minister. I always like to hear my right hon. Friend the Member for Ripon, for he is a man who has held high Office, and yet remains ingenuous. But he need not have been so superfluously indignant with the hon. Member for Brighton; and if he had delayed one more night, and spoken after the Secretary of State for India, his indignation might have even to himself seemed groundless. The speech of the Secretary of State for India was pitched in a very different key from that of the Prime Minister or the right hon. Member for Ripon. The Prime Minister had brought out the heroine of the hour and conducted her to the stage lights tricked out in the allurements of an artificial beauty. The Secretary for India has shown her to us as she is on the conclusion of the performance, the rouge washed from her wrinkled cheeks, the Royal mantle exchanged for the well-used dressing-gown, the curls remanded to the wig-box. We have been pelted with statements of the length to which modern debates have ran—58 days, I think, for the Irish Land Act of last Session. There is a great deal of mystification about these figures. A particular subject may have lasted for so many days; but it is a subject made up of many debates, and for each of these debates, if the argument is worth anything, a separate *clôture* would be needed, while each *clôture* would assuredly produce debates at future stages which would otherwise never have been thought of. By cutting off six or eight speeches at any stage of a discussion we may bring the end of a debate nearer, but we shall not bring the Prorogation nearer. We shall simply turn into the wilderness disappointed orators, dumb and desperate. Then, considering that, as in the case of worms, zoophytes, and other humble types of animal life, obstruction propagates itself by section, these six or eight stifled speeches will merely be transmuted, and they will come up on Amendments in Committee. Each will, again, have its satellites—the one or two speeches which must be listened to on each Amendment in Committee before even the most ruthless application of the *clôture*. One Member of the present Government commenced his political life with the programme of the "three F's"—not the new Irish imitation, but the real old "three F's"—Free Church, Free Land, Free Education. G follows F, and it seems as if the President of the Board of Trade has added a fourth item to his programme — "Gagged Parliaments." Now, I turn to the words of the Resolution, and to the manner in which it proposes to deal with Mr. Speaker. On this branch of the subject we all feel how easy it is to speak our minds, from the impossibility of anyone confounding you, Sir, with that Speaker of the future whom the Resolution tends to set up. Our only apprehension, Sir, is lest you should be the last of that glorious line of Speakers of our old Free Parliament. The object of the *clôture* is to make us all feel that we are walking with the headsman behind us. I appeal to you, Sir, whether a House of Commons pervaded with this dread can be what the House of Commons once was? The Resolution proposes—

> "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, during any debate, that the evident sense of the House is"—

And so on. But how is the evident sense to be ascertained? When the Prime Minister proposed the Resolution he assured us it was not to be noise or the absence of noise that was to show what the sense of the House was. It must then be, I suppose, some interior sense—one of those strange, mysterious qualities, which Theologians and Scotch Philosophers assert exists in the human mind—that is to guide Mr. Speaker in his conclusion. But who has ever heard of the interior, supermaterial sense existing in the Speakership? I do not think any Speaker would ever confess to being guided in that way. He might rise from his Chair, and call on the House to vote the *clôture*, with the declaration—"*Divinare etenim magnus donavit Apollo.*" But a profane House would ask itself—"Who is the Speaker's Apollo?" And, with or without an Apollo, what will the Speaker have to declare? He will have to declare that the evident sense of the House is that the debate should be terminated; and if, on the consequent division, 301 vote for, and 300 against, the termination, the evident sense of the House will be the quotient of the subtraction sum—300 from 301. Clearly, the Speaker will have to act by some process of reasoning; and would it not be possible to presume that a future Speaker might say to himself—"I know the House is evenly balanced. The senior Member for Canterbury, I am sure, is for closing the debate, and the junior Member for Canterbury for going on. I will watch the two; and if the senior Member walks out, I shall get up and declare the evident sense to be for a division." So, then, the evident sense will resolve itself into the chance of which Member for Canterbury may sit out longest. Surely no Speaker would commit himself to such a hazard. It is impossible to suppose he would rely on his unassisted sagacity. Those who remember their "Gulliver" will recollect that the men in authority at Laputa entertained as prominent members of their official staff gentlemen called "Flappers," whose duties were to find their Chiefs in memory and in thoughts. No doubt, Mr. Speaker of Laputa had his "Flapper;" and our Speaker of the future must equally have his. I have thought of an Amendment, which would, I believe, make this Resolution run much more ship-shape, according to its Inventor's intentions; but I fear that if I propose it I shall be called an "Obstructionist;" and I live in terror of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India—for I am sure that he will rush out and collar me, and gibbet me. But it may help the Prime Minister, if I read what I suggest—

> "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, during any debate, upon information privately conveyed to him by one of the Secretaries to the Treasury, to be the evident sense of the House"—

And so forth. The mode of procedure shadowed forth in these words will surely come. You, Sir, would shut your ears to any such suggestion from a Secretary to the Treasury; but I cannot have that confidence in your Successors elected under the conditions created by this New Rule. Personally, they may wish to be thoroughly fair; but no man can be greater in action than the conditions of his Office allow him to be. The Speaker of the future will be the nominee of the man who makes the Ministry, so will also the Whip be; and, with this Resolution existing to shape the Speaker's relations both to House and to Minister, it is impossible not to assume that the Minister will select Speaker and Whip at the same time and in relation to each other, so as to work the *clôture* for the benefit of the Administration. I must conclude by repeating a question. The *clôture* may advance some divisions; but will it advance the Prorogation? I do not believe it, for its inevitable tendency is to multiply these wrangles, which go much further to protract the Session than any solid serious debate, however lengthy. It will —slowly, it may be, but surely—emasculate Parliament; it will destroy the high quality of the debates, and make the House the facile engine of administrative chicane. And even for the objects which it is intended to meet it will prove itself worse than useless, for it will produce phases of Obstruction more extravagant than any which have yet taken root among us. We have heard of the *clôture* in America; but we have also heard there of "filibustering." What is meant by "filibustering?" Why, Obstruction brought up to its most scientific form. I shall give to the Motion my most decided opposition; for I believe that it will lower the character of Parliament, vulgarize the tone of our debates, and imperil our independence, without conducing one whit to the better performance of the duties of the House.

Mr. WALTER said, he felt that, after the quaint and humorous speech of the right hon. Gentleman opposite (Mr. Beresford Hope), he rose to address the House at some disadvantage. He had neither the ability nor the inclination at that moment to take the amusing and comical view of the matter which his right hon. Friend had taken. He intended to treat the question gravely; but he admitted that, perhaps, it was not a disadvantage in a debate such as the present to have the grave as well as the humorous aspect of the subject presented to the House. He rose to address the House because he thought that the issue involved in the debate, although a very narrow one, when closely examined was of a supremely important character, involving as it did the rights and privileges of Members as they had hitherto been understood. The question, as it presented itself to his mind, was this—whether, admitting the principle of the *clôture* in some form to be necessary, the power of closing a debate ought to be lodged in the hands of the House, viewed as a collective Assembly, or to be intrusted, as he contended it was capable of being intrusted according to the terms of the Resolution, to the dominant majority of a Party? He hoped hon. Members would not bring a charge of egotism against him if for a moment he referred to his past career. He had sat in the House, with a short interval, since the year 1847. There were just 12 Members left of those who entered the House when he did, or who were in it before that time — just a sufficient number to constitute a common jury; and he would venture to say that he felt confident that if he were tried by that jury on any general charge of obstructiveness, he would be honourably acquitted. He did not scruple, however, to say that, should he find himself at any future time the victim of the *clôture* under circumstances which he believed to be perfectly possible if the present Resolution were carried, he would not be surprised to find himself turning Obstructive at the fag-end of his Parliamentary life. He had in great measure been led to make that remark in consequence of the observations of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India in the very remarkable speech delivered the other night. The noble Marquess then made a statement which, he said, would startle new Members of that House. The noble Marquess was more remarkable for uttering very sensible opinions than for uttering startling ones; but on the occasion to which he had referred the noble Lord gave utterance to a doctrine to which he attached extreme weight, because he said it involved a principle the importance of which it was impossible to exaggerate—

namely, not only that the time of the House was the property of the House, and not of individual Members—a principle in which he (Mr. Walter) entirely concurred—but that no Member of the House had any personal right to speak in that House. That seemed to him to be a doctrine involving a question which was, perhaps, better fitted for discussion in a Chamber of philosophers than in one composed of practical men—namely, "What natural rights belonged to men in a state of social life?" He did not propose to enter minutely into that question; but the noble Marquess having challenged any difference of opinion on the subject, he felt disposed to ask in what sense he contended that a private Member who was sent to Parliament because he was supposed to be capable of taking part in their deliberations, by speech as well as by vote, had no personal right to open his mouth? No doubt, if the noble Marquess merely contended that no one could put forward his own personal or natural rights in opposition to those which every society and body of men prescribed for their own convenience and the general welfare, he was uttering a truism. If, however, the noble Marquess contended that it was only by the favour of the House that any Member had a right to speak, he challenged his doctrine. The true position was that a Member who entered the House had a natural right of speech, limited only by such Rules as the House had laid down, not arbitrarily or capriciously, but equitably and justly. If that was what the noble Marquess meant, well and good; but if he went beyond that, he (Mr. Walter) could not agree with him. Now, there was one thing connected with the Resolution under the consideration of hon. Members which he could not help referring to—namely, the singular place which the Motion occupied in the list of the Resolutions which had been presented to the House for consideration. Why it should have been placed first instead of last, as it ought to have been if the logical sequence of things had been adhered to, he failed to understand. It was a Resolution for putting a stop to discussion, for bringing about the division which would be the termination of a particular stage of a measure already introduced; and therefore he should have thought that the other Resolutions—all of which were more or less connected with the removal of obstructions in the way of the introduction of measures—ought to have been disposed of first. The Poet Laureate, whose muse he could not help thinking must have been inspired by the achievements of the right hon. Gentleman at the head of the Government, had lately sung as follows:—

> "May Freedom's oak for ever live,
> With larger life from day to day;
> That man's the true Conservative
> Who lops the mouldered branch away."

Why, he asked, had not the Prime Minister addressed himself to the task of lopping away those mouldering branches which everybody knew to be the real cause of the difficulty with which the House had now to deal, instead of adopting, in his woodman's character, the dangerous course of laying the axe to the root of the tree? Now, he should like very briefly indeed to state his own particular misgivings, and where he thought the real solution was to be found in dealing with this very difficult subject. He thought there had been some confusion of terms in the language employed. His right hon. Friend (Mr. Beresford Hope) had mentioned one—namely, the difficulty of determining what was the "evident sense" of the House. He thought there was another difficulty in determining in what sense the word "House" itself was used, because "House" might mean, and did mean, two different things. It might mean the collective assembly of English Gentlemen met together and discussing matters according to Rules contrived for mutual convenience; or it might mean the House regarded as two hostile camps drawn up in battle array, and ready to dispute a question at the sword's point. And let him make this remark—it had been forced upon him by the observation of many years. If he had to regard the House in a sense of a large assembly of English Gentlemen, he knew that in the honour and the spirit of fair play of the House he could have perfect confidence. If, however, he regarded the House as two Parties bent upon their own objects, and with a view to dislodging each other from those opposite Benches, the case was totally different. No man who understood human nature could place confidence in the fairness of the House regarded in that light. Those who thought with him on this subject were often asked why, when they admitted the right of a bare majority to pass such measures as the Habeas Corpus Act, which was carried by a majority of 1, or the Reform Bill; to turn out Governments, and perform other achievements of that kind; to decide questions of peace and war, finance and taxation—why the same principle should not be applied to the *clôture?* He would answer that question. He thought he could give a satisfactory answer. The answer was this. In those great Party fights to which they were accustomed, when the two sides were drawn up in battle array—when the object was victory—when the prize was Office—when some important political question was at stake—the element of fair play did not enter at all. It could not enter. It had no business there. It was said that in war and love everything was fair. So it was in political fights in that House. There was no idea of fair play. The idea would be an absurdity; men fought for victory. But when they came to deal with questions affecting the personal convenience, the rights and interests, not of one Party, but of the whole House collectively, the case was totally different. They must be guided by principles of equity; they must be guided by justice; they must not attempt to shut men's mouths, to choke them off from the right to join in debates. The whole thing depended upon this—were they to recognize the element of fair play in dealing with this subject? The Prime Minister had recognized it indirectly when he used such language as this—"Can you conceive that Mr. Speaker or any Party in this House would be so rash and unreasonable as not to give fair play to people who wished to speak?" That language was not held with regard to divisions on questions of reform, of confidence in Ministers, on questions of peace or war, because, as he had said, the question of fair play did not enter into the subject. Therefore, he contended that it was absolutely necessary for the protection of the rights of Members of the House—for the protection of freedom of debate—that the question of fair play should be recognized, not only indirectly in the speeches of Ministers, but either expressly by the use of such language as was intended to carry it out, or by the adoption of such proportional majorities as would put the matter beyond all doubt. What he was afraid of in this matter was this. The tendency of majorities on the question of the *clôture* would be to grow smaller by degrees and beautifully less. Take the case of a House of 500 Members when the question of the *clôture* was raised. They might at first have a majority of 100. He dared say the Speaker of the day would be very cautious not to try it until he could reckon on a majority of 100. The next majority might be 90, then 80, 60, 50, and so on. Where were they to stop? Where were they to draw the line in determining what was "the evident sense of the House?" There was an old Latin proverb which warned people to beware of giving up rights and privileges—"*Cave de resignationibus.*" And they all remembered how in the case of the foolish old King, who when he gave away his dominion to his daughters, reserved for himself a retinue of 100 knights, he was addressed by one of them—Goneril—who said—

> "What need you five-and-twenty, ten, or five,
> To follow in a house where twice so many
> Have a command to tend you?"

Well, that was the sort of language which the Speaker might use. Suppose the case came to a tie. Suppose there was a tie in a House of 500—on which side was Mr. Speaker to give the casting vote? Might he not say, in the words of the daughter of King Lear, "What need one?" The point upon which he was most anxious was the one to which his right hon. Friend referred—namely, the importance of maintaining the absolute freedom of discussion in that House in great debates. Personally, he cared very little about this subject when the question had passed the second reading. Everybody who knew that House knew that the second reading was the great *pièce de résistance* in the Parliamentary banquet. The second reading ought to be discussed slowly, deliberately, and with grave consideration. The debate ought to be discussed at leisure, not bolted hastily like a supper at York by passengers by the limited mail. If, as he had heard some people say, the *clôture* was to be applied at the end of a three or four nights' debate, what would be the feeling of Members who considered that they had a perfect right to speak, but had not been allowed to do so? They need not be well-known Obstructives. How would they feel if they were precluded from taking a fair share in the debate because it pleased the Ministry of the day to carry their measure? There was nothing in that Resolution to prevent this from happening. That was what he complained of. It was all very well to say that was not the intention. They must judge of measures not by the intentions of their Movers, but by their words. They must not place too much reliance on good intentions. He recollected a passage in one of Mr. Grattan's speeches on the Irish Union in 1799, in which he used these words—

> "When the liberty and security of one country depend upon the honour of another, the one may have much honour, but the other will have no liberty."

He would not trust the liberty of that House to the honour of any dominant section in it. He would have made an appeal to the Prime Minister had he been present; but, in his absence, he would make the appeal to those of his Colleagues whom he had the pleasure to see near him. Why could not the Government see its way to some compromise? Gentlemen on both sides would give the Prime Minister all the help they could to remove the obstructions under which they had so long suffered. He would go further than his right hon. Friend the Leader of the Opposition, and say he should be prepared to accept all the subsequent Resolutions without discussion—and they were by far the most important for the general Business of the House—if he could see his way to a fair and reasonable compromise being arrived at on the 1st Rule—a compromise something like that put down on the Paper by the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock). He would recommend *clôture* by a majority of two-thirds, with this proviso, that the quorum of the House should consist of 60 instead of 40 whenever it was applied. How did it come to pass that in referring to the various States on the Continent in which the *clôture* was in force the case of Switzerland was wholly omitted? Now, it happened that in Switzerland a majority of two-thirds prevailed. Switzerland was a small country; but, as was well known, it was the cradle of liberty. This was the account given by Mr. Carew—

> "The *clôture* exists, and is frequently put into practice"

—it was no sham in Switzerland—

> "in the Conseil National, especially in the course of the more important debates. The text of Article 49 (modified)—which relates to the *clôture*—of the Règlement for the Conseil National is as follows:—'The Assembly can decide the *clôture* of debates if the two-thirds of the Members present demand it. However, the *clôture* cannot be pronounced so long as a Member of the Assembly who has not yet spoken desires to formulate a proposal and moves it.' After the *clôture* of a debate has been pronounced by the President of the Chamber, no one has the right to ask permission to speak."

The working of the *clôture* in both Chambers was described as highly satisfactory. But he need not go as far as Switzerland. Authority was to be found in their own country testifying to the reasonableness and justice of the two-thirds majority system. The hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) had left the House. Had he been present he would have liked to call him as a witness. The hon. Member advocated Local Option. His *clôture*, indeed, was to be applied to public-houses. It might, perhaps, be an indignity to call that House a public House, although it certainly was not a private one. The hon. Member for Carlisle proposed to apply the *clôture* to public-houses; but before that could be done a majority of two-thirds of the parish must be obtained. If, however, the Prime Minister did not approve the principle of a two-thirds majority, let him adopt any other plan that would be acceptable to reasonable and moderate men on the other side of the House—and there were many of them—whose personal rights and convenience were just as much involved in this question as their own. But if the Prime Minister would not do this, he would appeal to the hon. Member for Burnley (Mr. Rylands), and those who thought with him, to stand by their opinions, and to agree with him that the Resolution as it stood was a most objectionable one. For himself, unless the Prime Minister accepted some such modification, he would not be deterred by any Parliamentary terror whatever from doing justice to his own convictions and voting against the Resolution.

Mr. J. HOLLOND said, that in those quarters with which he was acquainted the majority which supported Liberal principles in 1880 was as staunch to those principles as ever it was, and the charge of manufacturing public opinion on this subject was, therefore, unfounded as far as his knowledge went. He found it difficult to understand what hon. Gentlemen opposite would recommend as the mode of dealing with the present condition of affairs. They had two favourite methods—the one was to deal with the evil of Obstruction by silencing individual Members, and the other the adoption of the *clôture* by a two-thirds or three-fourths majority, In his opinion, either of these methods, if adopted, would be open to still graver objections than the proposal of the Government. The difficulty of solving the problem lay in this, that they could not define where Obstruction began and simply excessive talking ended. If they attempted to deal with Obstruction as an individual offence, the occupant of the Chair would come into very unpleasant contact with certain individual Members of the House, and a feeling might arise that his impartiality was no longer what it should be. Then, as to the *clôture* by a two-thirds or three-fourths majority. He was surprised the other night to hear the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes), speaking of the effect the *clôture* would have on the Irish Party, ask, would it not be a grave objection that it should be said that Irish Members were sent back to their constituents with their mouths closed? But if there was any system more objectionable on that ground than another, it was that the Irish Members should be silenced by a special *clôture* designed to meet their case. One argument in favour of a two-thirds or three-fourths majority went on the supposition that it represented the tacit understanding about closing the debates which was assumed to exist between different sides of the House. But when they passed from an unwritten to a written law, then an Opposition might be expected to use its rights to the utmost; or else Government would be tempted to make bargains with the Opposition in order to insure the proper closing of a debate. In that case they weakened the authority of the Government, which ought to do what it thought right on its responsibility to the public; and they weakened the responsibility of the Opposition, because it would make bargains to carry out measures of which it did not approve. They had heard in the course of the debate how the *clôture* was abused in France under the late Emperor Napoleon. But the *clôture* then was simply a part of the despotic machinery of the Empire, and as soon as Parliamentary Government became a reality in France, there was no complaint as to the manner in which the *clôture* worked. He heard the debate in the French Chambers on Tunis in November, and though the *clôture* was put to the vote twice, it was rejected, and the debate came to a natural conclusion. As far as France was concerned, the *clôture* was scarcely ever abused, and no serious attempt to alter it was made by the Party in the minority. The extent of the Government proposition was that due deliberation should be followed by a conclusion, and there was nothing that was very monstrous in such a proposition as that. He could not see how this proposal could affect the debates beyond rendering the dispatch of Business more certain and effectual. The real guarantee against any abuse of the use of the *clôture* would be found in the love of fair play and of free discussion which was inherent on both sides of the House. Hon. Members opposite declaimed against any interference with the ancient Forms of that House; but the ancient spirit that had actuated it in former times could not be preserved by merely adhering to the ancient Forms. In his opinion, free Parliamentary discussion would gain rather than lose by the adoption of the proposal, because the House of Commons could only act in sympathy with the feelings and the wishes of the country. He thought, therefore, that they could not do better than to accept the Government proposal as offering the best solution of the great difficulty they were endeavouring to meet.

Mr. DALRYMPLE said, he thought that it was evident that the hon. Member who had just sat down admired the principle of the *clôture* for its own sake. The illustration which the hon. Member had drawn from the experience of the French Chamber was not likely to recommend the adoption of the *clôture* to the Speaker, because if the same circumstances arose here there would be this unfortunate result—that, having endeavoured to recognize the evident sense of the House in a similar case to that referred to by the hon. Member, the House would not endorse the decision. It had been sought to justify the Government proposal on two grounds—first, on that of the great increase of Business; and, second, on that of the prevalence of Obstruction. No one denied the existence of the great increase of Business in the House, and the presence of prevalent Obstruction; but it was of the greatest importance that these two factors should not become inextricably confused, so that, while seeking to free themselves from the evils which they suffered under, they should adopt the wrong remedy. There was not one word in the speech, either of the Prime Minister or of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India, which in any degree led up to the conclusion that the *clôture* was the right remedy. There was no natural affinity between congestion of Business and Obstruction. True, they came very near to one another, in one respect, for, of course, when there was great congestion of Business, Obstruction found most easily its opportunity, and had the most fatal effects. But the House was not responsible for the congestion of Business. The House, he might almost say, was not responsible for Obstruction, but only a small section of it; and could it be maintained with any degree of justice that the remedy proposed by Her Majesty's Government—a remedy of a penal character directed against Obstruction, which was only the fault of a small section—ought to affect the whole House? If, putting out of consideration the proposal now made by the Government, they were looking only at the question of the congestion of Business, would it not appear that a reasonable remedy for congestion would be found in simple and more effective weapons than that of the *clôture*? Would it not be desirable that, to take the case of an ordinary evening, before the Business of the House was reached, discussion should not arise upon questions to Ministers, and that when the Business of the evening was reached, preliminary matters of a foreign character should not be introduced, and that, when the House had once embarked in the discussion of a particular measure, the opportunities for discussing it should be abridged? If Her Majesty's Government had dealt with these points, he asked whether there might not already in the present Session have been a large amount of time saved? No one would allege that there had been Obstruction in the old sense during the present Session; but the Business had often been interrupted by discussions raised out of questions to Ministers, and delayed by questions of a foreign character introduced on going into Committee of Supply. But whose fault was it that the House was not protected against those obvious evils? It was the fault of the Government, who had not at the outset proposed a renewal of the Monday Rule, nor taken steps to deliver them from the most detestable delays of Business which often took place at Question time. As regarded Obstruction, what would seem to be the natural method of dealing with it would be to punish the offender, and not the many. There never had been an adequate punishment for Obstructives, and certainly the innocent many ought not to suffer for their offences. The reason why simple and more effective remedies had not been tried was that they were not after the heart of the present Government. This was no ordinary Government. It was nowhere if it was not acting on heroic and histrionic lines. It was a Government which greatly delighted in producing effects; but he went further, and said that the Government was not only turning aside from simple and effective remedies, and recommending a remedy which was extreme and offensive to many, but he contended that the remedy proposed to meet the twofold dilemma in which the House was placed—namely, congestion and Obstruction—was especially inexpedient and unjustifiable. He would put it to fair-minded men—and the House was full of fair-minded men—whether, if Obstruction was the only thing which the Government desired to put down, the Government could not count upon the help of the Opposition? He asked hon. Gentlemen to remember the experience of last Session. They would recollect that when a case for Urgency was made out, the Government was supported by the Opposition. He felt sure that if Obstruction were the only difficulty, the *clôture* would not be needed. But, unfortunately, that was not the whole object of the Government. They intended not only to put down Obstruction, but in many cases to put down opposition. The speech of the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India bore out that statement. He (the Marquess of Hartington) admitted that the measures which the Government proposed to deal with would be greatly aided by the *clôture.* The noble Lord went further, for he said that it would not only advance the measures of the Government, but also silence private Members. If there were unnecessary prolixity or pertinacity, the silencing of those Members might be justifiable; but he begged leave to remind the House that Members such as the noble Lord singled out for remark brought forward subjects that were not agreeable to the Government, and if that powerful weapon which the Government asked for were placed in their hands, there could be no doubt as to the purpose for which it would be employed. The noble Lord referred to the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton), and he thought he was particularly unfortunate in that allusion. The hon. and learned Member for Bridport never detained the House for any length of time; and, moreover, when that hon. and learned Member desired to address the House on the subject of Patent Medicines, he placed himself entirely in the hands of the Leader of the Opposition, and having asked that right hon. Gentleman to prescribe for him, immediately swallowed the prescription. Such a course as that was as far as possible removed from Obstruction, and he should have thought that it would have rendered the hon. and learned Member safe from the reflections of the noble Lord. The peculiarity of the present Government was that two of its Members never made the same statement about the same thing. It would be remembered that the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister said that the occasions on which the *clôture* would be used were rare. But the Secretary of State for India evidently contemplated a much more frequent use of that weapon. There was one line of argument which had been used in order to rally the supporters of the Government. It had been said to them that when they were before the country they promised that certain measures should be passed through Parliament, and that as these could not be passed without the *clôture*, therefore they must vote for the *clôture.* But there was also another line of argument used with hon. Members opposite. The supporters of the Government had been told that the Government had nailed its colours to the mast, and that it would be placed in difficulties if the *clôture* were not adopted. A good deal had been said about the caucus. For his own part, he did not wish to say anything that would hurt the feelings of hon. Gentlemen opposite; but what was the meaning of the perpetual interpretation of Motions as questions of confidence? The Government seemed to say—"If you really love me, seat the Member for Northampton; if you really love me, tell the House of Lords—though the telling can do no good—that we will not have the Land Act meddled with; and, again, if you really love me, give me the *clôture.*" He thought the House disliked the present proposal of the Government as a whole, and that many of of the other Rules would have been readily accepted, which would have gone far to meet the evils from which they suffered. He would venture to cite to the House some criticisms passed by the late Lord Beaconsfield (at that time Mr. Disraeli) on the policy of a former Liberal Government. Those criticisms were directed to the foreign policy of the Government, but, *mutatis mutandis*, they were equally applicable now. Speaking in 1864, Mr. Disraeli said it was for the Government to frame a policy which would commend itself to the House. If it was a wise policy, the House would unanimously support them; but the House ought to assure itself of its wisdom. If in the difficulties which had arisen the policy were a necessary and just one, the House ought to consider whether those difficulties might not have been avoided by more skilful management, and whether the Government had shown a capacity adequate to the occasion; whether it had displayed that prudence and dexterity, that quickness of perception, that knowledge of human nature, the kind of science most necessary to those who would successfully lead the Parliament of the country, which might be reasonably expected of them. Those words of the late Earl of Beaconsfield were now particularly applicable to the Government, which was bringing forward that particular form of *clôture.* The House was told there was no fear of that power being abused. But he could not be absolutely sure of that; he had to look to the antecedents of the men who proposed it. He could not forget the allusions made to other Assemblies when it was said a Bill might be carried through in a single Sitting—a process which would enable a Government to snap its fingers at the Opposition. Still less could he forget the allusion made shortly before Parliament met to the powers which Government would be obliged to obtain and which it was desirable they should obtain as they were approaching subjects which might affect the privileged classes, whatever they might be. Language of that kind made men look carefully to the proposals of the Government before accepting them. He referred to the noble Lord the Secretary for India, who held high doctrine on the time of the House. But was not the time of the House the property of the House itself? The noble Lord considered that the House was responsible for the use it made of its time; but he would carry that doctrine one step further. Not only the House, but different sections of the House; not only the Government, but the Opposition, were similarly responsible. If, therefore, the Government had taken the Opposition along with them in their proposals to the House, instead of making them an article of a falling or rising Ministry, they would have been rightly able to claim the support of the Opposition in regard to this and the following proposals; but how ludicrous in view of these general theories about the time and responsibility of the House was the proposal that the *clôture* should pass by a bare majority. He believed that a careful and guarded *clôture*—say, of a two-thirds majority—would not have been unacceptable, if it was necessary to have a *clôture* at all. But he should have been disposed to say, "Try your other Rules first, and if they do not succeed, try the *clôture*, and then you may rely on the Opposition." The *clôture* by a two-thirds majority would amply meet the case. The noble Lord had referred to public opinion. But the Opposition was as responsible to public opinion as the Government itself. The effect of the Rule, if passed, would be to produce a general irritation in the House. He was afraid that the "evident sense of the House" might too often be the evident uproar—the evident chaos—and the House would be turned into a bear garden. But, more than that; he was afraid that the name and credit of the House, which were as dear to the humblest private Member as to the Government itself, or even to the occupant of the Chair, would not be vindicated or enhanced by the proposal of the Government in its present form.

MR. GEORGE RUSSELL said, he was sorry that his hon. and learned Friend the Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott) was not in the House, as he felt bound to make some personal reference to him. His hon. and learned Friend's opinions seemed to him to be of extreme antiquity—his political character would have suited better with the year 1688 than with 1882. It was only by this antiquity of political view that he could account for the vigour of his hon. and learned Friend's attack upon the President of the Board of Trade. His right hon. Friend was perfectly able to take care of himself, and he was not going to defend him. But the frequent attacks which were made on the right hon. Gentleman could only be accounted for by personal jealousy. It was natural that when the right hon. Gentleman had attained so high a position after a comparatively brief Parliamentary career, men of greater age and experience, but less ability, should feel a pang of envy. He did not for a moment impute such motives to his hon. and learned Friend. Indeed, he could not but condole with him for having at a critical moment felt himself constrained to desert his Party. His hon. and learned Friend had extended to the Leader of his Party a genial tolerance, which he denied to the President of the Board of Trade. His hon. and learned Friend had declaimed against the tyranny of the Caucus. But why had he said nothing of the Conservative Caucus, which had its abode in one of the palaces of Pall Mall, and about whose doings his hon. Friend the Member for Southwark (Mr. Thorold Rogers) had recently made some entertaining disclosures? No doubt, the Caucus had its ramifications spread all over the country; but was it incredible that there should be such a thing as spontaneous Liberal organization? It was said that circulars from the Party Caucuses had been sent through the Liberal camp like the fiery cross. For himself, he would say he had never been influenced by them, and had always consigned them to the waste-paper basket. The action of the Liberal Party had, in fact, been wholly unprompted. They had either not received these circulars, or, if they had received them, they had been disregarded. It was said it was necessary to conciliate the goodwill of the Caucuses. All he could say was that the electors of Aylesbury placed unqualified confidence in their junior Representative. He condoled with the hon. and learned Member for Brighton for the acquaintance he was about to make, not with the Birmingham organization, but with the Brighton organization, whose feelings had been quickened into indignation at their Representative's—he would not say treacherous — but untimely desertion. He must find himself now condemned to act with the hon. Member for Sunderland (Mr. Storey) and the hon. Member for Newcastle (Mr. Joseph Cowen), who lived in the torrid zone of politics. Let him distinctly understand that the great bulk of the Liberal Party was united in support of this measure. He was not going to blink disagreeable facts, and he could not but be aware that the unanimity of the Liberal Party was not so absolute as it had been on previous occasions. But those who were loyal were not actuated by a constrained loyalty, though he would admit that the loyalty of many of the Party was subjected to a considerable strain a year ago, when repressive measures were introduced for the government of Ireland. The fact that they, nevertheless, supported the measure showed their faith in their recognized Leaders. Then their loyalty had suffered another strain in respect of the Bradlaugh controversy. But in the present instance their loyalty was hearty and unforced. They were loyal, in the first place, to the principle of the measure. The hon. Member for Mid Lincolnshire (Mr. Stanhope) had said that if the majority were to have the right to terminate a debate, why should not it have power to prohibit debate altogether? That was exactly what the House was in the habit of doing when it refused leave to bring in a Bill, which showed that Parliament had the right to refuse to allow debate at all in some instances. Then, in the second place, they were loyal to the details of the measure. He should have no objection whatever to the adoption of the fancy proportion of 3 to 1, or, if that were insufficient, of any combination that would be effectual in arresting the decay of Parliamentary discipline. Again, they were not only loyal to this measure, they were not only tolerant of this Rule, but it was exactly what they wanted. Some of them had not only a personal, but an hereditary interest in the House of Commons. To many of them the acquisition of a seat in that House had been a subject of anxious thought and high ambition—but, having obtained seats in it, they found themselves condemned to a silence as severe as any that ever weighed on a Trappist monk, because of the extraordinary length of the useless and often insolent discourses to which the House was so frequently treated. They might bear this enforced silence with some degree of willingness if it were necessary for the passing of great measures in the public interest; but they were not disposed to submit to it in order that hon. Members might "heckle" the Prime Minister, or that the hon. Member for Portsmouth (Sir H. Drummond Wolff) might spread his subtle but ineffectual snares for the feet of the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, or that Irish Members might denounce the Chief Secretary for Ireland in language which, as Mr. Goldwin Smith had said, would be exaggerated if applied to Nero. It was singular to hear the right hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) talking of the turpitude of partizanship. Why, they were all partizans. There were measures of private interest to many hon. Members upon which they were absolutely debarred from speaking at all. For that reason it was that they felt there was a genuine urgent necessity for some such measure as that which had been proposed by Her Majesty's Ministers—a measure which would enable hon. Members to take an intelligent and orderly part in debate. They would welcome a release from the present condition of bondage, and not less welcome would be the opportunity of supporting by their voices, and not merely by their votes, those Ministers who were entitled to their gratitude for proceeding on their course in spite of the embarrassment caused by the defection of half-hearted friends and of the hostility of avowed but not very chivalrous foes, and who would yet win a victorious battle on behalf of the order and freedom of Parliamentary debate.

MR. STUART-WORTLEY said, that while he apologized for occupying the time of the House at an early part of his Parliamentary career, he would not be doing right to those whom he represented were he to come forward in any attitude of undue humility to plead the cause of those who found themselves bound to oppose the Government. He represented large bodies of working men, who believed that the proposal before the House was not justified by existing circumstances. If it were really the fact that there was such a congestion of Public Business as could not be remedied in any other way, that would be a different matter. But there was no evidence of the need of the measure, and even if there were, it ought not to be adopted unless the House had unsuccessfully tried every other course. This proposal came almost isolated at a time considerably removed from any previous occasion when any attempt was made to reform the Procedure of the House, and it stood at the head of a long list of proposals. This fact made them ask whether or not, when the present proposal was disposed of the Government would ever ask the House to consider the others? He would not be in Order in discussing the others; but he would have the concurrence of many hon. Members when he said he entertained the belief that much of the difficulty of the present situation was due to such things as the waste of time during Question time, and by Motions of Adjournment on irrelevant subjects. Further, the occasions on which the House had been kept sitting for 24 hours and upwards had been entirely due to the right which existed of making successive Motions for Adjournment, each of them reviving the right of speech in every Member who chose to follow up that dilatory course of proceeding. By dealing effectually with that practice, much might be done towards facilitating the due progress of Business. There were Members on his (the Opposition) side of the House who would be ready to accept some reasonable modification of the 1st New Rule proposed by the Government. What they objected to was, not that a debate should be closed by a general concurrence of Parties in the House, but that it should be closed by what could be best described as a Party vote. There was one occasion for which the power of peremptorily closing a debate by a Party majority made no provision, and that was when the minority in the House—as sometimes happened—were in harmony with the majority in the country. They had heard something of spontaneous expression of local opinion; but spontaneous local opinion in favour of this proposal was, "conspicuous by its absence." Almost exactly 100 years ago a great Minister governed the country with a minority in the House of Commons, and rapidly succeeding elections so far justified him that he was placed in a large majority. It might, however, have happened that he had not the power to appeal to the country, and it must have put an end to his power had it been possible then for the majority of the day to silence him. They were told that the proposal to closing a debate by a bare majority should be accepted, because it was never to be put in force. That was surely a bad reason for adopting it. If it never was to be enforced except on behalf of a much larger majority, why should not that be expressed in the Rule? He would now allude to the very curious argument that had been used by the hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton (Mr. H. H. Fowler). The argument of the hon. Gentleman was to the effect that a bare majority of this House would be less inclined to be tyrannical than a majority of two-thirds or three-quarters. Well, they were going to give to majorities of all kinds that power of being tyrannical. If a bare majority could close a debate, they put it in the power of a majority of any number to be as tyrannical as they pleased. Another great objection to the Rule, as now proposed—and one that could not be dwelt on too strongly—was that it made the Speaker the sole arbiter as to whether it should be put in force. If it were possible that the day—which he hoped was far distant—when it would become necessary to appoint a successor to the present Speaker, could be indefinitely postponed, it might not be requisite to consider whether it was well that the occupant of the Chair should have to put the Rule in operation. But they must contemplate the next and subsequent occasions upon which, under the proposed Rule, a new Speaker would have to be elected. Should that Rule pass, the Speaker would be chosen under circumstances, and from considerations and motives altogether different from those which had hitherto governed the choice for that Office. The practice of foreign countries had been quoted in that discussion. There was one country where the power of closing a debate by a bare majority existed in unabated rigour—namely, Denmark. Among the various countries which were supposed to possess that power, very few possessed it to the full extent proposed by Her Majesty's Government; but in Denmark, which was one of those few, it was the custom of the House of Assembly absolutely to elect its Speaker once every four weeks. The House would hardly desire to arrive at a state of things analogous to that. No one would deny that to close a debate by a bare majority was an evil which could only be justified by the fact that a greater evil would be avoided by its adoption. They did not, however, hear that any other country in Europe had anything approaching to such a congestion of legislative Business as was alleged as the ground for the present proposal. Every one of the countries which had adopted it, therefore, stood convicted of adopting it before the period had arrived which Her Majesty's Government considered would alone justify a resort to it. In Hungary there was no such power. In Austria it was rendered much less operative than if it existed as now proposed here by the fact that a certain number of speeches were allowed on the question of closing. In France and Belgium the case was similar. In the Chamber of Deputies in Holland no debate was allowed. In Portugal there was no *clôture* at all. In Spain the state of things was curious. The power existed, but in a very peculiarly modified form; it was an engine in the hands of the Government, and was entirely employed to stop the mouths of private Members, and it had for its effect, not the immediate determination of the question at issue, but only its postponement. In Sweden and Norway there was nothing of the kind; and, therefore, it was only in Germany, Holland, and Italy that anything fully resembling the present proposal existed. He doubted whether those countries had got beyond the most benighted doctrines as to Government interference in elections. In Switzerland, he should not omit to state, a majority of two-thirds was required to close a debate. So much, then, for foreign countries; and the last consideration he would urge upon the House was this—if they were going to adopt this proposal, let them first consider whether it was likely to be permanent. What was the reason for the much-admired stability of the results of British legislation? Was it not owing to the fact that the legislation of the Imperial Parliament was due, in a large measure, to compromise, and to the circumstance that the majority were bound to reckon, to a certain extent, with the opinion of their opponents? By adopting a Rule of this kind they imperilled that invaluable element of stability and compromise. Evidence, too, was not wanting that there would be a lack of permanence in results if this doctrine was adopted. To prove that he need only allude to the manifestations they had had in the speeches of the Prime Minister himself. Two years ago it was proposed to do no more than deal with urgent cases, in which the authority of the Chair had been disregarded and the Rules of the House abused by wilfully obstructing Business. That reform was attempted in an expiring Parliament, yet the right hon. Gentleman then deliberately proposed to the House that the Rule decided upon should not be made a Standing Order, but should cease with the close of the Session. Further, the right hon. Gentleman made an important reservation in his speech in introducing this measure. He said, in the course of that speech, debates might arise on subjects involving great questions of principle which would have to be brought into view from a distance, and to which they had not been accustomed. Seeing that the Prime Minister in 1880 suggested to the House that it should hesitate about making permanent so small a thing as the Standing Order relating to Members who obstructed the Business of the House, and that, in the present year, he was careful to make a reservation of opinion as to possible future occasions when the reiterated expression of arguments might not be Obstruction, he could not help but think that on some, possibly, not distant occasion, when the Party led by the righ hon. Gentleman was in a minority, his opinions on this matter might undergo very considerable qualification. There were those who now sat on the Opposition side of the House who had a sincere, though unostentatious, desire for the progress of Public Business, yet they hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not, while making to the world an unduly humiliating confession that the House of Commons was unable to conduct the Business of the country, present also the spectacle of an unedifying infirmity of purpose.

MR. HUSSEY VIVIAN said, he thought that the effect of the proposed Rule had been greatly exaggerated. If the *clôture* became the Rule of the House, it would have no operation such as hon. Members opposite, and some on his side, appeared to fear. Whatever it might do, it would not stop fair and reasonable debate. That was not its result even in America and other countries where it was rigidly enforced, and where it existed without any of the safeguards now proposed. Nor would any Speaker, however partial, do what the hon. Member for Leicester (Mr. P. A. Taylor) apprehended, and interfere to prevent a private Member from bringing forward a Motion. If that was the chief fear of the hon. Member, he might ask whether, as things were, the private Members had reason to be satisfied with the facilities afforded them by the practice of the House? At the beginning of a Session they had a fair number of opportunities; but the pressure of Business soon obliged the Government to take nearly the whole time of the House, and thus to stop private Member's Motions in the most effectual manner. In the present Session, if it might be regarded as typical, he supposed that Morning Sittings would begin in a few weeks, and that as the year advanced every day would have to be appropriated by the Government; that being so, private Members had much more to gain than to lose by the adoption of the New Rules. But, it was argued, the *clôture* would crush minorities. He did not think it would do so, and was confident that his right hon. Friend the late Home Secretary entertained fears that were by no means warranted. It seemed to be thought by him that the Prime Minister was to nod to the Speaker, and that the latter would then and there stop the debate; but there was nothing in the Rule to warrant that supposition. To stifle the discussion of grievances by the application of the *clôture*, three very unlikely conditions would have to be present at the same time—first, a tyrannical Minister; secondly, a partizan Speaker; and lastly, a tyrannical majority. Was there any probability that such things could coexist? A Minister who attempted to use the *clôture* tyrannically in order to force his measures unfairly through the House would have but a short tenure of power; and from the moment that a Speaker departed from that impartiality which the Speakers of the House of Commons had hitherto invariably displayed, and became a partizan, his power and authority in that House would cease. There was an equal improbability of the existence of a tyrannical majority. If any attempt were made by a despotic Minister to force his measures through the House before they had been fully discussed, the moderate men of his Party would soon let it be known that such a proceeding would not obtain their sanction. Supposing for a moment that a Party was so suicidal as to back up the Minister in stopping debate, how long would the constituencies stand such conduct? There was nothing Englishmen valued more than fair play; and any Party inclined to refuse fair play to their opponents, and to deprive them of their right to free discussion, would soon hear a voice from the country commanding them to cease from anything of the kind. How far a tyrannical Party was expected to be created or suspected to exist already might be gathered from the apparently universal belief of hon. Members opposite that all Liberals were influenced by the dreadful institutions called Caucuses. He could only say, speaking for himself, that he had no knowledge of any Caucus, and had never received any Circular pressing him to vote for the Resolutions. If any Central Committee sent him a Circular he should certainly return it without a stamp, and mulct the senders in the sum of 2*d*. One objection very often urged against the Prime Minister's proposal was that the *clôture* might be carried by a simple majority. He held, however, that the whole theory of fancy majorities was full of absurdities, and that all questions, many of them involving far graver issues, were decided by simple majorities. Some doubt had been expressed as to the meaning of the words "evident sense of the House." He had no doubt on that subject. As a matter of fact, until the last few years, a very effective *clôture* had always existed for all practical purposes. The custom was that when a question had been thoroughly debated the Government and the Opposition agreed that the time had come for taking a division. The Minister who had charge of the measure used invariably to wind up the debate, and if anybody rose after he had spoken he was howled down. That was the *clôture* in another form, and he believed that the operation of this Rule would be precisely the same. Now that times were changed, and debates were adjourned and protracted in spite of the evident sense of the House, the *clôture* seemed absolutely necessary. The present position of the House was unendurable. It was being dragged down, and deliberately dragged down, so that the people were beginning to feel that the great institution of Parliament was no longer to be relied on for getting through the work of the country. Hon. Members opposite said that public opinion was not in favour of this Rule. He entirely differed from them on that point, and thought there was no question in which the Liberal Party could appeal to the country with more confidence than on this. The country looked with dread to the condition of Parliament, which was strongly illustrated by the occurrences of last week. The Minister who had charge of the Army Estimates, involving £15,000,000, was kept waiting from 4 o'clock until a quarter to 1 before he could make his Statement, while matters of the most trivial character were being discussed. The same thing occurred with the Navy Estimates; and he believed it to be the general opinion of the country that decisive measures should be adopted to put an end to so great a scandal. Members were sent there to scrutinize the Estimates, and at present it was impossible they could fulfil that duty. Some hon. Members seemed ambitious to talk upon a question of the £10,000 a-year proposed to be voted as a settlement on the son of our gracious Queen; but when it came to millions questions of the most trivial nature were brought forward, and the main Business was put off for eight or nine hours. They were not doing their duty in allowing trifling matters to interfere between them and the most paramount service they had to render. They were also anxious to come to the discussion of several important measures, such as the Bankruptcy Bill; and it was necessary that their Procedure should be so changed that they could give due consideration to these measures. He hoped that, in the true interests of Parliamentary government, hon. Members would take a more calm and judicial view of the proposal before the House. He did not understand why it should be a Party question. It was not a Party question; it was one affecting the House only. There was a suspicion that it was to be used for improperly passing measures; but there was no risk of anything of the kind. Let them dismiss these miserable Party suspicions, and let them, in the interest of this great institution, pass the Rules which he hoped would place the House in the position it formerly occupied.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: Sir, I quite agree with the hon. Member that this, above all others, is a matter which should be calmly considered and not dealt with as a Party question. It must be generally admitted that any question relating to the Procedure of this House ought to be left to the independent judgment of the House, and can be better decided by the experience and knowledge which hon. Members have acquired in this House than by their constituents, or even by federations of their constituents, however national or however liberal. And, above everything, a proposal of this kind ought to be adopted, if it is to be adopted, by the general consent of the House, and not by a Party vote; and in its consideration we should not be biased either by allegiance to the Government of the day or by want of confidence in the Government. Therefore I cannot help thinking the hon. Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian) will much regret that the precedent which was set by the late Government in this matter—dealing, as they had to deal, with no less difficulties than those which beset the present Government—has not been followed on the present occasion. I deeply regret that the opinions which the Prime Minister appeared to me to express at the commencement of this debate were not adhered to by the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India; and that the noble Lord should have told the House that the existence of the Government was inevitably bound up, not with the whole of these proposals, but with that particular portion of them which has in its favour the least authority, and which, unquestionably, is the most unpopular in the country. I very much regret that that course has been taken by the Government, because it seems to me to render it extremely difficult for us to discuss this proposal with the calmness which it requires, and almost impossible to secure that if this proposal should eventually take the form of a Standing Order it should be worked with the success we should all desire. What is the feeling with which this Resolution is regarded by almost every Member, probably by every Member sitting on this side of the House, and also, I suspect, by not a few of those sitting on the other side? There is a feeling amounting to a dread that what it is intended to do is, not to stop Obstruction, but to put an end to legitimate opposition. There is a feeling that a minority in this House, however large, is to be debarred from its Constitutional right of full criticism of the measures of the Government, from delaying those measures, if it should appear to be necessary, for their fuller consideration by the country, and this although it is certainly the duty of each and every Member of the minority to oppose measures which his constituents disapprove, exactly as much as it is the duty of Members of the majority to support measures which have the support of their constituents. I think the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India ridiculed such an idea, as the hon. Member for Glamorganshire has done this evening. We were told, and we have been told again, that it is a moral impossibility that fair criticism should be stopped in such a manner, and that any Government which attempted to do it would, in fact, be committing suicide. So long as we have a majority of Members of the independence and honour of my hon. Friend the Member for Glamorganshire, and so long as political conflicts in England are conducted under our present system, I think there is great force in the argument of the noble Lord. I am bound to say that, in my opinion, if Her Majesty's present Government, having carried the Resolution and registered it as a Standing Order, were to attempt to act upon it during the rest of the Session in preventing us from legitimate criticism of important measures, the critics would have a much pleasanter time in the ensuing autumn than they would; and their tenure of Office would be even more precarious at the commencement of next Session than it is at present. But we cannot feel sure that Members of this House will always regard with such justifiable contempt the action of national federations on either side as does the hon. Member for Glamorganshire; and if the Resolution be passed as a Standing Order, it seems to me not only possible, but probable, that a time may come when, supported by such federations, the Government of the day might use it with impunity to crush all political independence in this House, and perhaps even to destroy anything like a continuous or fixed policy in our legislation, by repealing, in one or two Sessions, measures, however wise or beneficent, passed by a previous Parliament, however enlightened, before the country could shake off the fetters by which it would have been bound. That is what I fear, not in the present, but in the future, from the operation of this Resolution, coupled with the system of political organization to which we are tending more rapidly every day. But this is not the argument I wish now to impress on the Government; it is rather this — that, whether legitimate or not, whether foolish or wise, the fears to which I have alluded do undoubtedly exist; and that, for the sake of obtaining something like the consent and goodwill of this House to their proposals, it would be most politic on their part to still those fears and show that they are not justified. I think it will be felt that, after all, the possibility of transacting the Business of the House rests not upon any Rules we have made or may make so much as upon the mutual forbearance of hon. Members in this House, and on the deference which is paid to the general convenience of this House. I recognize the truth of the statement of the Prime Minister that there have been frequent and increasing instances of late when that forbearance has been no longer shown and that deference no longer paid; but I think we should remember that these, after all, have been individual instances, and I think they ought to be dealt with, not by general Rules, but by individual discipline. The feelings to which I have referred still characterize and govern the conduct of the vast majority of this House; and I do not think it is fair or reasonable to take away from the whole House the privilege of freedom of debate because that privilege has been abused by a few. Act as you will against those individuals; but let your New Rules be directed against them, and not against the House at large. I am convinced that, if this Rule be passed by a Party vote, those fears and suspicions to which I have alluded will be strengthened, and that you will lose more time by thus weakening that forbearance and deference upon which our institutions rest than you can possibly gain from the working of the Rule. As it is, your proposal may be carried. But its adoption will be accompanied with a feeling of irritation and injustice, with the open hostility of a large proportion of this House, and the dislike of many hon. Members opposite, not the less bitter because their Party loyalty will not allow them to express their feelings. I fear that the effect will be that our debates will not be curtailed in any way, but rather that they will be lengthened to a greater extent than at present, and that we shall be subjected to "filibustering," "stone-walling," and other objectionable practices which disgrace the Assemblies of other countries, and which, if once they take root here, will do more to destroy the honour and dignity of this House than any of the evils complained of. I have carefully considered the speeches of the Government; but I have been unable to ascertain for what particular evil this Rule is to provide a remedy. I want to deal with the matter without exaggeration; and it seems to me that it is ridiculous to say, as was recently said by a supporter of the Government, that the Government have to deal with unparalleled Obstruction. They have to deal with a difficulty; but I have noticed nothing—at any rate during the present Session—equal to the difficulties which the late Government had to encounter. I do not apprehend, as my hon. Friend the Member for Glamorganshire (Mr. Hussey Vivian) appears to suppose, that this Resolution would obviate anything like that which happened on Monday last. We know the difficulty now experienced by Ministers in obtaining an opportunity for making important statements on the Army and Navy Estimates; but this is dealt with by another Resolution. This Rule could do nothing to prevent any delay that has occurred in the present Session. I do not believe that it, or any other Rule, could put an end to the evil of too much talk. That has been recognized as a grave impediment to legislation in this House for more than a generation past. Anyone who cares to refer to the chronicles of any year during that time may see as strong complaints of the evil of too much talk as can be made in the present day. If you want to mitigate this evil, you ought to diminish the number of occasions on which debates may legitimately take place, rather than attempt to stop the flow of waters when once they have been let loose. But if this Rule cannot be intended for this purpose, neither is it adapted to the case of hon. Members who desire by their action to discredit or damage the efficiency of this House; for that, as I have already stated, appears to me to be a matter of discipline which would be properly dealt with, if occasion required, by a severe penalty. The practical point, as I gather from the speech of the Prime Minister, which this Rule is to secure, is that, when in the general judgment of the House a question is mature for decision, no want of deference to the general wish of the House shall be permitted to prevent that decision being taken. Well, that appears to me, as my hon. Friend the Member for Glamorganshire remarked, an attempt to put into a Rule what has long been the recognized custom of this House. The custom has been that, when by mutual consent of the great majority on both sides the time for a division has arrived, that division should be taken. Why is it necessary to go beyond that point, and provide for the closing of a debate, not by a majority of both sides of the House, but by a bare majority? As to the provision in this Rule about the evident sense of the House, of course our old custom did provide for the closing of a debate by the evident sense of the House. The Rules that were adopted on a great exceptional emergency last Session provided also for the closing of debates in accordance with the evident sense of the House; for I think it cannot be repeated too often that you, Sir, the great authority in this House, then interpreted the evident sense of the House to mean a vote by a majority of three-fourths—an interpretation which, so far as I can see, would not be open to the Speaker under this Rule. Yet is there any reason why the Rule shall not be so limited? Of course, there have been instances during past years in which debates have been prolonged by individuals against the general sense of the House; but what I maintain is that no one can with any justice argue—no one, I believe, can produce one single instance in which the great body of the Opposition of the day did not give a most loyal support to the Government of the day in putting an end to resistance to the prevailing will of the House otherwise than by argument. And the words used by the right hon. Gentleman in his speech give colour to this view. He said that the Rule did not mean a state of things in which a majority, as commonly understood, is clamouring one way, and a minority, as commonly understood, is clamouring another way. Well, if it does not mean that, what, I should like to ask Her Majesty's Government, does it mean? I remember the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister told us that he had endeavoured in no point to go beyond the necessity of the case. Well, if it is the fact that the Opposition has been as loyal to the Government in a difficulty of this nature as I have stated, and if it is the fact that this Rule would close a debate by a bare majority, and not only with the consent of a majority of both sides of the House, surely this Rule, in its terms, does not carry out that undertaking of the Prime Minister. The right hon. Gentleman said there is but one sound principle in this House, and that is that the majority of this House shall prevail; and he gave to us instances in which most important decisions have been come to by this House involving even the fate of a Government by very small majorities. But he forgot, when quoting those instances, that the House is not fettered in arriving at such decisions by any safeguard while he has found it necessary to impose certain safeguards on his own Rule. He has done this, I presume, because voting to give effect to our opinions is obviously not quite the same thing as voting to prevent other people from expressing theirs, in spite of their protest that they have not sufficiently done so. But as he has proposed certain safeguards, the question to be decided is not whether any should be provided, but merely what the nature of the safeguards should be; and I am utterly unable to understand why the right hon. Gentleman has expressed so very strong an objection to a proportionate majority of the House. He has referred us to the Colonies for examples. I will follow him there; and will take an example, not from Colonial action, but from a suggestion made by a Member of his own Government not longer ago than February 2. A very important despatch was on that date addressed by Lord Kimberley to a Colony which has recently, perhaps, occupied more of the attention of Her Majesty's Government than almost any other—I mean the Colony of Natal. The inhabitants of Natal had apparently desired that a system of responsible government, with only a single Legislative Chamber, should be granted to them. Lord Kimberley replies—

> "There is at present no instance of a single Chamber with full Parliamentary powers in a British colony under responsible government. In Natal it will be especially desirable, having regard to the gravity of native questions . . . . that there should be some protection against hasty and ill-considered legislation and action, such as it is elsewhere the object of a second Chamber to supply. The point is one of serious importance, and will require careful consideration when the details of the proposed constitutional changes are being determined. I will only at present suggest that a possible mode of providing the requisite safeguards might be to enact that in certain cases the concurrence of more than a bare majority of the whole Council should be requisite for the passing of a Bill."

Therefore, as a safeguard against "hasty and inconsiderate action" on the part of the Legislative Assembly of Natal, Her Majesty's Government themselves suggest "that the concurrence of more than a bare majority of the whole Council should be requisite." Is there no risk of "hasty and inconsiderate action" by this House in deciding on a matter with which the House of Lords have nothing to do, and which is to be decided here by a single division without debate? And if there be, why should the Prime Minister, desirous as he is to assimilate the Procedure of our Imperial and Colonial Parliaments, stigmatize here on the 20th of February as a "vast innovation," and as "contrary to the one only sound principle in this House," the very proposal which, on February 2, he had himself suggested as a leading feature in the brand-new form of responsible government which he contemplates conferring on the important Colony of Natal? Supposing, however, that the feeling of the majority of the House be in favour of a proportionate majority, and that the Government should go so far as to adopt either the Amendment of the hon. Member for Glasgow (Mr. Anderson) or that of the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), or in some other way to concede the principle of a proportionate majority, there would still remain objections of no small moment against the adoption of the *clôture* by a majority. Some hon. Members seem to think this power could not be applied to prevent private Members from bringing on Motions. But what did the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India say the other night? He was referring to cases in which the power now asked for would be required; and he said that this power would enable the House to prevent the hon. Member for Eye (Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett) from bringing on the question of Central Asia, and the hon. and learned Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton) from bringing on the question of patent medicines.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON explained that he had said that there should be some mode by which discussions such as that on patent medicines should be limited in duration. He had never said that the hon. and learned Member for Bridport should be prevented from bringing the question forward.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: In saying even that much the noble Marquess was singularly ungrateful to the hon. and learned Member for Bridport, who had twice resigned his opportunities of bringing the matter forward in order to enable the Government to proceed with their Business. But what might certainly be inferred from the speech of the noble Lord is that he had in contemplation the application of this Rule against private Members who may wish to bring grievances before the House. That means that Members who may happen not to be looked on favourably by the majority in this House will be debarred, if not from bringing forward questions which the majority may consider to be crotchets, at all events, from having them discussed at any reasonable length. That would soon amount to a very material interference with one of the most important functions of this House—namely, that of considering the grievances of Her Majesty's subjects. It is all very well for Members of the Government to say that the occasions for the application of the Rule would be rare. We were told last year that the reductions of rent under the Land Act would be rare, and we think ourselves fairly entitled to look with some doubt on similar prophecies. I fear that the *clôture*, whether by a proportionate or by a bare majority, would prevent the advocates of unpopular subjects from being fairly heard in this House. Let it be remembered that some of the very best among us have, at one time or another, been the advocates of unpopular subjects. The Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster might, for example, be numbered among such advocates. The great eloquence of those right hon. Gentlemen might, under any circumstances, enable them to obtain a hearing either in the House or in the country; but I question very much if less eminent men would be in an equally favourable position under this Rule, for it would be difficult indeed for advocates of an unpopular cause, unless of very exceptional ability, to obtain that hearing in the country which certainly would not be denied to a powerful minority, or to any individual who happened to have a great wave of popular feeling at his back. But there is another class to which the Prime Minister has himself referred. What of those Members of this House who have, at one time or another, been guilty of apparent Obstruction, which has been justified by the result where important changes have by their action —to quote the words of the Prime Minister—been introduced into measures as the fruit and product of long debates? This action would, at the moment, appear to be Obstruction. It would be met by a Government by no means anxious for the alteration of its proposals, and by a majority impatient of delay; and can anybody suppose that the *clôture* would not be pretty readily applied, and, if applied, would it always be to the advantage of the country? But there is still one instance more. I have spoken of the advocates of unpopular causes, and of unpopular Members. There are also unpopular sections of this House. For more than a generation past there has been an Advanced Irish Party in this House, which has never been popular with either the majority of Members of this House or with the majority of constituencies in the United Kingdom. I quite admit that on one or two occasions in the past few years it has been necessary, in one way or another, to put an end to debates which have been raised by these Members; but I contend that this object might be achieved equally well by the operation of the other Rules, to which I have already alluded. I fear, if this power of the *clôture* existed, it would be applied to an unpopular section of this kind far too frequently to be consistent with justice and fairness to them or their constituents, and a safety valve which at present exists would be closed in a manner calculated to add materially to the serious difficulty of governing Ireland. I quite agree with what fell at the commencement of this debate from the right hon. Baronet the Leader of the Opposition; that, considering the number and importance of the other proposals which Her Majesty's Government have placed on the Paper, it would have been, above all things, desirable that we should have considered and decided those other proposals before we arrived at this. I feel that there is much in those proposals which would form a very valuable addition to our power of conducting Business in this House; but, for the reasons I have ventured to state to the House, I cannot look upon this Resolution in the same light. It seems to me that it is not for the interest of any Member, or any section of Members of this House, that measures, as to the necessity of which the majority may have made up their minds, should pass, perhaps not with insufficient discussion, but with an amount of discussion, which the minority will believe and say has been insufficient. I cannot feel that, if there be any amongst us who desire to discredit and destroy the honour and usefulness of this House, their operations will in any way be impeded by the passing of such a Resolution as this. I think there must be some reasons for the course which the Government have pursued beyond those which hitherto have been mentioned to this House. I think the Government must have in their minds, not merely the merits of this particular proposal, but other difficulties which they see before them. A few days ago the Prime Minister told us how Pope Pius IX., with a temper too sanguine, and with very deficient calculation of the impediments in his way, promised to the population reforms of every description—a course which, for the moment, brought him much popular favour; and how he then found it very difficult to live on promises instead of performances. I do not know how far that is a correct history of Pope Pius IX.; but it seems to me not entirely inapplicable to the history and present position of the Prime Minister himself. A terrible catastrophe may be awaiting the right hon. Gentleman, as he told us fell on the Pope; but I trust there is sufficient independence still left in this House, in spite of so great a danger, to decline to abandon that freedom of speech which is as the breath of life to this ancient Assembly; and to oppose a proposal which, if we had brought it forward while we were in Office, would have been by no one more jealously resisted than by the right hon. Gentlemen who now occupy the Treasury Bench.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I am sure the House will appreciate the moderate and cautious spirit in which the right hon. Gentleman has addressed himself to this Motion; and in the remarks for which I shall ask the indulgence of the House I shall endeavour to follow his example. On this, the third night of this discussion, I think it may be useful to ask exactly what is the Parliamentary situation? I know that, although the right hon. Gentleman has left us rather in doubt as to whether he is altogether against the proposal of a power of closing a debate, or whether he would be favourable to a limited proposal of that kind, there are Gentlemen opposite who are of opinion that two-thirds or three-fourths would be a proper limitation on the *clôture*, if we have the *clôture* at all. But I do desire to point out that there is no proposal of such a nature before us, and, for the reasons which I shall adduce, no such proposal is possible. You have before you the Resolution of the Prime Minister, and you have the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott). I will not enter into the merits of the question whether "bare majority" is, or is not, a violation of Parliamentary decorum; but if the English language means anything at all, the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton is a statement that no majority shall be allowed to close a debate. ["No, no!"] Well, I have arrived at an age when I imagined that I understood the English language. I will read the Amendment. It says—

> "No Rules of Procedure will be satisfactory to this House which confer the power of closing a Debate upon a majority of Members."

That is a statement that a majority shall not close a debate. However, I do not wish to go into that verbal discussion, for I have stronger reasons to give for the assertion I have made. Assume the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton to be carried, what will be the situation of this House? The operative proposal which the Prime Minister has brought forward, which might have been amended, will be gone, and in its place will be inserted a negative proposition—because the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton is a simple negation. It does not propose to do anything; it cannot do anything, and it cannot be amended. Therefore, the carrying of the Motion, which you are invited from various quarters of the House to approve, is an absolute condemnation and destruction of the proposal for closing a debate at all. ["No, no!"] It is quite useless to say "No!" because it is a proposition which is absolutely self-evident. ["No, no!"] Perhaps hon. Members will allow me to make my statement. They are beginning to make an evident sense of the House against my doing so. I assert that if the House adopts the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton, they will then declare that—

> "No Rules of Procedure will be satisfactory to this House which confer the power of closing a Debate upon a majority of Members."

I assert that that is a negative proposition; it is not a positive proposition, and it is no use saying "No!" because it is self-evident. That being the case, of course you may say that the Government, not accepting that Amendment of the hon. and learned Member, might produce another plan. But Her Majesty's Government have already, I think, sufficiently intimated that, having maturely considered this matter, they do not think any other plan would be satisfactory, and therefore they will produce no other plan. Then, who is going to produce any other plan? It is not contained in the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton. Is it going to be produced by the responsible Opposition? I do not speak of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton, because, from the tone in which he addressed these Benches, I should call the Amendment a personal rather than a responsible opposition; but what is the view of the responsible Opposition on this matter? Are the responsible Opposition prepared to propose a modified *clôture*? I have attended carefully to their speeches, and I cannot make out that they propose any form of *clôture* at all. [Sir STAFFORD NORTHCOTE assented.] The right hon. Gentleman accepts that proposition. That is quite clear. They are not in favour of two-thirds; therefore they are not going to propose two-thirds. The Government have said they are not going to propose two-thirds. How, then, is two-thirds ever to become a practical proposition before the House? It is perfectly obvious that there is no such proposal now, and there can be no such proposal. The ardent Members below the Gangway who are allies of the responsible Opposition, but not the responsible Opposition, are they in favour of two-thirds? Certainly they are not. We know they are as much opposed to two-thirds as to the proposal which is now under the consideration of the House. Therefore it is perfectly clear two-thirds is a proposition, which is not, and cannot be, under the consideration of the House. As the right hon. Gentleman opposite assents to my statement that he is against the *clôture* in every form, the question we have really to discuss is, whether there is or is not to be in this House any power of closing a debate when it has proceeded to an unreasonable length? I think it may be necessary, and it may be indispensable, as was shown last year, that some such power should exist. It was shown to be necessary last year by your action, Sir—action which was approved by the immense majority of this House—action which was called, and properly called—because the word may be used in a good sense or a bad sense—a revolutionary proceeding—a proceeding like that on which the Constitution of this country is framed. What follows on a revolution? A settlement on the principles of the revolution. You do not want a temporary revolution. You want some regular recognized law of the House. Well, Sir, the action you took last year cannot be repeated. The House must consider the character, and the necessity, and the nature of that action, and either legalize or condemn it; but if they condemn the principle of that Act, then, if that necessity should again arise, I venture to think that you could not repeat the action you took last year. The right hon. Gentleman (Sir R. Assheton Cross), who spoke on the last night of this debate, in his very reasonable speech, argued the matter from this point of view. He said—"We must regard your supposed Rule as it is likely to be worked, perhaps, at first; we must look at all the evils of which it is capable, because it would not be safe to establish such a system, and assume that the evils it might involve would not occur." That was the line of argument he pursued. The right hon. Gentleman said this proposal of a *clôture* was one which no Committee had actually proposed. That is perfectly true, but he referred to the last Committee upon this subject; and it was apparent then that though no Committee previously had entertained this question, it was very seriously entertained by that Committee; and that that Committee would not pronounce positively against the *clôture*, but said it was not desirable at that time, and the majority of the Committee said they would not at present recommend it. Therefore, it is quite plain that they had seen that there might arise—and, indeed, it was quite possible there might arise—a state of things in which a remedy of this kind might be and would be necessary. But a great authority has been mentioned in this discussion. We are told that, to old Parliamentarian minds, nothing could be so dreadful as the French system of *clôture*. I suppose there is no finer old Parliamentarian than Lord Eversley, who was formerly Speaker of this House. He was examined in 1854, and was asked—

> "Has it ever occurred to you that it would be well to adopt some mode similar in principle to what is called in France '*La clôture*,' to enable the House summarily to shorten a discussion which did not excite much interest in the House?"

His reply was—

> "My belief is that the House will, some day or other, be obliged to adopt a summary mode of putting an end to useless debate."

Thirty years ago the growing necessities of the House of Commons had caused a man so imbued with the ancient traditions of Parliament as Mr. Shaw Lefevere to appreciate that one of these days the *clôture* would become a necessity. In the year 1878, a majority of the Committee then considering the subject said that at present they would not recommend the *clôture*. But we have learned a good deal since 1878. [MR. NEWDEGATE: That is not in the Report.] No; in the Report subsequent experience naturally does not appear. But we have advanced rapidly since 1878. The late Government said that, because things were not in the Report of the Committee, it was not necessary to propose this in 1880; but hon. Gentlemen opposite approved and supported the *clôture* exercised by the Speaker last year. That shows that step by step you have found the existing measures insufficient, and you have had to take stronger and stronger measures against the evil with which you have to deal. I wish we could really rely upon that fine old spirit of the House of Commons to which the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Cambridge (Mr. Beresford Hope) has referred, and of which he is himself an excellent Representative; but we know perfectly well we cannot any longer confidently rely upon that. The right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary of State (Sir R. Assheton Cross) said the other night—and I think the phrase was a good one—"What we have and what we suffer from is a want of loyalty to the House in some of its Members." That is the evil against which you have to contend; that is the evil which you have not been able to overcome. I referred just now to the argument of the late Secretary of State—that you must look at the scheme we propose by the light of all the possible evils which it may involve, because you must be guarded against possible as well as probable evils. I accept that line of argument; but he has applied it to the remedy; allow me to apply it to the disease. Let us examine what are the possible evils of the present system, and see whether they are tolerable, or whether it is not absolutely necessary that you should seek for some efficient remedy against them. The possible evils in the House of Commons, under the present system, are that the House of Commons may find itself absolutely helpless in the hands of an unpatriotic and unscrupulous minority. The right hon. Gentleman considered the other aspect of the case from the point of view of what might happen if you had a tyrannical and reckless majority. I ask you to consider what would be the position of the House of Commons if ever you should see in the House of Commons an unpatriotic and unscrupulous minority, who used all the powers they possessed. I will ask you to consider what the Business of the House of Commons is, and how it can be dealt with by such a minority. In the transaction of the Business of the House you have the part which is taken by private Members; you have the part of the Business which is transacted by the Government. I will not say much about the part which is transacted by the private Members, except this — that nothing is more true than what the hon. Member for Aylesbury (Mr. G. Russell), in his able and interesting speech, pointed out—namely, that private Members are equally the victims of this system of Obstruction by a reckless minority as are the Government themselves. But I want you to consider what could be the operation of such a minority as this upon the Business of the nation, as transacted by the Government. We know very well here, but it is not very well known outside, that although the Government is held responsible for the whole time of Parliament, which really is only nominally two-fifths of the time, out of five days of the week, until you come to the end of the Session, private Members have three days of the week, and the Government two. I say the Government have nominally two, because they may have none at all; and last week they hardly had any at all. The Business of the Government consists of two classes. It is talked of generally as if it was only legislative Business; but the Government have also great administrative Business, the passing of Votes of Supply, carrying the Estimates through, and passing what, from habit, I will call the Mutiny Bill. The legislative Business of the Government is, no doubt, important in a very high degree; but the administrative Business of the Government in this House is absolutely indispensable. The machinery of the State cannot go on without it. For transacting the whole of the Business during the early part of the Session, the Government have eight days in the month at its disposal. In that period they have to transact all the varied Business of the complicated society of this vast Empire. Now, if there be such a minority as that of which I have spoken—a minority reckless of consequences, careless of the opinion of this House, utterly indifferent to the opinion of the country, resolved, if it can, to disorganize the whole fabric of Parliament and destroy the operation of the machinery by which the Business of the country is transacted—I have a right to make this hypothesis to-night, as right hon. Gentlemen opposite have a right to make theirs on the other side. Let me ask the attention of the House while I endeavour to point out what such a minority can do. In the first place, the Government have to propose the Address to the Crown. In the name of freedom of debate, every Member has a right to speak, and to speak at any length he chooses, either on the Address, or on any other topic, foreign or domestic, and he can do what he pleases. In the old days, on great occasions, you had two or three days' debates on the Address; recently you have had a great many more. You may have a great many more; and, without such a power as this inherent in the House, there is no reason why such a minority might not occupy the greater part of February in the debate on the Address. You then come to March, when the Government have the Supplementary Estimates and the Army and Navy Estimates, which they must carry before the end of March. Look at their situation in the presence of a minority of that description. I will suppose the Government have introduced no legislative schemes at all, but have devoted themselves from the first day to Votes of Supply, and taken the first Monday in March for Supply. The minority can cover that day's Paper with any number of Motions which will prevent the Government getting into Supply at all. The minority may discuss each of these Motions separately, and at any length they like, and the Government can get no Supply on that Monday. They may do a little more than they did on Monday week last. The Government get no Supply, and the House is helpless. The Government then have Thursday, and they put down Supply again; but the Paper is again covered with Motions, and the Government again get no Supply. That may be done through every week in March on each Government day; and the minority, if they choose, have the power to stop Supplies. The power of stopping Supplies was in old days a power which even a great majority in great crises shrank from exercising. It is impossible to conceive that there may be a minority who may desire, and who certainly have the power, to stop Supplies in the month of March, until the financial year has expired. If they choose, there is no man in the House who would not find that they have ample power to do that by covering the Paper with Motions on each Government day. It is useless to speak, as the right hon. Baronet did, of personal action against these men. You can take no personal action. Their proceedings would be perfectly legitimate.

SIR MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH: The point I took on the question to which the right hon. and learned Gentleman has alluded was that there is a Resolution on the Paper which will enable the Government to get into Supply, notwithstanding these Motions.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I am bound to state the things as they actually exist; and I say, as matters now exist, the minority have perfect power to stop Supply. I come now to the next point. When the month of March is gone we come to the month of April. When you come to the month of April, even if you had no Vacation at all, the Mutiny Bill has to be passed. There are numerous stages of the Mutiny Bill, every one of which can be opposed; and to-night I see by the Paper that the Mutiny Bill is blocked by the hon. Member for Limerick. You may oppose and debate every stage of the Mutiny Bill. You may propose any number of Amendments in Committee on the Bill, and it will be perfectly easy for such an opposition as that which I have sketched out to prevent the passing of the Bill before the period for passing it expires; and, if so, the whole fabric of your military position would be destroyed, and the Army would be disbanded. Is the House of Commons to be helpless in such a situation as that? Is it to have no power of saying it will take measures to prevent the Opposition being allowed to disintegrate the whole of our political system by stopping Supply, and even to disband our Army? I venture to say nobody in this House can disprove that, without some protection of this character, it is perfectly possible for a position such as I have described to occur. Then, after you have dealt in the month of April with the Mutiny Bill, you come to the ordinary Estimates. In the face of a minority like this you have to deal with the ordinary Estimates; and the same thing that I have pointed to in regard to Supply before Easter may be done after Easter, and still more effectually, without any possibility of operating against the individual. You may have every item discussed, and the whole time of Parliament occupied; and you may reach August without the Government being able to command a single day for the consideration of any measure. Nobody can say those are not possibilities actually within your existing Rules. Now, I want to know whether there is any Legislative Assembly that is without some means of protecting itself against things of that description? Then consider the position with reference to legislative measures themselves. The Government of the day has some considerable measures—it is generally expected that the Government shall submit two or three considerable measures. If the Opposition desire to block and destroy the measures which are to follow, it is not necessary to operate on these measures. Scientific Obstruction has gone much too far for that. It is like the game of curling; a stone is placed not to win, but to prevent others from getting in. The thing has been brought to scientific perfection, and all you have to do to destroy all the measures proposed by the Government is to extend the discussion on the first measure until you waste the whole time of the House; and, what with that and the discussions on Supply and the ordinary Estimates, you may take care that only one measure, or not even one, shall be passed by the Government. Is that a state of things—I will not say with which the Government can be satisfied; but with which the country which has placed the Government here is going to be content? My opinion is that it certainly is not. All this is to be done in the name of freedom of debate and freedom of discussion. I do not think respectable terms were ever so badly abused as when these were employed to justify such a state of things as this. Freedom of debate and freedom of discussion for whom? Why, for a reckless minority; there is no freedom of debate and freedom of discussion for the majority. As the hon. Member for Aylesbury (Mr. G. Russell) has said, over and over again the majority are silenced; they are obliged to be silent because they want to see something done. They hold their peace simply because a small minority have occupied the whole of the time for discussion; and, therefore, it is a proceeding not in favour of freedom of debate and freedom of discussion, but adverse to freedom of debate, when you allow a minority to exercise such a power as that. Hon. Gentlemen opposite object to the *clôture*, but they have a *clôture* of their own. I remember the other night that an hon. Member opposite spoke—I had not the patience to count, but a Friend counted that the hon. Gentleman spoke 15 times three or four nights ago. ["Name!"] No; I will not give his name; he might speak 16 times to-night. But he spoke 15 times, and that was a practical *clôture* against 14 other Gentlemen who might have occupied the time in useful discussion. The truth is that the minority shut the mouths of the majority by occupying all the time the majority might occupy in the useful discussion of important questions. Therefore, when the right hon. Gentleman opposite said we ought not to punish the many for the offences of the few, I agree in that; but what we are doing is that we are punishing the many by the offences of the few, by depriving the majority of the time they might usefully occupy in the transaction of Public Business.

Sir R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he had stated that the restraint placed on the licence of the few ought not to be the standard for restraining the liberty of the many.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I say that the offences now committed by the few practically punish the many. All that is necessary in order to produce the evils which I have indicated is, that you should some day or other see an organized body constituting the minority with no respect for the traditions of the House, no regard for its influence, and no sympathies with its functions. And then, I say, such a body can use its powers, with the effect I have described. You may say—"Oh, but this does not exist, and we do not believe that it will ever exist." We may not believe that this House will be set on fire to-night; but that does not prevent our having in readiness in every part of it the hydrants and hose necessary to extinguish a fire in case it should break out. Therefore I oppose my picture of the possibility under the existing state of things to the possibility under the proposal made on the other side. The right hon. Gentleman opposite said that the majority, if they misused their power, would be exposed to retribution. That is perfectly true, and I am glad that it is so. But that is your safeguard. The majority would know very well that in such a case they would be exposed to the retribution of public opinion. They will be restrained by their sense of fairness, by their sense of honour, and by their knowledge of retribution, because otherwise they would lose the power which belongs to the majority. But you have not that safeguard in the case of a minority; it has not the same responsibility, and it is not exposed to the same retribution. Whatever it does it will be a minority still, and therefore there are circumstances which exist in connection with the powers of a minority which do not exist in the case of a majority. Well, Sir, these are the reasons, or some of the reasons, which have convinced Her Majesty's Government that it is absolutely necessary that this House should have within itself the power of protecting itself against the reckless and improper use of the rights of the minority. Nobody can have listened in this House for the last three or four years without feeling that, so to speak, it has been afflicted with something in the nature of a creeping palsy, and that unless we take some measures to defend ourselves from the paralysis which is gaining upon the House, and preventing the transaction of the Business of the nation, I believe there will follow some great public catastrophe. Did any hon. Member deny that? The right hon. Gentleman opposite, in a speech which he made the other day, said that the House of Commons, which we have always looked up to in former times as the glory and honour of the country, has now become a bye-word and a sham. Are we, then, to do nothing to cure this evil, or shall we take measures which will make it unnecessary for the right hon. Gentleman to repeat that observation? If so, Her Majesty's Government are bound to recommend to the House a measure, which, in their opinion, will alone be efficacious for that purpose. Gentlemen opposite say—"Take action against the individual;" but I am quite certain that anybody who considers this matter, and has observed the way in which Obstruction has worked, will see that the plan of action against individuals is utterly useless, because they have become adepts by careful practice, and can easily avoid such action. It is only an occasional outburst of bad temper or unbecoming language that can ever expose the individual to action on the part of the House. Sir, it is not at all necessary that the minority should employ violent means. They can kill the unfortunate patient *secundum artem*—they can kill the House of Commons by means of its own Rules, and that is an operation which is being gradually and certainly performed. This is my answer to the contention of the right hon. Gentleman opposite as I understand it. It is admitted now by the Leader of the Opposition that they will assent to no form of the *clôture* whatever, and that they will give the House no power in the form of *clôture* to defend itself from this system which is destroying its vitality; which will defend the House of Commons from that which it is partially suffering from, and from which, in my judgment, it is destined, unless our proposal is adopted, still more to suffer in the future. There are Gentlemen who do not agree with that opinion, who feel the nature of the evil we are exposed to, and who say they will assent to a majority of two-thirds or three-fourths for the purpose we have in view. It is not necessary that I should detain the House by arguing that point at any length, because, as I ventured in the early part of my remarks to point out, that is not in the proposition with which we have to deal, nor can it be made under any conceivable circumstances the question before the House. I say the Government did not propose it, the Leader of the Opposition does not propose it, Members below the Gangway do not support it, and the hon. Member opposite, who appears to approve it, says that somebody on the other side of the House approves it. I say, therefore, that it is not a practical proposition which there is any chance of dealing with in the House of Commons. No doubt it is on the Paper; but no one, I think, will deny that if the Amendment of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton be carried it cannot be put. I should like to state in a few words why it is that Her Majesty's Government did not propose a two-thirds majority. There is one very good reason given, I think, by the right hon. Gentleman opposite, and those who sit near him—namely, that if it had been proposed, it would not have been accepted by hon. Gentlemen opposite. The whole question relates to the disposal of the time of the House, and the time of the House is its most valuable commodity. It is quite as valuable as the Estimates of which the House disposes, because it belongs to the nation, and in that time the national Business has to be done. All other questions of the time of the House are decided by a bare majority. If it be a question whether the House shall sit on a Saturday; whether there shall be Morning Sittings, or whether the Government shall occupy the time allotted to private Members—all these matters are decided by a bare majority. In short, wherever the time of the House is involved, the question is always decided by a bare majority. Further, as the Prime Minister has pointed out, the gravest measures are disposed of in the same way. As a consequence of that, you may turn out one Government and introduce another by a majority of 1; you may support a declaration of war by a small majority; but then you say that after you have installed a Government by a small majority, and after you have made war by a small majority, you must have a majority of two-thirds in order to carry out the measures of that Government, or the measures which may be necessary to carry on the war. What can be more ridiculous than such a proposition? To state it is to show how preposterous is its character. The basis of your whole Parliamentary system is that the will of the majority shall prevail; and, therefore, you say that the will of the majority shall prevail whenever a question is put. But the preceding question, whether that question shall be put, is to be in the hands of the minority; and a small minority may practically decide that neither question shall ever be put at all. If that be so, then the power is absolutely in the hands of the minority, which can prevent the question being put to the House. Why, this is giving to the minority what used to be called in a foreign country the minority veto; you give them the opportunity of vetoing the proceedings of the whole House. At the end of the Session the country had a right to ask the Government, which was the representative of the majority, the question—"What have you done with the time of the nation; what has become of the time which belonged to the House of Commons, in which our Business was to be transacted?" And the answer must be—"Oh, the minority of one-third would not let us have it." The responsible majority gives this answer to the nation—"We did our best to prevail with the minority of one-third, which said we should not employ that time as you and we thought we ought to employ it; but we were not successful." Sir, I ask, could any position be more absurd than that? How can you make that one-third minority responsible to the country for the employment of the time of the House of Commons? It is impossible to do so; and, therefore, if you are going to embody the principle of a two-third's majority in a Rule, I say you will, in my opinion, consecrate the operation of Obstruction, because you declare that the minority of one-third has the right to obstruct. You would declare that this minority were in their right in using all the powers which the Forms of the House gave them for preventing the majority carrying out the measures which they desired to carry out. Then, Sir, there are objections made to the Rule which we propose upon arithmetical grounds. Some Gentlemen have thought it worth their while to construct a series of what I may call arithmetical puzzles in connection with it; but this can always be done with regard to any question into which numbers enter. During the passage of the Reform Bill it used to be said—"What an absurdity it is that a place of under 5,000 inhabitants should lose its Member, while another with one more than 5,000 inhabitants keeps its Member." But the principle of our Rule is not a question of proportionate majority with reference to numbers. It is, as my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister explained, altogether a question of quorum. We have thought that this power would not be exercised in a thin or empty House, but in a full House—one capable of properly considering the question, and able to deal with it according to its importance. I will now pass from the subject of the Rule itself; but, before sitting down, I should like to say a few words upon the statement of the right hon. Gentleman opposite with reference to this being a Party question. Well, Sir, I believe it is desirable that no question should be made a Party question. That, however, is one of those hopes which people confidently express, but which are seldom fulfilled. If I desired to recriminate, which I do not—and I wish to say nothing that may give offence to hon. Gentlemen opposite—I should say it was not we who first made this a Party question. On every Conservative platform throughout the country our plan has been denounced, and that, too, even before it was born. Therefore, I say we do not take to ourselves the whole of the responsibility in that matter. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) has brought a charge against the Prime Minister of want of courtesy, for not having communicated with the Leader of the Opposition candidly and frankly upon this subject. But surely, if that right hon. Gentleman had thought that any modification of the Government proposal would have rendered it more agreeable to those whom he represented, he could have made a suggestion to that effect. But the right hon. Gentleman did not think fit to do so, although it was for him to make any suggestion of the kind; and it is quite plain now that no such suggestion could have been made by him, because the attitude of the Opposition is resistance to the proposal in every shape. In my opinion, it was inevitable that this should become a Party question, not in a bad sense of the word, but because it symbolizes and defines the principles which distinguish the two Parties in this House. The Liberal Party is a Party which desires activity and progress in legislation; while, without wishing to say anything at all offensive to hon. Gentlemen opposite, the Conservative Party, I should say, represent a principle rather antagonistic to that activity and progress. A noble Lord, addressing his supporters the other day in Lancashire, said they wanted the House of Commons to perform the great work of legislation; and, in order to do that, they must make it—what it was not at present—capable of doing its work. That seems a very natural and sound proposition; but it shocks the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes). Why? Because he does not want to see that work done; and nothing would shock or disgust him more than that the House of Commons should be made capable of doing that work. He says the cat is let out of the bag. No, Sir; that cat has always been out of our bag. We have never concealed that there were great measures we wanted to carry; and that we want the House of Commons to be capable of doing great work for the good of the nation. But, according to the contention of some Gentlemen, it is not for the majority of the country, or for the majority in this House, which represents the majority of the country, to determine whether that great work shall be done. It is to be a minority of two-thirds that is to have a veto as to whether that work is to be done or not. That is a very ingenious plan, and, I have no doubt, is perfectly satisfactory to hon. Gentlemen opposite. It is—"Heads, I win; tails, you lose." When they are in a majority they have the initiative; and when they have got the initiative, they do just as much or as little as they please, and generally rather the latter than the former. Well, nobody has a right to complain of that. The country has put them in power; and if the country wishes that nothing shall be done it keeps them in power. But then the time comes when the country wishes a great deal to be done, and it puts the other Party in power, with a majority; and then the Conservatives, who, when they were in Office, had the initiative, think, when they are in Opposition, they ought to have the veto; so that, when the Conservative Government are in power, and when the Liberal Government are in power, nothing will be done; because when the Conservatives have the initiative they do nothing, and when they have got the veto they prevent the Liberals doing anything. And that is the meaning of the veto of the minority, and of the rights of the Opposition; and, therefore, *qui cunque via*, nothing is to be done at all. That is the question. It is necessarily a Party question, and one upon which the contending and rival Parties in the country will probably, some day or other, have to decide. I cannot look at it otherwise than as a Party matter. I believe the Government of this country can only be conducted by Party. If you have not organized Party, what have you got? You have got the caprices and fancies of individuals in a chaos, and the public good perishes in the midst of it. The organization of Parties is nothing less than the predominance of the counsels of those who are chosen by the Party to advise them, because they think they are the fittest advisers. That is what is the meaning of Party Government. I am bound to say that hon. Gentlemen opposite act loyally and cordially upon those principles themselves; but they have great objection to our acting upon them. Disloyalty to the natural Leaders of the Tory Party is an offence unheard of, and not to be forgiven; but if there is Party loyalty on this side of the House, it is slavish submission and coercion. The Party which expects to hold power, or accomplish anything, always must accept the advice of those whom they have placed in the position they hold for the express purpose of advising them; they have made them their leaders for that purpose. To talk of coercion seems to me the most absurd thing in the world. Why, a Leader of a Party—and especially the Leader of the Government—is there by the free choice of those with whom he acts. At any time their breath can unmake him, as their breath has made him. He is their champion, it is true; but he is also their creature. You say to him—"We have made you our Leader because we have confidence that you will advise us properly;" but it is open to them any day to say—"We have no longer confidence in you as Leader, and we will no longer take your advice." He ceases to be their Leader, and the Government ceases to be a Government. It is the most reasonable and natural thing in the world that it should be in the power of any Party to give to those whom they have chosen as Leaders notice to quit at any moment they please. At this moment there are two pieces of advice upon this Paper between which the Liberal Party have to choose. There is the advice of the Prime Minister in the Resolution before the House—the advice of a statesman who has a Parliamentary experience of 50 years as to the only manner in which it is possible to conduct the Business of the House—and there is the other advice, the advice of the hon. and learned Member for Brighton (Mr. Marriott), a Gentleman with 18 months' experience of Parliamentary life, as to the best way of conducting the Business of the nation. It is perfectly free for the Liberal Party to choose between these two pieces of advice. No one can talk of coercion; it is the freest thing in the world for anyone to choose their advisers and select the advice they will follow. But, talking of Parties, I think if this issue were to be decided solely between the Conservative and Liberal Parties there would be very little doubt as to the issue of it. But there is another Party, a Party which does not profess to follow the advice of the Prime Minister or the Leader of the Opposition. Yes; within the last day or two we have seen the sentiments of that Party expressed in a more definite way than the opinions of Parties are generally expressed. Talk of Caucus, coercion, and Birmingham manifestoes! I have never seen anything equal to the published Whip of the Party represented by Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite. I have never before seen a Whip printed and published in the newspapers, signed by the Leader of the Party, countersigned by the Whips, and again countersigned by the Secretaries. That Party is a very important contingent. Yes; they are the allies of the Conservative Party on this question. ["No!"] They say so in their political arithmetic, for in this very Whip they say—"How many are the Conservative Party? We are so many, and if we can only get a few more, then we shall turn out the Government." It is a very natural calculation, and I perfectly understand it. I understand perfectly the principles of the combination which we have to face. Sir, they avow their object to turn out the Government. I do not complain of that. They avow another object, and it is that, if they can only defeat this proposition, they will never be again exposed to such action as that which you, Sir, took last year; but they will be enabled to renew the character of the opposition with which we had to deal. ["No, no!" *and* "Read!"] I am sorry to say the Whip was not sent to me. I am sorry if I misrepresent hon. Gentlemen opposite; but that was what I read to be the second object. At all events, they will not deny that they oppose the *clôture* because they think it will interfere with that character of opposition which they consider legitimate. [An hon. MEMBER: Coercion!] Ah, it applies to a good deal else. ["No!"] Well, I must be allowed to reserve my opinion on that subject. There is one thing in this manifesto which is clear, and that is that hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite claim the power of determining what is to be administration in this country. They make their calculations, and if those calculations are correct they have that power, and they will overthrow the present Government. Yes; but have the Government which is to succeed us considered what is to be their situation? Have they thought that their allies to-night will be their masters to-morrow? Sir, in my opinion, the principles stated in that manifesto, and the combination which exists to defeat, if possible, the Government on this Motion, form one of the gravest dangers that this country has ever known. I am not speaking of the fate of the present Government. I do not hold that so dear as some hon. Gentlemen opposite may think; but, Sir, it is not a question of the fate of the present Government, but it is a question of the fate of all future Governments, if hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway opposite, acting upon the principles which they profess, and by the means which they pursue, are to determine the fate of the Administration in this country. Sir, the right hon. Gentleman the late Secretary of State for the Colonies (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach) expressed the confident opinion that this Resolution would not be carried. I suppose he knows it is not going to be defeated by the strength of the Conservative Party. I suppose he, like the Whips of the Party below the Gangway, has confidence in the power of that combination. Sir, it is because I know that the Liberal Party has, if it chooses, the power to defeat that combination, that I believe the right hon. Gentleman is wrong in his prediction. I believe, Sir, that when you announce the decision upon this Resolution, you will announce to this House and to the country that the majority of the House of Commons has placed in your hands the power and the right to vindicate the ancient fame of the House of Commons.

SIR HARDINGE GIFFARD begged to move the adjournment of the debate.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Debate be now adjourned." —(*Sir Hardinge Giffard.*)

MR. GLADSTONE said, he thought that, in assenting to the adjournment, he might express the hope that, after this adjournment, the House would begin to think seriously of the expediency of bringing the debate to a close.

MR. O'DONNELL hoped that the Irish Members would not be practically excluded from participation in the debate. It unfortunately happened that none of them had as yet succeeded in catching the Speaker's eye; but the advantage of following the speech of the Home Secretary was one which would be availed of by Irish Representatives. There was no advocate of the Government whose speech would give them so large facilities for an Irish reply as the speech of the Home Secretary. For many reasons, the Irish Party, in a special sense of the coercionist policy of the Government in this and other matters, had a complete right to examine the conduct of the Government, and to examine the allegations by which it was attempted to justify that conduct. It must be remembered that they had peculiar reasons for examining the conduct of the Government, considering that they were now in the position of the discarded associates of the Obstructionists on the Ministerial Benches. There was one historical parallel for the conduct of the Premier towards the Irish Party in this matter, and it was that famous scene in Roman history where Cæsar recognized his champion, his friend, and his devoted admirer amongst the foremost of those who conspired against Cæsar's life. The Irish Party, like Cæsar, were entitled to exclaim "*Et tu Brute!*" He did not wish to delay the House at this time; but he must say that the Irish Party would consider it incumbent upon them to examine the extraordinary series of misstatements which had fallen from Ministerial lips in the course of the present debate. It might cause them some natural pain to speak, as they would have to do, with severity of those who stood by them in many an ardent struggle against the majority. The fault was not theirs; it was the Government—the Premier—who had severed the sacred ties of old, and he could no longer hope for respect from those he had discarded.

MR. SEXTON said, he could not now encourage the hope of the early termination of the debate. Such termination was much more likely before the Home Secretary addressed the House than it was at the present moment. So long as Ministerial orators confined themselves to the probable effect of the measure of *clôture* on the House, Irish Members were content to remain silent or to interfere but slightly; but as the Home Secretary had chosen to represent both the Conservative and Irish Parties in the House in a manner likely to lead to unjust and inconsiderate opinions in the country with regard to both those Parties, it would be their duty, as Members of the Irish Party, to expose the fact that if they happened to be, on the present occasion, fortuitous allies of the Conservative Party, it was because each Party, acting upon its separate interests, had been led to a common fusion.

MR. CALLAN said, the Irish Members owed a deep debt of gratitude to the Home Secretary. The Irish people would read with great interest and instruction the report of his speech which would appear to-morrow in the Irish newspapers. For the first time since the *clôture* Resolution was introduced, the Irish people would know what the real intentions of the Government were. They would now know that a more iniquitous Coercion Bill was intended for Ireland—and intended to be passed when the gag could be applied to the Irish Members. And they thanked the Premier also for his description of the "baker's dozen" who sat below the Gangway on the Ministerial side—for his designation of them, which would stick and stink in the nostrils of the Irish people, "the nominal Home Rulers." Within the next week, even though they might in consequence be cast into Kilmainham as persons "reasonably suspected" under the Coercion Bill, the Bishops and priests of Ireland would be able to declare what the fate of the nominal Home Rulers below the Gangway would be if, after the speech of the Home Secretary, they sacrificed the interests of their country to the interests of their Party. To-day, as he was entering the House, he had met one of the renowned Party, who, for the present, should be nameless—["Oh!"]—well, the clique—and he had asked him how he was going to vote? He had said to him—"Are you going to vote for the *clôture?*" And the reply was—"Well, if I vote against it, I might turn out the Government." "But," he (Mr. Callan) said, "do you think the fate of the Government worse than the renewal of a Coercion Bill for Ireland?" And this Gentleman answered—"Oh! I never thought of that." Well, it was to be hoped that the priests of this Gentleman's borough and the Bishop of his diocese, and the people of Ireland would teach him before that day week to think of his country as much as he did of the interests of his Party. He (Mr. Callan) again thanked the Home Secretary for his plain exposition of his principles and of the intention of the Government, under cover of the *clôture*, to inflict upon the Irish people a more iniquitous Coercion Bill than that which disgraced Parliament last year.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Debate *further adjourned* till *Monday* next.

ARKLOW HARBOUR BILL.—[Bill 96.]

(*Mr. Herbert Gladstone, Lord Frederick Cavendish.*)

SECOND READING.

Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE, in moving the second reading of the Bill, said, its object was to improve the harbour of Arklow. The measure was before the House in 1876, when it was brought in by the senior Member for Westminster (Mr. W. H. Smith) and the senior Member for East Gloucestershire (Sir Michael Hicks-Beach), read a second time, and referred to a Select Committee. The Bill fell through then owing to local disagreements—chiefly in consequence of the opposition offered to it by the Wicklow Copper Mining Company. That opposition had now been overcome, and the Mining Company had agreed to sell their rights for the sum of £5,000. The local authorities were completely unable, out of their resources, to undertake the necessary works, and to deal with the encroachments of the sea; and the Bill, therefore, was brought forward in order to authorize the Board of Works to proceed with the necessary repairs. The Treasury, recognizing the work to be of a national character, had granted the sum of £15,000 towards the proposed improvements; and, in addition, had sanctioned a loan of £20,000. There was no necessity for him to trouble the House at any length upon the Bill, because he proposed, to-morrow, to move its reference to a Select Committee. There was considerable distress amongst the fishermen in the Arklow locality, arising chiefly from the bad state of the harbour; and taking this into consideration, together with the fact that further delay would only increase the cost of making good the harbour, the Government wished to press on the Bill as quickly as possible. He would, therefore, move that the Bill be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."—(*Mr. Herbert Gladstone.*)

Mr. R. POWER said, he did not rise to oppose the second reading of the measure, but to ask the hon. Gentleman why the Bill should be referred to a Select Committee? He agreed that the

Bill should be pushed on with all possible speed; but he had never known that the best way to push on a Bill was to refer it to a Select Committee. If it were referred to a Committee nothing would be done; but if the hon. Member carried the Bill through a second reading to-night, and then proposed to take the Committee stage in the ordinary way, he (Mr. R. Power) was sure there would be no objection on the Opposition side of the House, for all the Irish Members were anxious that the Bill should pass.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, this partook of the nature of a Private Bill, and must, by the Standing Orders of the House, be referred to a Select Committee.

Mr. WILLIAMSON said, that, unlike the hon. Member who had just sat down, he rose for the purpose of expressing the opinion that the Bill should not only be referred to a Select Committee, but should be subjected to a searching scrutiny. If this Bill were part of a national system of aiding fishery harbours on the exposed coasts, not only of Ireland, but also of England and Scotland, then he approved of it, contingent on that searching scrutiny. But if it were a mere sop to an ungrateful and undeserving Cerberus, he most emphatically objected to it. He recently applied to a Cabinet Minister for aid to a fishery harbour of refuge on the East Coast of Scotland, and he was told that the Government did not give such grants. He, therefore, should be pleased if the Bill passed, if it were a step in the direction of a great national system of aids to fishery harbours on all our exposed coasts, not only of Ireland but also of Scotland and England, and he should not oppose the second reading. At the same time, there were many grave considerations connected with this special Bill which would need very searching scrutiny. It was proposed to pay, in the first instance, £5,000 for this harbour—a useless asset of a bankrupt Company—then to make a free grant of £10,000, and to give a loan of £20,000 besides, on very dubious and undefined security. There were, moreover, further and subsequent liabilities. The harbour, he believed, was exposed to be silted-up by the sands, driven by easterly winds, from the Arklow banks, so that not only must there be economic inquiry, but also the very best scientific investigation before the Bill could be allowed to pass. He should not oppose the second reading; but, as far as he was concerned, he should insist upon a searching investigation by the proposed Committee.

Mr. MARJORIBANKS said, he did not wish to stand in the way of the second reading of the Bill; but he had always thought that such grants as this grant of £15,000 in aid of harbour construction were against the policy of the present Government. The Harbour and Passing Tolls Act was passed in 1861 for the purpose of discouraging and preventing such grants; and he did hope that when the working of that Act was brought up the Government would remember this grant of £15,000, and the other similar grants made for the benefit of Ireland. This question was a pressing one to those who lived on the coast of the North Sea, where harbours were very much needed. They did not grudge this grant to Ireland; but they did press on the Government to do something for them on the East Coast of Great Britain also.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, the Government had done something for the people referred to in 1876, and at other times. For himself, he thought it only fair and proper that a Committee should examine into the question most carefully. The loan which the Bill would grant was secured on sufficient guarantees.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* to a Select Committee.

MOTIONS.

PARLIAMENT—CALL OF THE HOUSE.

RESOLUTION.

Mr. SEXTON, in rising to move that this House be called over on Thursday, the 30th March, said, in making the Motion at that advanced hour of the night, he would endeavour to be very brief. He acknowledged, at the outset, that his Motion was one of a kind which had not often been resorted to in the recent proceedings of Parliament; but, at the same time, he was entitled to say that it was embedded in the practice of the House, and that it frequently appeared on the Records. He found, on reference to the Journals, that in 10 years—from 1822 to 1832—a Call of the House was moved and ordered as often as seven or eight times; indeed, he found that the only occasion on which the House refused to accede to the Motion was on the 10th July, 1855, when Mr. Roebuck endeavoured to get a Call of the House for the purpose of obtaining a Vote on a Motion introduced by him condemning the Crimean policy of the Government of the day. He (Mr. Sexton) could well understand the House refusing that Motion, because it was merely a Party movement against the policy of the Government. He found that in 1839, in connection with the repeal of the Corn Laws, a Call of the House was moved and ordered, and in the same year a Call of the House was ordered in connection with National Education. In 1852 there was a similar Motion in connection with the subject of the repeal of the Corn Laws. He was entitled to say that whenever any Member had made a Motion for a Call of the House, not merely upon a question of first-rate, or second-rate, or third-rate importance; but even on a question that did not concern the general policy of the State, on some Departmental question, the House had readily granted it. On the last occasion that a Call was enforced, it was in connection with a Motion by Mr. Whittle Harvey, the terms of which were—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to revise each pension specified in a Return ordered to be printed on the 28th June, 1835, with a view to ascertain whether the continued payment thereof is justified by the circumstances of the original grant, or the condition of the parties now receiving the same, and to report thereon to the House."

It would be said that the question of pensions, one concerning the expenditure of a very small portion of the public money, was one, at least, of secondary importance; and the conclusion he wished to deduce from this brief reference to Motions of this kind was simply that, whenever it was deemed proper to make one, the House readily acceded to it. In Sir T. Erskine May's *Practice & Procedure of Parliament*, the following occurred:—

> "When the House of Commons is ordered to be called over, it is usual to name a day, which will enable Members to attend from all parts of the country. The interval, however, between the Order and the Call has varied from one day to six weeks. If it be really intended to enforce the Call, not less than a week or 10 days should intervene between the Order and the day named for the Call."

Well, the interval contemplated by his Motion was a week; and he might say, on the one hand, that why he could not allow a longer interval was because circumstances did not admit of it, for the question, to decide which he required a full attendance of Members, would probably come to a division in a week; on the other hand, the interval would be amply sufficient to enable hon. Members to attend in the House from all parts of the country. What was the occasion for which he desired to have recourse to this somewhat unusual measure? No Member of the House would deny that the crisis which the House was now approaching was the greatest which had ever challenged its attention in the whole Parliamentary history of England. It was not a mere question of Departmental policy like National Education, in connection with which the Call was made in 1839, nor a question of State policy like that in connection with which the House was called in 1852. It was a question most profoundly affecting the Constitution of the country—a question which touched the very essence of the Constitution—a question affecting its vital power—a question concerning its most material function. Without endeavouring, as he should not be entitled to do, to notice for a moment the merits of the proposal that would be presently before the House, he thought he was entitled to say that it touched not only the ancient Constitution of the country, but the inalienable and most valuable rights of every private Member of the House, from the greatest to the least. No one, he thought, would deny that, this being the case, it was desirable that there should be the fullest possible attendance of Members, on whatever side they sat, or whatever might be their political opinions; and he should wait with curiosity to hear whether the Government of this country, in view of the precedents he had cited, had any reason to allege against the reasonable demand he now made. He should make one more quotation from the learned author he had already referred to. The author said—

> "In later years Calls were enforced less strictly. The attendance of Members is generally ample,

> and a Call is of little avail in taking the sense of the House, as there is no compulsory process by which Members may be obliged to vote."

But the learned author did not deal with the contingency which had now arisen, and he could not be blamed for not dealing with that contingency, because it was unprecedented in the Parliamentary history of this country. He said there was no compulsory process by which Members could be obliged to vote; but the House had now to consider a compulsory process by which Members were to be prevented from voting. It was well known to the House that three Members of the House were now detained by main force in Ireland. One of them was the recognized Leader of a Party in the House, and was as familiar as any Member of the House with the Rules and Procedure of the House; and no man, whatever his political opinions, would deny that the hon. Member for the City of Cork (Mr. Parnell), if allowed to take part in this debate, on this great and important question, would be able to contribute valuable matter for the guidance of public opinion. He was one of the Members detained by main force elsewhere, and there were two other Members detained. The hon. Member for the City of Cork was on the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the best method of conducting Business in the House, and his masterly knowledge of the subject was universally recognized on that occasion. These three hon. Members represented: one of them a very great county, another one of the most important counties, and another one of the most important cities in Ireland; and the question the Irish Members had to raise was whether the Government, by virtue of the mere will of an official of the Irish Executive, were entitled, in the opinion of the House, to keep these three Members out of the Division Lobbies, and to prevent their taking part in the final decision of the House upon a question of such momentous importance, by the mere will of the Chief Secretary for Ireland? He wished to point out, with all gravity, that these hon. Members had been detained in prison for six months, not in pursuance of any judicial process, or the verdict of any jury, or sentence following upon a trial, not even because of a committal by the humblest magistrate in the Realm. They were detained upon reasonable suspicion working in the brain of the official servant of the Head of the Government. And why were they detained? Because they were reasonably suspected of having incited to intimidation or violence, or of one of the acts specified in the Coercion Act of last year. The policy of release under the Coercion Act was by no means novel. There had been two classes of release up to the present time. Persons had been released on giving an undertaking not to take any share in a certain social movement which was at present agitating the people of Ireland; and others on undertaking to leave the country. He wished the House to understand that in making this Motion he was acting upon his sole responsibility, for he had not communicated with the hon. Members for the City of Cork, or Tipperary, or Roscommon. He was not aware whether, if the Government adopted this Motion, and the House confirmed it, those hon. Members would be willing to attend in the House; but it would be to the honour of this House, and to the good name and credit of the Government, that they should be afforded the opportunity of attending in their places. For was it to be said that by reason of mere suspicion operating in the mind of an official of the Executive, the counties of Tipperary and Roscommon and the City of Cork were to be deprived on this great question of their Constitutional right to express their opinion on the question of the *clôture*, and of their Constitutional force in the vote? That was the question he submitted to the Government. If his Motion were adopted and affirmed, what would be the probable consequence? He had already shown that persons had been released on the simple undertaking to go out of Ireland. He believed he did not go too far in saying that any one of the 600 men now in prison would be released by the Lord Lieutenant upon that undertaking. If the three hon. Members now detained were allowed to come and represent their constituencies on this question they might pursue either of two courses. If they were released either in obedience to the vote of this House, or by virtue of a visit of the Serjeant-at-Arms, they might decline to attend the House and remain in Ireland; or they might immediately come to this House and attend to their Parliamentary duties. He was unaware what course they would adopt; but if they adopted the former course, the powers of the Coercion Act remained unimpaired, and it would be open to the Chief Secretary for Ireland to re-arrest them. If, on the other hand, as he considered it highly probable, they would come to the House—for he could not think they would disregard the desire of their constituents to be heard upon this question—he supposed it could not be contended that their presence in the House could lead to further intimidation and violence in Ireland. That was the position he took up. If the hon. Members refused to avail themselves of the opportunity to take part in this debate and the Division, the Lord Lieutenant would know how to deal with them; if, on the other hand, they did avail themselves of the opportunity which he hoped would be given to them, it could not be contended that from such a course of action any danger would arise as to incitement to intimidation. As an Irish Member, he thought he was entitled and bound to offer this Motion to the House, because he could not conceive that the drastic measure now pending before the House, which might not merely affect the present Parliament and change the whole character, constitution, and efficacy of the Commons Chamber, but which might have a dominant and far-reaching effect on the future legislation of the country, was directed against the Irish Members. The only difference between the two great Parties was that the Party in power wished to apply this power to every other Party; and the Party out of power wished to apply it to the Irish Party. They were both agreed that to the Irish Party it must and should be applied; therefore, because the three hon. Members detained by main force were Irish, and because their constituencies were Irish, he felt that he had a special right and duty to entreat the House to give impartial consideration to the question. From the point of view of the Government there was another serious question arising in connection with this Motion. According to the public prints estimates of the probable vote on the *clôture* had been made; and while the noble Lord the Member for Flintshire (Lord Richard Grosvenor), according to his desire and the impulse of Office, formed a sanguine estimate, there were other people who were less confident of a majority. Some estimates placed the majority of the Government at a figure as low as 6, and others anticipated that, by one of those fluctuations which sometimes occurred at the last moment, the vote might be a matter of equipoise, or even leave the Government in a minority. But by the law of suspicion, involving no judicial process, and by the exercise of the law vested in the will of the Nobleman who was the official servant of the Head of the present Government, on a question of vital gravity—on a question upon which the duration of this Parliament and the existence of the Government depended—the Government did not seem to be ashamed, in a great Parliamentary conflict which might determine their existence, to keep out of the Opposition Lobby the votes of these three Members. He asked the Constitutional Party in the House and in the country to take note of this—that on the presence or absence of the Members for Tipperary, Roscommon, and Cork might depend the success or defeat of the Government upon this momentous question. The keeping away of votes on mere suspicion, without proof and without sentence of defined duration, was a mean course, unworthy of any civilized Government, and especially unworthy of the Government of a great country and a great community like this; and it was not only unworthy, but unmeaning and foolish, when pursued by a Government so boastful of its strength and so confident of its success. The question he had raised was one which might well excite deep feeling in himself, for he could not refer to this angerine enactment without every fibre in his body being aroused; but he had preferred to keep himself within proper limits. He had preferred to treat the question as one of Constitutional freedom, and he trusted he had said nothing which was not entirely in accordance with that view.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House be called over on Thursday, the 30th March." — (*Mr. Sexton.*)

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: Sir, with reference to the last observation of the hon. Member, I have no complaint to make of the tone in which he has brought this Resolution forward, or the arguments by which he has supported it. I do not deny that the practice of enforcing a Call of the House has been, in the few cases which the hon. Member has quoted, a common one in former times; but I think the hon. Member has failed to show, among the precedents he has quoted, that this practice has ever been resorted to for any other purpose than to secure a full attendance of Members; and he has not been able to bring forward any case in which this proceeding has been adopted for an ulterior motive such as he has described in the concluding portion of his speech. The hon. Member quoted liberally several passages from the work of Sir Erskine May, and also quoted fairly the statement contained in that work, that this practice has now, for many years, fallen into desuetude, for the reason that the attendance of Members is generally so good that it is unnecessary to resort to any procedure of this kind to secure a good attendance. It is quite unnecessary for me to discuss the relative importance of the present Motion, and the vote we shall be called upon to give at the close of the *clôture* debate, which has just been adjourned. I do not think there is any reason to anticipate that the attendance on that occasion will be deficient, or that a Call of the House would tend to increase it in any way, because, as has been pointed out in the work referred to, a sufficient excuse offered for the absence of a Member is accepted by the House; and I have no reason to suppose that any Member of this House will be absent on this occasion whose attendance can possibly be secured by resorting to this proceeding. But the hon. Member has perfectly fairly acknowledged that his principal reason in submitting this Motion is to call the attention of the House to the question of the arrest of the hon. Members for the City of Cork and the Counties of Tipperary and Roscommon. I am under the impression that the case of their arrest has already, on several occasions, been discussed in this House, and that the opinion of the House has been given upon it. If that is not so, and there are any further circumstances connected with the policy of the Government in the arrest of those Members, I think the proper method for the hon. Member to take would be to raise a direct question upon the conduct of the Irish Executive, who have, under the Act of last Session, acted on their responsibility in the arrest of these hon. Members. With regard to this Motion, I have only to point out that I fail to see that the proceeding which is recommended by the hon. Member would in any way raise the question. The hon. Member spoke of the Government assenting to this Motion and the House agreeing to it, and I think he spoke of the Serjeant-at-Arms proceeding to Kilmainham to release these hon. Members. But I do not suppose that any such proceeding would take place. If a Call of the House were ordered the names of the three hon. Gentlemen would, no doubt, be called, and when they were called an explanation would, no doubt, be offered either by their own Friends, or from some other quarter, as to the cause which prevented their attendance; and the House would, no doubt, accept that explanation as sufficient.

Mr. SEXTON: It has been the invariable consequence of a Call of the House that defaulting Members are sent for.

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: As I have said, the hon. Member, in the course of his observations, quoted from the work of Sir Erskine May. I find, on reference to that work, that upon the occasion of a Call of the House being made, the names of Members who did not attend were called and taken down by the Clerk of the House; they were afterwards called over again, and if the absent Members appeared in their places, it was usual to excuse them for their previous default; but if not, they were ordered to attend on a future day. It was also customary to excuse them if they afterwards attended, or if a reasonable excuse were offered for their non-attendance; and it was only if a Member did not attend, and no such excuse was offered, that he was liable to be committed to the custody of the Serjeant-at-Arms. I apprehend that the excuse that would be offered for those Gentlemen to whom the hon. Member for Sligo referred would be considered ample; and that, therefore, the House of Commons has no power, by any Order of its own, to release them from detention in pursuance of an Act, not of one, but of both Houses of Parliament. For these reasons it appears to me that the question supposed to be raised will not arise.

When the hon. Member concluded his speech, he referred to the different estimates which had been formed with regard to the probable majority for Her Majesty's Government upon the question of Procedure; and he charged the Government not, by any action of theirs, to detain from the approaching Division Members who might possibly exercise any influence upon the vote. On the part of the Government, I must say that we absolutely decline to be in any way influenced by that suggestion. What would be said of the conduct of a Government who should release Members of the House, who were detained by virtue of an Act of Parliament, because a Division was about to be taken, on which, had they not been so detained, they might have exercised an influence? For my own part, I do not think any words could be used that would be too strong to reprobate such a course. If the release of the Members in question were improper in one sense, it would be improper in the other—that is to say, if there is sufficient reason of a political character for their detention, they ought to be detained altogether, without reference to any Parliamentary consequences which might ensue. On the other hand, if there is no sufficient political reason for their detention, then Parliament ought to be called upon to reconsider the whole question. Sir, I deny that the Government ought to be influenced in any degree by the question whether the vote of these Members would have any effect, one way or the other, on the question to be submitted to the House. It has been over and over again admitted that no distinction ought to be made with regard to the Parliamentary or non-Parliamentary position of persons who might be arrested under the Act. For these reasons, I cannot accept the argument put forward by the hon. Member in support of the position he has taken up with regard to the detention of the Members of this House now under detention; and I must, therefore, oppose the Motion which he has made for a Call of the House.

Mr. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, the noble Marquess had, in the course of his observations, only dealt with one of the suggestions of the hon. Member for Sligo. But it was difficult to find a good precedent which would apply in the present case, for there never was so absurd an example of the arrest or detention of Members of that House, without even a charge being made against them. The present situation was absolutely without precedent and without example. But there was an example of the House exercising authority over the person of absent Members, who were brought there under a warrant by the Serjeant-at-Arms. He perfectly well recollected a Member of the House being sent for, taken into custody, and brought back by the Serjeant because he had failed to attend upon one of the Private Committees. Again, in the famous case of Stockdale, the Serjeant-at-Ams took the Sheriffs of London out of one of Her Majesty's Courts, and brought them, under a kind of duresse, into that House. He did not pretend to say that this course should be followed now; but his hon. Friend thought that one effect of the adoption of his Motion might be that the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant should of his own motion release the Members of the House, now absent from its deliberations, from custody. The noble Lord could not pretend to say that this would not be a reasonable outcome of the adoption of a Motion such as this; and if that were its result, it would solve the whole question in the most practical and easy way. The Chief Secretary for Ireland, under the circumstances, would simply bend to the wish of the House in allowing those Members to vote; and when that had been done he had no doubt they would put no difficulty in the way of the right hon. Gentleman as to re-consigning them to custody. He asked the House to consider what must be the effect upon the public mind of the proceedings of the Government in this matter. How many persons were there in this country or in Ireland who would not believe that an arbitrary power was made use of to get rid of dangerous opposition, or, at least, to get rid of three hostile votes at a crisis of great importance to the Government? If the Government were willing to expose themselves to the consequences of that policy, he could point out to them an easy way of securing a substantial majority on the forthcoming Division. For instance, the question which had been the subject of debate that evening had been adjourned, and it might, by some possibility, be carried over the Easter Holidays. Indeed, he was bound to say that, after the speech just delivered by the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Home Secretary, the possibility of delay arising between that time and the taking of the division appeared to him to have considerably increased. In the by no means impossible event of the debate upon the *clôture* being continued after Easter, and as it was very likely that a considerable number of Irish Members might be able to visit their constituencies during the Recess, he suggested to the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary for Ireland that he should, from a sense of public duty, issue his warrant for their arrest, and the desired majority would be assured. If the policy which now detained the three hon. Members in prison were persisted in, the country would certainly regard the Government as taking the course he had indicated; and the Government would really have established a method of carrying a vote something like that of which the famous Marshal O'Donnell, Prime Minister of Spain, once boasted, when he said he could carry any vote in the Spanish Cortes, because he would take care to have all the Leaders of the Opposition shot.

MR. LABOUCHERE said, he certainly thought that the House of Commons was a more fitting place than a gaol for persons who had been elected to serve their country in Parliament. He was in favour of a Call of the House, inasmuch as there was another Gentleman who would make his appearance on the occasion, and who might possibly vote for the Rule proposed by Her Majesty's Government. He referred to the hon. Member for Northampton (Mr. Bradlaugh), his Colleague, who was prevented from discharging his duty to his constituents, not, as the noble Marquess had said of the three Irish Members detained in prison, by the Act of the whole Parliament, but in defiance of the law. His hon. Friend was prevented from attending, not in pursuance of any Act of Parliament, but in consequence of the act of one House of Parliament; and, were the Motion for the Call of the House agreed to, he would have an opportunity of explaining why he was required to take his seat outside the Bar instead of within the House; and perhaps, also, he would have the opportunity he had long sought, of convincing the House that he was as fit a person to take part in its proceedings as any Member now sitting in it. For this reason he should support the Motion of the hon. Member for Sligo.

MR. O'DONNELL said, he had been very much struck by one of the remarks which had fallen from the noble Marquess. He had contested the request of Irish Members for a Call of the House, which was founded on the consequence of not bringing into the House three Members who, in all probability, would vote against the Government on the question of the *clôture*, by the opposite supposition of the case of three Members incarcerated, who, it was known, would vote for the Government proposal, under similar circumstances. Now, he thought that the way in which Her Majesty's Government regarded this matter ought to be entirely apart from the consideration as to how the Members in question would vote, and not only the Government, but the House ought to look at the question entirely apart from any consideration of the kind. It would be just as legitimate for the House to call upon three absent Members who would vote for the Government, as upon three absent Members who would vote against the Government. He contended that, whether they voted with or against the Government, they ought to have an opportunity of giving their vote on behalf of their constituents on so important a question as that which was now engaging the attention of the House of Commons. With regard to the Motion of the hon. Member for Sligo, it was entirely a vote of the House, apart from that of the Government, which was solicited. He should hardly have expected that the Government would have met that Motion with any opposition, for the reason he had stated; and if, as would no doubt be the case, the question again presented itself, it could be shown that there were many reasons present in the minds of the Government in ordering the arrest of the three Irish Members which might be absent from their consideration of the matter now. Amongst other things, the position taken up by the Government with reference to the incarcerated Members was that they consumed a great deal of time, and that their action was purely vexatious.

MR. SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. Member that he is travelling beyond the Question before the House.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he regretted that his observations should be considered out of Order, and would, therefore, not trouble the House with any further remarks.

Mr. WARTON said, he trusted that the Government did not wish to get any advantage from the fact that three of their opponents were in prison; and he suggested that the way out of the present difficulty was extremely simple. He did not see why the Prime Minister should not pair with the Leader of the Irish Party, while the Home Secretary and the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant paired respectively with the hon. Members for Tipperary and Roscommon.

Question put.

The House *divided* :—Ayes 22; Noes 90: Majority 68.—(Div. List, No. 59.)

PUBLIC OFFICES SITE BILL.

LEAVE. FIRST READING.

Mr. SHAW LEFEVRE hoped the House would allow him to introduce a Bill for the acquisition of property and the provision of new buildings for the Admiralty and War Office, and to defer an explanation of it until a future stage.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

> "That leave be given to bring in a Bill for the acquisition of property and the provision of new buildings for the Admiralty and War Office."—(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre.*)

Mr. HEALY pointed out that if the Irish Members had continued the last debate the Government would have counted them. When, however, their own Business was to be done the Government kept a House. Irish Representatives had just ground of complaint.

Mr. R. POWER said, he did not intend to do so; but if he did oppose the introduction of the Bill he would be quite justified. He found that the hon. Member for Sligo had two Notices on the Paper, and both were opposed by the Government Whips.

Motion *agreed to.*

Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. Shaw Lefevre and Lord Frederick Cavendish.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 111.]

House adjourned at a quarter after Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS,

Friday, 24*th March*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—Public Bill—*First Reading*—Consolidated Fund (No. 2) *.

PRIVATE BILLS.

Ordered, That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after *Thursday* the 15*th day of June* next:

That no Bill originating in this House authorising any inclosure of lands under special report of the Inclosure Commissioners for England and Wales, or confirming any scheme of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales, shall be read a first time after *Thursday* the 30*th day of March* instant:

That no Bill originating in this House confirming any provisional order or provisional certificate shall be read a first time after *Thursday* the 30*th day of March* instant:

That no Bill brought from the House of Commons authorising any inclosure of lands under special report of the Inclosure Commissioners for England and Wales, or confirming any scheme of the Charity Commissioners for England and Wales, shall be read a second time after *Tuesday* the 20*th day of June* next:

That no Bill brought from the House of Commons confirming any provisional order or provisional certificate shall be read a second time after *Tuesday* the 20*th day of June* next:

That when a Bill shall have passed this House with amendments these orders shall not apply to any new Bill sent up from the House of Commons which the Chairman of Committees shall report to the House is substantially the same as the Bill so amended:

Ordered, That the said orders be *printed* and *published*, and affixed on the doors of this House and Westminster Hall. (No. 50.)

PARLIAMENT—BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—RESOLUTION.

The Earl of CAMPERDOWN, in rising to move—

> "That, in the opinion of this House, the sittings for public business should commence at 4 P.M. instead of at 5 P.M.,"

said, his Motion was not now proposed for the first time, as it was originally moved in 1867 by the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Shaftesbury), whose name was associated with so many salutary reforms, and he nearly succeeded in carrying it. The Motion was renewed in 1878 by the noble Viscount opposite (Viscount Midleton), and it received a large measure of support from Peers on both sides of the House, representing every shade of political opinion. On that occasion the Motion was opposed by the late Earl of Beaconsfield, though in an indirect manner. He said—

> "There should not be a fixed Rule, like the Laws of the Medes and Persians, that the House should meet at 5 o'clock. As the Session advances, as Business increases, it is in the power of the House to apply the remedy that is wanted by meeting earlier. I do not know whether my noble Friend will ask for a more decided opinion by the House, or whether he will be satisfied with the debate—leaving those who have the management of Public Business to consider whether the Rules may be relaxed without inconvenience to the Public Service."—[3 *Hansard*, ccxxxviii. 630.]

On that occasion the Mover acceded to the request of the noble Earl, and did not take the opinion of the House. A short time afterwards, in the course of an important debate, he moved that the House should meet at 4 o'clock in order to renew it; but he was told that it was an important Motion of which Notice ought to have been given, and that the hearing of an important appeal would be interfered with, and he therefore withdrew the Motion. Next year it was renewed by a noble Earl near him (the Earl of Dunraven), and it met with considerable support from both sides of the House. On that occasion the opinion of the House was tested by a division; and, although Lord Beaconsfield renewed his opposition, yet the Motion was supported by 64 to 101 against. On both occasions the present Leader of the House spoke for the Motion, and on the latter occasion he gave it the support of his vote. The noble Earl then said that he believed the younger Members of the House were in favour of the Motion, and he felt sure it would be brought forward again. There was a strong and growing feeling among their Lordships that important subjects were sometimes passed over without adequate debate, and without the Members of the House generally having the opportunity of expressing their opinions upon them. Owing to the customs of their Lordships' House, and the somewhat lax observance of Rules, it sometimes happened that important debates arose in the course of conversation; and, if the subject of conversation was not the first Order of the Day, it not unfrequently happened that the speeches were limited to the occupants of the two Front Benches. He said limited, and it was necessarily so, because the House had a strong objection to sitting after half-past 7 o'clock, especially if the Leaders on the two Front Benches had spoken. For this the Leaders were not to blame; and both the present and the late Leaders of the House had frequently stated their desire that the general body of Members should participate freely in debate, and more especially the younger Members. But it was absolutely necessary that occupants of the Front Benches should at some time express their opinions on subjects of importance; and when a conversation arose at a somewhat late hour, it became impossible for them to abstain for any length of time from addressing the House; and after they had done so, and the magical hour of 7 had passed, it was practically impossible for any of the younger Members of the House to command a hearing. A very important instance of this occurred so recently as this Session, when the House was asked to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into the Irish Land Act of 1881. After the leading Members of the House had spoken there was no opportunity for those sitting on the Back Benches to express their opinions. The natural inference to be drawn by the outside public was that on such an important occasion only five Peers cared to take any part in the proceedings. He would ask their Lordships to consider whether such an impression was calculated to uphold the dignity of the House in the feelings of the people of this country? It was not only on such occasions that there was not time for the Business. It was quite true that in the early part of the Session there was comparatively little on the Paper; but in the later months of the Session Notices of Motion became more frequent, and, in addition to subjects for discussion, several Bills were brought forward for consideration. What was the result? Why, either the Business was rapidly hurried over, or it was postponed, because the time had been exhausted, or a later Order was considered of importance, and thus Bills in Committee escaped that revision they were supposed to receive at their Lordships' hands. The most familiar argument against the proposal was that there was comparatively little Business early in the Session. In common with others of their Lordships, he regretted it; but that did not in any way touch his position as to the lack of time when there was Business to do. Although the House had sometimes little or no Business, yet that did not affect the fact that when they had Business they had not sufficient time in which to do it properly. He admitted that debates arising out of conversations did not frequently occur; but if there were only one occasion during the whole Session on which a subject was brought forward which there was not sufficient time to discuss, owing to their hour of meeting, that was an ample reason for its being altered. With respect to the convenience of the Lord Chancellor, he believed that he was in favour of the proposed change. But if the convenience of the noble and learned Lord was in any way interfered with, they already had a Deputy Speaker in the person of the noble Earl (the Earl of Redesdale), who had held the position of Chairman of Committees with great advantage to the House for many years. As regarded any interference with the Appeal Business of the House by reason of the proposed change, he wished to hear the opinion of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack. At the same time, he would wish their Lordships to consider the relative importance of Appeal Business compared with Public Business. He believed that, in the opinion of the country, the importance of the Public Business of the House far outweighed that of any appeals brought before it. As respected the convenience of Ministers, he was fortified by the opinion of the noble Earl the Leader of the House, who, in 1879, declared that the convenience of Ministers would not be seriously interfered with if the House met at 4, and expressed himself in favour of the proposed change. So far as the majority of their Lordships was concerned, he thought that their convenience would be met by the House sitting at 4. Many of their Lordships served on Select Committees, which adjourned at 4 o'clock, and if they desired to remain for the Public Business in the House they must remain within the precincts of the House and occupy the intervening hour in the best way they could. If they met at 4 for Public Business that time would not be wasted. When this proposition had been made on previous occasions it had been opposed by the late Lord Beaconsfield in his lighter and more airy manner, without addressing himself very seriously to the real merits of the question. It was also opposed by the ex-Lord Chancellor (Earl Cairns). He did not pretend to say that the proposed change was the only reform which it was desirable to make in their proceedings; but he believed that if they were to meet an hour earlier for the despatch of Public Business many debates would not be nipped in the bud as they now frequently were, and, especially towards the close of the Session, the Business of the House would be conducted in a much more efficient and thorough manner than at present. The noble Earl concluded by moving his Resolution.

Viscount MIDLETON, in seconding the Motion, expressed the opinion that its adoption would be of very great advantage to the House, and would much facilitate the proper conduct of Business. He had compiled some figures respecting the Sittings of their Lordships, with the view of showing the effect of the present hour of meeting in their curtailment. In 1877 their Lordships sat on 93 occasions, on 49 of which the debate closed before 6. On 41 occasions the House rose between 6 and 9, and there were six cases of long debate followed by divisions. In the following year, the House sat 103 times, and on 47 occasions adjourned before 6 o'clock. On 52 occasions it sat till between 6 and 9, and in four cases there were long debates. If their Lordships sat at 4 o'clock it would entirely suit the convenience of noble Lords sitting on Select Committees, who would be enabled to proceed at once with the Public Business of the House, and afterwards have greater leisure to attend to their own affairs. Moreover, the consequence of meeting at 5 now was, that when an important debate arose only Cabinet Ministers, or noble Lords who had been, or expected to be, Cabinet Ministers took part, and those among their Lordships whom he might call private Members were deprived of the opportunity of expressing their opinions. There certainly was no necessity for the *clôture* in that House, as it was enforced in a very strict form already—that was to say, when it was seen that there was a general wish to close the debate at the important hour of the evening no Peer sitting on the Back Benches was so unwise as to disregard it. He knew they would hear from the noble Earl at the Table (the Earl of

Redesdale) the objection that Peers could not take their seats at 5 o'clock if this Motion were carried. From the time of Charles II. down to the passing of Lord Campbell's Act Peers could not take their seats at 5 o'clock; they were obliged to take their seats before 4 o'clock. If it was necessary that clause of Lord Campbell's Act might be repealed. It was said that additional labour would be cast upon the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack if this Motion were carried; but he had on a former occasion made an excellent speech in favour of the change. It was perfectly true that since 1853 their Lordships had commenced their Sittings for Judicial Business at half-past 10 o'clock instead of 10. If it was necessary to give additional time to the Lord Chancellor, there was not the slightest reason why their Lordships should not revert to the practice which prevailed during the whole of Lord Eldon's tenure of the Office of Lord Chancellor and for 50 years previously, and commence Judicial Business at 10 o'clock instead of half-past 10. In nine cases out of 10 the first Business of the Legislative Sittings was purely of a perfunctory character. There was not the slightest reason why the seat of the noble and learned Lord who occupied the Woolsack, if he felt fatigued by previous Judicial Business, should not be admirably filled by the noble Earl at the Table (the Earl of Redesdale) until the noble and learned Lord was able to take his seat on the Woolsack. It was said that this was a question which required a great deal of examination and consideration. But examination and consideration had already been given to it on the Motion of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies (the Earl of Kimberley). What was the result of that deliberation? The Committee actually passed a Resolution that the House should, if desirable, sit at a quarter past 4 o'clock. That was carried by 9 to 8, though it was true that it was subsequently reversed by 8 to 7. On the recent occasion of the debate on the Irish Land Act several of his noble Friends would have taken part in it if there had been time for doing so. This Motion now came on for the third time. He should support it on every possible ground, and he did not believe that any valid reason could be assigned against it. If it were carried it would add to the dignity and efficiency of the deliberations of their Lordships' House.

Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, the sittings for public business should commence at Four P.M. instead of at Five P.M."—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

EARL GRANVILLE said, that an appeal had been made to him by the noble Lords who had just spoken, and they had said, with perfect truth, that he (Earl Granville) had spoken and voted on previous occasions in favour of this Motion; but he was not quite sure that he felt so keenly on the subject now as when in Opposition. Still, he thought that he had no very good reasons why there should be a diminution of his zeal in this matter. Argument had been so well put forward by his two noble Friends in favour of the Motion, and as no Peer had risen to express an opposite view, he thought he need not make any observations upon the merits of the question; but he would suggest that the time of meeting should be a quarter past 4, and not 4 o'clock, as it would cause some inconvenience if the time devoted to hearing Appeals were shortened by the alteration proposed. He could not help pointing out to unofficial Peers that there was a certain advantage in the earlier hour of meeting. On those occasions when the House adjourned soon after the hour of meeting the greater part of the afternoon was at present lost; but supposing that they adjourned, as it sometimes happened, at five minutes after they met—namely, 20 minutes past 4, those noble Lords would have the whole afternoon before them, and the inestimable advantage of being able to catch the 5 o'clock train, even if they wished to go into the country. With the greater security which he had suggested in regard to Appeals, he should, on this occasion, cordially vote with his noble Friend.

THE MARQUESS OF BATH was of opinion that the noble Earl opposite would entirely fail in the object which he had in view if he succeeded in carrying his Motion. The idea of the noble Viscount (Viscount Midleton) was that if the House met earlier more Peers would take part in the debates; but he would ask their Lordships to look at the question like men of common sense. The House met now at 5, and commenced Business at a quarter past, and half-past 7 was the dinner hour. The two noble Lords said, in proposing this change, that there would be longer time for discussion; but now, if there were any Business of importance to transact, their Lordships were always willing to remain at the House even till a late hour of the night to dispose of it. When there was no Business of importance they rose early—namely, at half-past 5 o'clock—and the effect of this Motion would be, if it were agreed to, that on those evenings, instead of the House becoming impatient at half-past 7, they would become impatient at 5 o'clock. The result of the change would be that they would rise earlier.

THE EARL OF REDESDALE (CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES) said, he thought that to meet three-quarters of an hour before the time they now met would be no gain to anybody, and, in fact, a perfectly needless occupation of their time; while the inconvenience would be extremely great to the noble and learned Lord who occupied the Woolsack, and the Legal Lords engaged in the exercise of the Appellate Jurisdiction of the House. The arrangement would also materially interfere with the conduct of the Private Business of the House in his Department. He would remind their Lordships that from a quarter to 4 o'clock to a quarter to 5 was the most busy period of the day with many of their Lordships; and, looking at all the circumstances of the case and the inconvenience, he saw no reason for making any change.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR remarked, that the noble Lord who had made the Motion had truly remarked that when he (the Lord Chancellor) was not in Office he had supported a similar Motion. He had held the Office of the Great Seal before he expressed that opinion, so that he was not ignorant of the demands which an earlier hour of meeting would make on the time of the Lord Chancellor, or of the inconvenience which might arise unless their Lordships made such arrangements as would prevent the inconvenience. But he thought then, and he thought still, that if the change would conduce to the more adequate discharge of the legislative and deliberative functions of the House; if it would tend to induce the House more frequently to take the part which became such an Assembly in connection with the discussion of important public questions; and if it would tend to increase the number of speakers, no considerations connected with the Appellate Business of the House, or with the official position of the holder of the Great Seal, could be of sufficient importance to countervail the reasons for the change. He had received substantially the same impression as that of the Mover and Seconder of the Resolution —namely, that the hour at which the House met now, when considered in connection with the inevitable effect of other circumstances upon the habits of their Lordships, did operate as a discouragement, and had a tendency to limit the proportions of discussions on important public affairs. He frankly confessed, also, that this discouragement was not absolutely confined to the younger Members of the House, but extended even to the occupants of the Front Benches, where the rule that silence was golden prevailed to a greater extent than it would prevail, or ought to prevail, if there were more time for debate. A good many subjects which might be discussed with advantage to the country were often only touched upon very slightly on account of the sense of the inconvenience that was caused by a discussion prolonged beyond half-past 7. It was all very well to say that on occasions when Business was continued up till 8 or 9 o'clock, noble Lords might remain and prolong the debate if they should think fit; but, as a matter of fact, they did not like to do so, because their Lordships generally would disapprove that course, their habit being to make arrangements and enter into engagements in the expectation that the Business, under ordinary circumstances, would not last beyond a certain hour. Even on the great occasions when the House did make the necessary effort, and sat for some length of time, an additional hour, or three-quarters of an hour, would often be useful and advantageous. For these reasons, he thought the proposed experiment was, at least, worth trying; but he should be glad if their Lordships would also make such arrangements as would obviate the necessity of the presence of the Lord Chancellor or of the Chairman of Committees upon the Woolsack at the earlier hour of meeting. If his noble Friend should agree to make a quarter past 4 the hour of meeting he would endeavour to persuade the noble and learned Lords constituting the Appellate Court to sit at a quarter past 10 instead of half-past 10, and rise a quarter of an hour before the usual time. As he had already said, he had voted when out of Office for a similar Resolution; and he could not now refuse to support the present Motion without laying himself open to the charge of having less care for the convenience of his Predecessor in Office than for his own. He was, therefore, prepared to vote for the Motion.

THE MARQUESS OF SALISBURY said, that in the history of the future it would be a singular incident in the mode of conducting Public Business in the year 1882, that the two Houses of Parliament, abandoning their tedious practice of adding Acts of Parliament to the Statute Book, occupied themselves with talking about their own discussions. In the House of Commons the virtue of silence was strongly enforced, and in the House of Lords the virtue of loquacity was being encouraged. His impression was that the Motion was not a very important one, and that it would lead to no very important change. He did not share the views that had been expressed as to the motives that actuated Peers when important matters were under discussion. A terrible picture had been drawn of the importance to the Public Service of an adequate discussion on the occasion of the nomination of the Committee on the Land Act, and their Lordships had been told how the debate was closed when the witching hour of dinner was in view. He did not wish to depreciate the claims of dinner; but he ventured to say that there were not many Peers upon whom the pangs of hunger had so large and anticipatory an effect as to make it impossible to continue a debate when the clock showed that the time was within 60 minutes of the dinner-hour. He thought there must have been other causes than the approach of dinner to account for the silence of their Lordships on the occasion referred to. He had always felt that this question was really one for the decision of those who were in Office. It was on them the burden would fall; and if the noble Earl opposite (Earl Granville) and the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack felt that the change could be effected with convenience in connection with the Public Service, it would be ungracious in those who were not engaged in that Service to put any difficulty in the way of the Motion. For those noble Lords who were engaged on Committees it would be a great relief, because it was difficult for them to know what to do with the fragment of time between the rising of the Committee and the present hour of meeting of the House. The suggestion of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack was one of considerable weight. There had been an impression among the younger Members that they were unfairly dealt with by those who sat on the Front Benches, and that the flood of their eloquence was unduly checked. He should be sorry to take any step that would confirm that belief; and he hoped, now that they proposed to make that change, they should see the younger Members spring forward into the arena of debate. In that case, they might congratulate themselves on the change.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN stated that he would accept the change in his Motion proposed by the noble Earl (Earl Granville), and substitute a quarter past 4 instead of 4 o'clock.

EARL STANHOPE said, he hoped that when the change took place the Government would give their Lordships something to do. There were many Bills which might be introduced into the House of Lords; but they had been sitting all this Session with their arms folded, because the Government would bring forward nothing in their Lordships' House.

Motion amended, and *agreed to.*

Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, the sittings for public business should commence at a quarter past Four P.M., instead of at Five P.M.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR asked the noble Earl (the Earl of Camperdown) what he proposed as to the time when this change was to commence? Probably it would be more convenient to delay any change until after Easter.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said, that he would consult the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, and the Leaders on both sides of the House.

THE NEW PUBLIC OFFICES—THE SITE AND PLANS.—QUESTION.

LORD LAMINGTON asked Her Majesty's Government, Whether any decision has been come to as to the site and plans for the new public offices?

Lord SUDELEY: The Government have given the most anxious and careful consideration to this question, and have decided to use the site of the present Admiralty and Spring Gardens for new buildings, in which the War Office and Admiralty will be concentrated. It is proposed to purchase a few houses fronting Charing Cross, and to take over from the Office of Works the whole of New Street, Spring Gardens Terrace, and one side of Spring Gardens, and to pull down the existing Admiralty. By this means space will be obtained for a large quadrangle between the Horse Guards and Spring Gardens, on which both War Office and Admiralty can be built. This scheme has the great advantage of bringing the War Office and Admiralty under one roof, and of placing the War Office next to the Horse Guards. It will give about 59,000 square feet to the War Office, and about 52,800 square feet to the Admiralty, which is considered to be ample. The noble Lord complains that land will be taken from the Park. It is true that a small piece of land will be taken from the Park; but, on the other hand, the much larger area of the gardens in Spring Gardens Terrace will be thrown into the Park and given up to the public. As regards the cost of the site, it is estimated that the private property to be purchased and Crown land will together amount to something under £500,000. A large portion of this sum will be merely a book transaction between two Departments. This estimated amount might be very much reduced, if thought desirable, by the sale of property already purchased in Great George Street and by Winchester House, and also by giving up all the houses in Pall Mall now rented at £7,500 per annum. The cost of building these Offices, taken roughly, will be about £670,000, which would be spread over a number of years. Next year the large amount of £160,000 a-year now spent on erecting public buildings will cease, owing to their completion; and the Government think the time has arrived when this great improvement, so long delayed, may fairly be undertaken. The noble Lord, who was Chairman of the Committee which sat in 1877, and who has always taken great interest in this subject, will at once perceive that, while giving the accommodation required, this plan will be carried out at a very economical rate. The noble Lord complains that this site has been adopted contrary to the recommendations of all the Committees which have ever sat. He must remember, however, that the Committee over which he presided had a proposal somewhat similar to this before them, only in a more expensive and extended form, and that it was one of the three suggested schemes embodied in their Report. The noble Lord must also remember that that Committee, after sitting a great many times, were unable to come to any definite decision, and merely submitted the proposals, throwing the onus of determining what was best on the Government. A Bill was introduced last night by the First Commissioner of Works in the other House for acquiring the necessary lands; so the noble Lord will have further opportunities, when the Bill comes up to this House, of discussing the question.

The Earl of REDESDALE (Chairman of Committees) expressed some disappointment that it was not proposed to continue the public buildings to the end of Parliament Street, thereby securing a fine, wide, handsome approach from Charing Cross to the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Abbey. He had, more than 30 years ago, advocated the purchase of all the freeholds between Downing Street and Great George Street, the interests of the occupiers to be dealt with from time to time as new offices were to be erected. Many of the houses were those of a poor description, and, consequently, the cost would have been comparatively inconsiderable. The opportunity had been neglected, those buildings had been replaced by new ones, and the whole property had greatly increased in value.

Lord TRURO urged that one of the first duties of the Government was to elevate the character of our public Offices.

Earl STANHOPE asked whether the Government had determined to take any steps with a view of relieving the block of traffic at present experienced at Hyde Park Corner; and, if so, if they would state what was the nature of their scheme?

LORD SUDELEY said, he was sorry he was unable to give the noble Earl any promise as to the plans being submitted for inspection; but he believed it was usual to lay similar plans on the Table of the Library, and he would make further inquiry. As regarded the Hyde Park Corner question, he was unable, without Notice, to give the noble Earl any information about it, as the whole matter was still under consideration. In respect to the Question of the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees, as to Great George Street, he was afraid he had been misunderstood. What he said was, that if thought desirable to sell it, the sale of the property purchased on the Great George Street site would meet, to a very large extent, the cost of the new site; but he did not say that it had been so decided.

CONSOLIDATED FUND (NO. 2) BILL.

Read 1^{a}; to be read 2^{a} *To-morrow;* and Standing Order No. XXXV. to be considered in order to its being dispensed with.—(*The Earl Granville.*)

House adjourned at half past Six o'clock, till To-morrow, half past Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Friday, 24*th* *March*, 1882.

MINUTES.]—SUPPLY—*considered in Committee*—CIVIL SERVICES, Classes I., II., III., IV., V., VI., VII., AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

PRIVATE BILL (*by Order*)—*Third Reading*—Lower Thames Valley Main Sewerage Board.

PUBLIC BILLS—*Ordered*—*First Reading*—Duke of Albany (Establishment) * [112].

Second Reading—Partnerships [27].

Select Committee—Arklow Harbour [96], *nominated;* Bills of Exchange * [70], Mr. Asher, Mr. Orr Ewing, Mr. Armitstead, Sir Edmund Lechmere, and Mr. Gibson *added.*

Report—Drainage (Ireland) Provisional Order * [94]; Metropolitan Commons Supplemental * [92].

Third Reading—Consolidated Fund (No. 2), and *passed.*

PRIVATE BUSINESS.

LOWER THAMES VALLEY MAIN SEWERAGE BOARD BILL (*by Order*).

THIRD READING.

Order for Third Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read the third time."—(*Mr. Dodds.*)

MR. RAIKES said, he proposed to take a course which was not frequent in that House, and which, he hoped, would never become frequent, for it was most undesirable that questions connected with the details of a Private Bill should be re-opened on the third reading. It might be presumed that the details of such a Bill had been carefully examined by the Committee to which it had been referred upstairs; but he did not think this objection could be fairly taken now, seeing that the present measure was one for the purpose of providing for the payment of certain costs incurred by a District Board in promoting legislation in the year 1879, and really the question which the Committee upstairs had to decide was one which hardly admitted of such a tribunal dealing with it in more ways than one. The Bill, under ordinary circumstances, would have been an unopposed Bill, because the parties whose interest it was chiefly to oppose it were, by the recognized practice of the House, excluded from a *locus standi* to oppose the Bill, because they were constituents of the District Board which promoted it. That being so, a Bill of this sort generally went to the Chairman of Ways and Means as an unopposed Bill, and was adjudicated upon by him without calling on the parties to be heard. In this particular case, an opposition was offered by 11 ratepayers of the district, and these gentlemen might have been excluded from hearing before the Committee if the promoters had chosen to take an objection to their *locus standi*, and by that means have shut them out. But the promoters, with an adroitness which he certainly thought did them credit, did not object to the *locus standi* of these 11 unfortunate ratepayers, because they thought that it would tell much more in their favour if it appeared that the Bill was only opposed by 11 out of a population of 118,000. But everybody who had the means of obtaining competent legal advice in the district would necessarily have been informed by every counsel they consulted that it was not of any use to present a Petition against the Bill; and that, if they did, their *locus standi* would be certainly disallowed. Therefore, it was only left to these 11 persons, who could scarcely have been able to obtain experienced advice, to come before the Committee, by whom their case was certain to be rapidly disposed of. Indeed, the Committee could hardly come to any conclusion but one, because, when the promoters pointed to the circumstance that, out of 118,000, only 11 persons were found to oppose this particular measure, it was a very reasonable and natural conclusion that the bulk of the population of the district was entirely in its favour. Therefore, he did not think the question of this Bill having been before the Committee really bore at all on the issue which had now come before the House. He ventured to call the attention of the House to the matter because it was one which occupied the attention of the House some three years ago, and certainly was to him a matter of very great interest and very great anxiety. At that time he had the honour to hold the Office which his right hon. Friend (Mr. Lyon Playfair) now occupied, and he frequently was obliged to make up his mind and to advise the House on matters in regard to which the arguments on either side were very closely balanced, and upon which it was rather difficult to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. In point of fact, the difficulties of any case rendered it more and more anxious and doubtful work to advise the House satisfactorily as to the conclusion it should adopt. But, in this particular case, he had felt it his duty, after hearing all the arguments, to advise the House to throw out the Bill, and the ground on which he asked the House to throw it out was simply this. This Board for the Lower Thames Valley was formed under the Provisional Order Act of 1877, for the purpose of carrying out a system of sewerage for the districts, and he would point out what was the method that was adopted. The Act which was its origin provided, in the 23rd clause of the Schedule of the Act, that they should get their expenses in a certain shape. The clause said that the expenses incurred by the Board in pursuance of the Provisional Order should be defrayed out of the common fund to be contributed by the local authorities of certain districts, and so forth. By the Bill of 1879 the District Board deliberately, for reasons best known to themselves, determined to take action outside the powers assigned to them under the Act by which they had been created. The intention that was clearly visible throughout the whole of the Act was that the District Board should act through and in connection with the Local Government Board, and the result of an application to the Local Government Board for a Provisional Order would have been that the merits of the case would have been inquired into on the spot by one of the Inspectors of the Local Government Board. He would have held an inquiry, at which all the parties would have been represented and would have been heard, and, after his inquiry, the Local Government Board would or would not have recommended the measure to Parliament. But the District Board of the Thames Valley thought they knew better than that. They foresaw that if they were to give effect to the scheme which they desired to carry into effect, and attempted to submit that scheme to an inquiry conducted by a Local Government Inspector, all parties whose rights were affected and interests concerned would have an opportunity of being heard on that inquiry. And they were equally well advised that if they came to Parliament, it would be in their power to shut the mouths of every single person whose interests were affected or whose rights were concerned except they happened to be the owners of the land they proposed to deal with. He remembered it was stated in the debate which occurred upon the Bill that some 24 or 25 schemes were submitted to the District Board, and that 23 of those schemes—all of which were perfectly practicable — could have been given effect to under a Provisional Order; but the District Board rejected every one of them, and selected the only one out of 24 schemes which came before them which required an application to be made to the House of Commons, because it touched the principle of water rights. He believed that their sole justification for the course they took was that their

Bill of 1879 interfered with certain water rights, and therefore it was necessary to make an application to Parliament; but he ventured to state that, if the District Board had thought it proper to adopt any of the 23 schemes submitted to them by competent engineers, it would not have been necessary to come to that House at all. It was urged with great force in 1879 by his hon. and learned Friend the present Solicitor General that a great and obvious wrong would be done if the House allowed its Rules to be employed as a means of excluding from a fair hearing the owners of property and the ratepayers of a particular district. That being so, the House adopted that view, and the Bill was rejected. It was rejected, not with any regard to the precise merits of the particular scheme, but distinctly on the ground that it was an example of *mala fides* on the part of the promoters, who sought to use the Forms of the House as a means of excluding from opposition the parties who were most interested in the scheme. They were told that the unfortunate District Board were only doing what they were obliged to do, because they could not get what they wanted with a Provisional Order. But, subsequently, they did go for a Provisional Order, and there was a local inquiry, conducted at considerable expense. But, although it was expensive, at least it was fair, and the persons who objected to the Bill of 1879 were successful at the inquiry before the Inspector of the Local Government Board, and hence they had heard no more of this precise scheme; it had passed to the limbo of many other abortions. Under these circumstances, he did not think the House would do well, without a word of inquiry, to consent to the proposal to alter the law for the benefit of certain individuals who had been detected in abusing the Forms of the House and in trying to inflict a substantial injury upon persons who had a right to be heard. He had therefore felt it his duty to bring the matter at this stage before the House. He intended to make no Motion upon it, nor would he take upon himself the responsibility of dividing the House upon the question. He had rather that that responsibility rested with his right hon. Friend the Chairman of Ways and Means. But he did think that he had a right to complain with regard to one of the Papers that had been sent abroad on that occasion. He sometimes wished that there was some Order of the House to prohibit their circulation. He would only say that he felt it his duty to take exception to the first statement which that Paper contained. It was stated by the promoters that on Friday, the 24th of March, at the time of Private Business, he (Mr. Raikes) intended to move the rejection of the Bill on the third reading. He called attention to this paragraph for this reason, that the agent who had charge of the Bill spoke to him at 6 o'clock yesterday, and asked him if he intended to move the rejection of the Bill. He told the agent that it was not his intention to do so, whereupon Mr. Wyatt, the agent in question, told him that that was very satisfactory, and went away. Nevertheless, Mr. Wyatt, in that Paper, which was circulated with a number of others, among Members of the House, made a statement which he knew distinctly to be untrue. He was sorry to express himself so strongly upon the subject, because he had had a good deal of acquaintance with Mr. Wyatt at the time he had official relations with the House, and it was a very pleasant acquaintance. At the same time, he felt bound to indicate to the House any statement contained in a document submitted to Members which was distinctly without foundation, and which might be considered to prejudice the action of any hon. Member on matters of this sort. If the House thought, out of pity, that it was desirable to pass this Bill, and if they thought that the District Board had suffered sufficiently for their rashness, and, he must add, for their sharp practice, in the year 1879, he should have nothing further to say; but he did not think he should be doing right—having a knowledge of the circumstances of the case—if he did not, at all events, give the House an opportunity of expressing an opinion as to whether such knowledge as they now had of the proceedings of the District Board rendered them deserving of the favourable consideration of the House.

MR. SHIELD said, that, in the absence of the hon. Member for East Cheshire (Mr. Legh), who was the Chairman of the Committee to which the Bill was referred, as he (Mr. Shield) had had the honour of sitting on the Committee, he hoped the House would allow him to say a few words in answer to the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes). The right hon. Gentleman passed no reflection upon the action of the Committee. Indeed, it was obvious that the Committee could come to no other conclusion than to pass the Bill; but he (Mr. Shield) was anxious, if the House would permit him, to state what was the case presented to the Committee, especially as such statement would show that the House itself could take no other course than to permit the Bill, passed by the Committee, to go through its remaining stages. The Bill originally promoted by the District Board was presented in the year 1879, and its object was to provide for the disposal of the sewage of a large district in the Valley of the Thames, lying just outside the limits of London, without allowing it to flow into the Thames. The Board was constituted by an Act of Parliament, and Parliament placed upon the Board certain statutory obligations, which obligations it was their duty to carry out within a period of three years. That being so, how did they set about this duty? They obtained the best plans they could from the most eminent engineers of the day, and they appointed a superintendent engineer to report upon those plans, and eventually, after much labour and consideration, they adopted one of them. The scheme they adopted, it was quite true, had certain features and incidents connected with it which rendered it impossible that it could be authorized by the Local Government Board, and it was therefore necessary, if it were to be carried into effect, that the promoters should make an application to Parliament. The suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman was, and it was a very injurious suggestion to the Board, that the features of the scheme which rendered it inappropriate for a Provisional Order were not *bonâ fide* inserted in it, but that there were patches adroitly foisted upon the scheme by the promoters to give them an excuse for proceeding by Bill instead of by Provisional Order. It would take far more time to meet that suggestion than the House would probably care to allow him; but he certainly thought that the right hon. Gentleman ought not to have made such a serious accusation, and that he ought not to have talked about the "sharp practice" of these gentlemen who, at all events, were gentlemen of position, and had undertaken the discharge of most important and onerous public duties. He would not enter into the defence of these gentlemen; but if hon. Members would kindly read the Papers which had been circulated, he would be quite content to accept their judgment upon the question whether the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman was or was not well-founded. Eventually the Bill of the District Board came before the House of Commons, and it was rejected on the second reading, notwithstanding that the then President of the Local Government Board expressed a strong opinion that these gentlemen were honestly endeavouring to perform the duty that Parliament had cast upon them. He trusted that the House would not entertain any Motion now for the rejection of the Bill. If they did they would set a very bad example, as the Bill was promoted *bonâ fide* and was strictly within the precedents of Parliament. Similar Bills had been passed in the interests of the Metropolitan Board of Works, that Board having incurred very heavy expenses in promoting Bills which had been abortive, and they had been allowed to recoup themselves for the expenses they had incurred by a Bill of this nature. In this case it must also be recollected that the work was being done gratuitously, and that the Bill had already passed a Committee upstairs.

Mr. GORST said, he had no wish to detain the House for more than a few minutes; but he wished to remove an impression which must have been produced by his right hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes). He understood his right hon. Friend to complain that, after having last night given Notice to the promoters of the Bill that he did not intend to oppose it, a statement had been sent out to the Members of the House to the effect that he intended to move the rejection of the Bill at 4 o'clock that day. He was sure that his right hon. Friend would quite understand that printed statements of this kind were not got up at the last minute, but required a little time in order to print and circulate them. He believed the real fact was that the statement was sent out to hon. Members some time before his right hon. Friend informed the agent that he did not intend to move the rejection of the Bill. His right hon. Friend would also recollect that the Bill was to have been considered last Tuesday instead of to-day, and that if there was to be any opposition it would have been unreasonable to expect that the promoters would not take all the steps they could for the protection of their own interests.

MR. SPENCER said, he should not have obtruded himself upon the attention of the House if it had not been for the fact that he had been also a Member of the Committee with his hon. and learned Friend (Mr. Shield); and he wished, therefore, to express what his view was when the gentleman representing the Petitioners came before the Committee. They heard the whole of the statement for the promoters of the Bill, and nobody appeared to oppose, until at length a gentleman put in an appearance, and proceeded to make what he called a statement against the Bill. Now, he thought that all the Members of the Committee would agree that this gentleman brought forward no reasons whatever why the Bill should not be passed, but rather indulged in an acrimonious discussion with the promoters of the Bill, which was totally irrelevant to its primary object. Having listened carefully to everything that this gentleman had to say, the Committee came to the conclusion that they ought to pass the Bill; and the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) admitted that they could have come to no other conclusion. The right hon. Gentleman himself had brought forward no reason why the Bill should be rejected, and he had stated that the Local Board of East Moulsley, who opposed the Bill in 1879, had withdrawn their opposition. Indeed, there was nobody opposing the Bill at all, except 11 gentlemen from East Moulsley. The Committee were acquainted with all these facts, and having talked them over among themselves, they came unanimously to the conclusion that the Bill ought to pass. It must be borne in mind that only 11 persons, with a very small interest in the district, gave notice of opposition to the Bill, out of a population of 118,000. He apologized to the House for having troubled them with these few remarks; but he had felt that, having had the honour of sitting on the Committee, it was his duty to make them.

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, that as his right hon. Friend the Member for Preston (Mr. Raikes) had made no Motion for the rejection of the Bill, it was scarcely worth while to continue the discussion; but as he (Mr. Sclater-Booth) was privy to all these complicated series of transactions, he thought it right to say that although, in his judgment, the District Board took the wrong course, and selected the wrong mode of proceeding, he had never any reason to suppose that they had adopted that course with any *mala fides*, nor did he think that their object in proceeding by Bill was to prevent an investigation being conducted on the spot. There was no reason to believe that it was so, although he must repeat that, in his judgment, the course they pursued was wrong. Under the circumstances, he did not think that the House should hesitate now to pass the Bill, for everyone would be willing to admit that the promoters must be protected, to some extent, in regard to the expenses they had incurred.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read the third time, and *passed.*

QUESTIONS.

METROPOLIS—ELECTIONS TO APPOINTMENTS IN THE CITY OF LONDON.

MR. FIRTH asked the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Whether his attention has been called to the fact that, on Thursday last, the Common Council of the City of London elected a pawnbroker of advanced age to the office of collector of wine dues for the Port of London, at a salary of £400 a-year; whether it is the fact that, in order to such election, the Common Council successively suspended their 83rd standing order, which prevents the election of present or recent members of the Council to offices in the gift of that body, and the 69th standing order, which provides that no bankrupt or insolvent person shall be elected to office under the Corporation; and, whether, in the forthcoming Local Government Bill, he will consider the propriety of excluding from the pension and compensation clauses of the Bill persons hereafter appointed to any offices which may be thereby modified or abolished?

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Sir, I have no authority over the appointments made by the Corporation of the City of London, and I ought not to express any judgment either for or against them.

RAILWAYS (7 & 8 VICT. c. 85)—ARTIZANS' TRAINS.

MR. BUXTON asked the President of the Board of Trade, Whether the Act 7 and 8 Vic. c. 85, 1844, which imposes obligations on Railway Companies of running cheap Artizans' Trains (Clause 6), and relieves them from the payment of the Railway Passenger Tax for passengers carried by such trains (Clause 9) is still in force, or has ever been repealed or modified by subsequent legislation; and, whether any Railway Companies are now exempt from the obligations imposed by this Act either from the fact of their incorporation prior to the passing of the Act, or from the exercise of the discretionary powers of the Board of Trade, as provided under certain conditions by Clause 6 of the same Act?

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Sir, the Act referred to in the first part of the Question is not accurately described, because it only relieves the Railway Companies from the Railway Passenger Tax where the passengers are carried at a charge of less than 1*d.* a-mile. The Act is still in force, and has not been repealed or modified by any subsequent legislation. None of the Railway Companies are exempt from the obligations imposed by the Act.

STATE OF IRELAND—THE COUNTY OF WATERFORD.

MR. R. POWER asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, If his attention has been called to the charge of Judge Harrison to the Waterford County grand jury, in which he said,

> "I am very happy to be able to tell you, on the occasion of my first visit to your beautiful county, that there is not much business of a criminal nature to come before you; the number of cases in which the Crown will send up bills to you is only six, and they are of a very trivial character. These cases are of an ordinary kind, and such as you must expect in a large community like this;"

and, why he still considers it necessary

to keep so peaceful a county under the provisions of the Coercion Act?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, I have seen the report in two newspapers of the learned Judge's charge to the Waterford County Grand Jury. There were only six criminal cases tried. This, however, did not represent the reported but undetected crimes, which included firing into dwellings and maiming of cattle. At present the proscription of the county of Waterford cannot be revoked.

WATER SUPPLY (METROPOLIS).

MR. FIRTH asked the President of the Local Government Board, Whether the Reports upon the London Water Supply, prepared by Dr. Tidy, Dr. Olding, and Dr. Crookes, and which are circulated as being Reports "presented to the President of the Local Government Board," are prepared with the authority or at the request or expense of the Local Government Board?

MR. DODSON: Sir, these Reports are not prepared with the authority or at the request or expense of the Local Government Board. They are prepared at the request, and I presume at the expense, of the Water Companies. They are addressed to the Board; but this is a purely voluntary proceeding on the part of their authors.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—PATRICK MURPHY.

MR. SEXTON asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether Patrick Murphy, of Kerry, has now been nearly ten months imprisoned under the Coercion Act, and has only once received notice of remand, at the end of the first three months; whether, immediately after the arrest of Patrick Murphy, the house in the occupation of his wife and children was burnt to the ground, by order of the agent of Lord Kenmare, Patrick Murphy's landlord; whether the Killarney magistrates, on the 28th ultimo, fined Mrs. Murphy 22*s.* for occupying a hut which had been put up to shelter herself and her children; whether Patrick Murphy applied for six days' release on parole, to provide a shelter for his family; whether the said parole was granted; and, whether, considering the length of imprisonment and the circumstances detailed, the Government will now order the release of Patrick Murphy?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, the hon. Member asks me six Questions. As to the first, Patrick Murphy was arrested on the 23rd of May last, and has been since detained. His case was reconsidered every three months, and on each occasion the decision was certified to the Clerks of the Crown for Kerry and Dublin, in compliance with the provisions of the Statute. As to the second Question, the house was destroyed nine months before Murphy was arrested, and not after his arrest. As to the third Question, Lord Kenmare's property was trespassed on, and a hut built there by the Land League for Murphy's wife, who took possession of it, and was twice summoned for the trespass, convicted, and fined, in each case, 10*s.*, with 2*s.* costs. Notwithstanding this, the trespass was persistently repeated; and she was, therefore, summoned a third time, convicted again, and committed in default of payment of the fine. As to the last three Questions, Murphy applied to be released on parole for 12 days, and his application is now before his Excellency. Of course, if the husband and wife have been arrested, the children are naturally deprived of the protection of their parents.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR asked if the right hon. and learned Gentleman would have any objection to lay upon the Table a Return showing the number of tenement processes brought by Lord Kenmare against his tenants, and the number of houses burned down on the property?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) could not see the exact utility of such a Return, but he would ask about it.

STATE OF IRELAND (WICKLOW CO.)—CARRICKBYRNE LODGE.

MR. REDMOND asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether it is a fact that for some months past Carrickbyrne Lodge, county Wexford, the residence of Mr. Browne Clayton, has been occupied by police; and, if so, what is the nature of their duties there, and if they are paid for as extra police by the county?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, since the 16th of January a party of Constabulary has been stationed in Carrickbyrne Lodge for the purpose of protection and ordinary constabulary duty in preserving the peace of the district; but they are not paid for as extra police by the county.

MR. REDMOND asked whether the district required to be protected?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): I take it for granted that that is so.

RIVERS CONSERVANCY AND FLOODS PREVENTION BILL.

MR. HENEAGE asked the President of the Local Government Board, If he will introduce a Clause in Committee on the Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill, to enable the Conservancy Boards to make provisions for a good supply of water in the uplands in times of severe drought, should it be decided to include uplands within the rateable area?

MR. DODSON: Sir, the Bill introduced by the Government in the House of Lords last year contained a clause to the effect indicated in the Question. That clause was omitted by the Lords' Committee, and was not re-inserted by the Committee of the Commons. Under these circumstances, I do not propose to introduce such a clause in the present Bill.

THE ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY—SUB-CONSTABLE FORBES.

MR. METGE asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the case of Sub-Constable Forbes, of the Kells police force, who, on the 21st of October last, was fined £3 for being drunk, by a court of inquiry held at Kells, which fine was afterwards confirmed by the Inspector General, notwithstanding the evidence given by two medical doctors of high standing to the effect that Forbes was not drunk, but suffering from "ear vertigo," a complaint, the symptoms of which are of a similar character to those manifested by a person under the influence of drink; and whether, under the circumstances, he will have the fine remitted?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, the Court of Inquiry into this charge examined several witnesses. Among those called for the defence were two medical gentlemen, one of whom, having seen the defendant one hour and 25 minutes after the charge was made, gave it as his opinion that the defendant was then sober; the other, having seen the defendant two hours after the charge was made, gave it as his opinion that the swaying motion and staggering gait were caused by "ear vertigo." The Court, however, on consideration of the whole evidence, came to the conclusion that the charge was established; and the Inspector General, on reviewing the proceedings of the Court, confirmed them. Under the circumstances, the fine cannot be interfered with.

Mr. METGE asked whether the right hon. and learned Gentleman had seen the evidence of the doctor?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): I have only seen the extract which I have read to the House.

Mr. METGE said, this was a matter of great importance to the Police Force. One of the doctors was a most eminent man, and he had examined the constable, and found him to be suffering from ear vertigo, and not from drink. He had found his pulse quite feeble, and his hands bloodless.

Mr. SPEAKER: Does the hon. Member wish to ask another Question?

Mr. METGE said, he wished to ask the right hon. and learned Gentleman whether he had seen that portion of the evidence?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, I have not seen that part of the evidence; but I take it for granted that the Court was satisfied as to the condition of the constable.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—OWEN BREHENY.

Mr. SEXTON asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether he is aware that Owen Breheny, of Geevagh, county Sligo, has now been over nine months in prison, under the authority of the Coercion Act, on suspicion of having been concerned in an illegal assembly; whether Owen Breheny was, in the first instance, summoned to the petty sessions on the charge in question, together with a number of other persons; whether, whilst Breheny was arrested under the Coercion Act, before the case came on for hearing, the other persons were regularly tried and acquitted; whether a person arrested under the Coercion Act on the same day as Owen Breheny, and in the same neighbourhood, was released some months ago; and, whether, under all the circumstances, namely, the acquittal of the other persons, the release of a man from the same neighbourhood, arrested at the same time, and the length of time, nine months, that Owen Breheny has been in prison, he will now direct his release?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, the hon. Member asks me five Questions. In reply to the first three, Breheny was arrested on the 20th of June last. He was not summoned to Petty Sessions, but nine other persons were summoned; they were not acquitted, but were bound over to keep the peace. As to the fourth and fifth Questions of the hon. Member, it is the fact that a person arrested on the same day, and in the same neighbourhood, has been released, and Breheny's case also is, I am informed, at present under his Excellency's consideration.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—JOHN RYAN.

Mr. SEXTON asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether he is aware that John Ryan, of Ballykeating, county Galway, now, and for some time past, imprisoned in Dundalk Gaol as a suspect, is the tenant of a farm, which, since his arrest, has been left in the care of his mother and sister only, he having no male relative to attend to it; and, whether he will release John Ryan for ten days or a fortnight, on parole, to enable him to buy seed for his farm, and enable him to have the agricultural operations proper to this season carried out upon his holding?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, I have made inquiries into this case, but have not had a reply. I must ask the hon. Member to postpone the Question until a future day.

STATE OF IRELAND — ALLEGED IMPRISONMENT OF A BOY FOR PURCHASING A COPY OF "UNITED IRELAND."

MR. SEXTON asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether it is true that, a few days since, at Bruff, in the county Limerick, a boy named Ahearne was sent by the Local Bench to gaol for a month (in default of finding bail for six months), the charge against him being that he had bought a copy of "United Ireland" in the shop of a local newsvendor; whether the magistrates acted legally in the infliction of such a sentence; and, whether he will release the boy?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, Ahearne was summoned for obstructing a constable in the discharge of his duty. He was ordered by the Bench to enter into his own recognizances in £5, with two sureties in £2 10*s.* each, to be of good behaviour for one month, and, in default, to be committed for a like period. He refused to enter into recognizances, and was accordingly committed. Under these circumstances, I cannot recommend his release; he has only to enter into the recognizances to behave himself, and then he will be entitled to be discharged as of right.

MR. SEXTON asked the right hon. and learned Gentleman to explain the nature of the obstruction. The only evidence against the boy, as he was informed, was that he had paid a penny for a copy of the *United Ireland* newspaper.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): Sir, I am informed that is not so, nor anything like what occurred. A constable entered the shop for the purpose of obtaining a paper, and this person, who is over 17 years old, officiously interfered and snatched up the paper in a defiant manner, and contrary to law and authority. I have no hesitation in giving my opinion that the policeman was obstructed, and I think the Bench would have been wrong if on that evidence they did not bind him to be of good behaviour.

MR. SEXTON: Had the boy not paid for the paper, and did it not belong to him?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON): No, Sir, he had no interest in the paper, pecuniary or otherwise. As stated to me, his interference was purely officious, and in defiance of law and authority.

LAW AND JUSTICE (SCOTLAND)—SASINE OFFICE CLERKS.

MR. DICK PEDDIE asked the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Whether the Treasury have considered the memorial of the 8th June last, by the third class clerks in the Sasine Office, Edinburgh; and, whether they intend to comply with the requests made by the memorialists?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: Sir, the Treasury decision upon the Memorial of the third-class clerks in the Sasine Office was communicated to the head of their Department on the 19th of July last. The decision was that the requests of the Memorialists could not be complied with. The Treasury Letter was laid on the Table of the House on the 8th of August last, on the Motion of the right hon. Member for South-West Lancaster (Sir R. Assheton Cross).

THE IRISH LAND COMMISSION.

MR. M'COAN asked the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, Whether his attention has been called to the action of the Land Commission in, this year, calling in the half-yearly tithe rent-charges a month earlier than has hitherto been required by the Church Temporalities Commission, that is to say, on the 31st of March instead of the 30th of April; and, whether the Government have sanctioned such action, in view of the present agricultural depression and state of rent payments in Ireland?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH: In the absence of my right hon. Friend, I have been asked by him to answer this Question. The Irish Land Commission have demanded payment of tithe rent-charge five months after it was due, instead of six months. They have done so because their accounts are now made up for the year ending the 31st of March, instead of for that to the 31st of December, as heretofore; and they did not wish to have to state in their annual accounts that the bulk of moneys due five months previously were still in arrear. For this reason they have changed the date of lodgment for the November tithe rent-charge from the 30th of April to the 31st of March. This will not cause any real hardship, as large numbers of those liable have already paid their November rent-charge without question, and no application on reasonable grounds to defer payment until the 30th of April will be refused.

ARMY — COLONELS OF ARTILLERY AND ENGINEERS.

MR. MACLIVER asked the Secretary of State for War, If it is intended to confer the rank of Brigadier General on any of the officers commanding the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers in the Military districts at Home, or at any of the Stations Abroad?

MR. CHILDERS: No, Sir, it is not my present intention to confer this rank on colonels of Artillery or Engineers; but the rates of consolidated pay for colonels on the Staff belonging to these Corps have been increased under the recent Corrigenda Warrant. We are, as far as possible, abolishing the rank of brigadier general, in some cases substituting for them major generals.

ARMY (AUXILIARY FORCES)—RETIREMENT OF VOLUNTEER OFFICERS.

MR. MACLIVER asked the Secretary of State for War, If he is prepared to recommend that officers of Volunteers, who have previously served in the ranks, shall be allowed to reckon the whole or any portion of such service towards retirement?

MR. CHILDERS: Sir, I presume that my hon. Friend means by the word retirement "honorary rank on retirement." If so, I can only say that I am not prepared to alter the rule, which requires for honorary rank or a step of honorary rank a certain number of years of commissioned service.

SPAIN—QUARANTINE.

COLONEL OWEN WILLIAMS asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Whether his attention has been called to the vexatious and expensive restrictions lately imposed on British vessels trading to the Spanish Mediterranean Ports, inasmuch as ships direct from England (should they have called at Gibraltar) are subjected to a delay of three days' quarantine, notwithstanding that they carry clean bills of health duly approved and signed by the Spanish Consul at that place; if so, whether he has been in communication with the Spanish Government on the subject; and, in that case, whether he has received a satisfactory explanation of the very unusual course that Government has adopted in ignoring without notice the bills of health issued by their own Consul at Gibraltar?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, Her Majesty's Government have received no complaint on the subject.

COLONEL OWEN WILLIAMS said, that he would repeat the Question in a few days. Perhaps, in the meantime, the hon. Gentleman would obtain the information?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, I am quite sure that the records of the sanitary authority have been searched, and that no complaints have been received.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT.

MR. LEAMY asked the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, Whether it is true that representations have been made, on the part of the Government of the United States, to Her Majesty's Government with regard to the trial or release of American citizens imprisoned under the Coercion Act in Ireland?

SIR CHARLES W. DILKE: Sir, such representations have been made, and they are now under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

CONTAGIOUS DISEASES (ANIMALS) ACT, 1878 — SLAUGHTER OF FOREIGN CATTLE AT CREWE — INTENDED ABATTOIRS AT CREWE.

MR. HENRY TOLLEMACHE asked the Vice President of the Council, If his attention has been called to a proposed scheme for erecting abattoirs at Crewe, in the centre of an agricultural district, for the slaughter of foreign cattle; and, if he is prepared to give his consent to such a proposal?

MR. MUNDELLA: Sir, no such scheme has been brought under the notice of the Privy Council, and, if it were, we should refuse our sanction, as it is contrary to the provisions of the Act of 1878.

RELIGIOUS DISSENSIONS (GIBRALTAR)—DR. CANILLA.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR asked the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, Whether the Papers promised on recent events connected with the Roman Catholic Church at Gibraltar would be laid upon the Table before Easter?

MR. COURTNEY: Sir, we have been promised the proofs of the Papers tomorrow if no unforeseen circumstances occur.

PARLIAMENT—THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT—MEETING OF THE REFORM CLUB.

CAPTAIN AYLMER asked the First Commissioner of Works, Whether his attention has been called to a paragraph in the "Times" of the 22nd instant, stating that a meeting of members of the Reform Club was held in the Committee Room, No. 15, of this House, with the object of adjusting certain differences connected with the election of members of that Club; whether such meeting was sanctioned by himself, or by any other authority of the House; and, whether the Committee Rooms of this House can be legitimately employed for such a purpose?

MR. SHAW LEFEVRE: Sir, the responsibility for the use of the Committee Rooms rests, not with myself, but with the Serjeant-at-Arms. He informs me that he frequently gives permission to Members to meet in these Rooms, and I am quite sure that he does so with a wise impartiality. On the occasion in question, I am informed that none but Members of this House were present.

ENGLAND AND FRANCE—THE CHANNEL TUNNEL SCHEME.

SIR HARRY VERNEY asked the First Lord of the Treasury, What action Her Majesty's Government will take with regard to the proposed submarine tunnel, uniting England with the Continent, and thus destroying the insular position of our Country, which it is important to maintain for Military considerations, and which might have the effect of diverting from England, now the entrepôt of commerce between the East and the West, a trade highly beneficial to her commercial and shipbuilding interests?

MR. GLADSTONE: Sir, the hon. Member is no doubt aware that this question has been referred to a scientific Committee for examination. The Report of the Committee will be subjected to the consideration of the military authorities. It will be the duty of the Government to advise the House, at the proper time, what course they should take; but, in the meantime, all the Bills are postponed.

SIR HARRY VERNEY: But the work will still be going on?

MR. GLADSTONE: The excavations are proceeding under the surface of the foreshore; and the question as to whose is the title of the foreshore is in dispute. The Board of Trade is giving attention to the subject.

NAVY—LAUNCH OF H.M.S. "EDINBURGH."

MR. WILBRAHAM EGERTON asked the Secretary to the Admiralty, Whether he could give the House further information with respect to the stranding of Her Majesty's ship "Edinburgh?"

MR. TREVELYAN: Sir, the *Edinburgh* was being towed from the dockyard to Hobb's Point, where she is to be while she is taking in her engines. During the passage the vessel ran on to what is known as the Dockyard Bank. She was moving very slowly and she ran a little way up the shelving bank, said to be soft mud. She remained there about two hours, when she floated off with the tide, and was put safe alongside the pier at Hobb's Point. In a private letter from the Chief Constructor at Pembroke, he says—

> "I do not apprehend the slightest damage. Every single compartment has been minutely examined, and not the slightest sign of weeping, or bending, or buckling of plates or frames is anywhere visible, nor do I think the bilge-pieces have suffered."

This refers, of course, to an examination made from inside the ship. Captain Parkin tells us that at the earliest opportunity divers will look over the part of the vessel which was in contact with the mud, and that she will be again thoroughly overhauled when she is placed in dock in the course of a few weeks.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. ANCKETELL.

MR. HEALY asked the Attorney General for Ireland, If his attention has been called to the reported conviction of Mr. Ancketell, J.P. co. Monaghan, for assaulting a bailiff; and, whether it is intended to maintain this magistrate in the commission of the peace?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, the hon. Member asks me whether it is intended to maintain the magistrate named in the Question in the Commission of the Peace? The hon. Member has not been correctly informed. This gentleman is not, and has not for some years been, in the Commission of the Peace.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—TREATMENT OF PERSONS ARRESTED UNDER THE ACT.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether it is true that the Governor of Limerick Gaol stopped a letter written by Mr. M. Power (suspect) for saying, "if I was in Castleisland I would vote for Mr. Knight to be guardian;" and, if not, if he could state on what ground was the letter kept back; whether he is aware that the Limerick suspects complain that the pipes through their cells have not been heated for some time, although some of them have had to sleep in cells which were quite damp owing to being newly whitewashed; and, whether, as these gentlemen allege that it is quite useless bringing their complaints before the Governor, he will afford an independent inquiry into Mr. Eager's general treatment of prisoners?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, the letter referred to in the first Question of the hon. Member was stopped not on the ground suggested in the Question, which is a statement of Mr. Power's, but because it was not confined to business or personal matters. There has been no such general complaint as suggested in the second Question of the hon. Member. One person did complain, but, as the Governor states, without grounds. As to the third Question, the Prisons Board have more than once made inquiries into complaints by the persons detained in this prison, and their Inspector will shortly be there again and investigate any complaints made to him.

THE MAGISTRACY (IRELAND)—MR. CLIFFORD LLOYD.

Mr. HEALY asked Mr. Attorney General for Ireland, Whether he has seen Mr. Clifford Lloyd's letter to Mr. D. Maloney, of Ennistymon, praising the brave manner in which he defended himself against his assailants, and regretting that "the shots he fired did not take effect;" whether, as Mr. Lloyd refers to "quivering men" who do not defend themselves against attack, he can state the number of Mr. Lloyd's refusals to grant arms licences to farmers in the past twelve months; and, whether any record is kept of the number of such refusals all over Ireland?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, it was only while Mr. Clifford Lloyd was stationed in the Kilmallock district that he was licensing officer under the Arms Act. I cannot state the number of instances in which arms licences were refused there; but the suppression of outrage and the present peaceful state of that district show that his discretion was properly exercised in the matter. There is not, I understand, any record kept of the refusals of arms licences all over Ireland.

PROTECTION OF PERSON AND PROPERTY (IRELAND) ACT, 1881—MR. HODNETT.

Mr. HEALY asked the Attorney General for Ireland, Whether the case of Mr. Richard Hodnett, of Ballydehob, county Cork, who has spent long periods in Limerick, Dundalk, and Naas Gaols, has been reconsidered; and if it is the fact that the district where he was arrested is now quite peaceable?

The ATTORNEY GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. W. M. Johnson): Sir, during Mr. Hodnett's detention his case has been re-considered every three months, as required by the Statute. The last occasion was the 26th of January. His Excellency is at present inquiring into the state of the Ballydehob district.

PARLIAMENT—PRIVILEGE—NEW WRIT FOR NORTHAMPTON (MR. BRADLAUGH).

Mr. LABOUCHERE: Sir, I beg, with your permission, to ask the following Questions:—First, whether, having regard to your ruling of the 21st February last, when you allowed me to move as a matter of Privilege a new Writ for Northampton, I am now entitled as a matter of Privilege to move that Mr. Speaker do make out his Warrant to the Clerk of the Crown to issue a Writ for the election of a Member to serve in the present Parliament for the borough of Northampton in place of Charles Bradlaugh, Esq., disabled from sitting and voting in this House by the Resolution of the 6th of March, 1882? Secondly, Sir, whether, in regard to a petition that I have this day presented from the electors of Northampton, having regard to the proceedings of this House in the matter of the Middlesex election of the 29th of April, 1769, I am entitled as a matter of Privilege to move that the electors of the borough of Northampton be heard at the Bar?

MR. SPEAKER: In reply to the hon. Member's Question, I may say that Motions for new Writs are ordinarily made without Notice, and have precedence as concerning Privilege. Such Motions are founded upon certain events which have recently caused a vacancy—as, for example, the death of a Member, his acceptance of Office, or the report of Election Judges. In such cases there are obvious reasons for giving precedence to a Motion for a new Writ. The grounds are clear and of recent occurrence, and the seat ought not to be left vacant, in the interest of the electors. But none of these reasons are apparent on the present occasion. The Motion, indeed, can scarcely be proposed with the serious purpose of inducing the House to issue a new Writ for Northampton; but, like a similar Motion of the hon. Member on the 21st of February, seems rather designed to raise a discussion, indirectly and irregularly, upon the claim of the junior Member for that borough to take the Oath. For these reasons the Motion of the hon. Member is clearly not entitled to Privilege. With regard to the second Question of the hon. Member, I have to say that there are Standing Orders with regard to Petitions which were not in existence when the Middlesex Petition referred to by the hon. Member was heard. On that account there is no ground for dealing with a Petition of that kind stated as a matter of Privilege.

MR. FIRTH: I beg to give Notice that, on the earliest available opportunity, I will move that the electors of Northampton be heard by themselves or by counsel at the Bar of the House in pursuance with the prayer of their Petition presented to-day.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg to give Notice that on Tuesday next I shall move that the Petition from the electors of Northampton, which I have this day presented, be printed with the Votes of the House.

MR. THOMAS COLLINS: With the kind indulgence of the House, I wish to make an explanation. Before I had taken the Oath, the hon. Member for Carlisle (Sir Wilfrid Lawson) wished to have certain questions put to me, of which he had informed me in the most kindly manner, and I then stated that if the House insisted I was prepared to make my declaration of belief in the words of the Nicene Creed, or that of St. Athanasius. Ever since that speech of the hon. Baronet was made, I have received a series of letters week by week, requesting to know if I do not hold Atheistical opinions. I had a Petition sent to me from a town not very long ago in favour of the admission of Mr. Bradlaugh to the House, with a request that I would present it, on the ground that I was a sympathizer with him. Now, I am not going to weary the House by reading the whole series of letters. But I will read one, and an extract from another. This is a letter which I received from Rochdale—

> "DEAR SIR,—Excuse me the liberty I am taking in writing to you on a delicate subject. It being constantly asserted by the admirers of Mr. Bradlaugh that you are an Atheist, I shall be very glad if you will give me your authority to contradict such a statement. As the report is generally believed, I shall be glad if you will allow me to publish this correspondence.—SAMUEL TAYLOR."

Well, the other day a meeting was held near Manchester, at a place called Harpurhey. It was a meeting of a Liberal Club, and, after passing a resolution condemnatory of the conduct of this House in refusing to allow Mr. Bradlaugh to take the Oath, a Resolution was passed declaring—

> "That the meeting condemns the hypocritical and cowardly action of the Conservative Party, who, while objecting to Mr. Bradlaugh on account of his conscientious opinions, allow one of their own political partizans of the same opinions to take his seat in the House without question."

Mr. SPEAKER: The House is always very indulgent to hon. Members in matters of personal explanation; but it appears to me the hon. Member does not refer to any matter concerning debates in this House.

Mr. THOMAS COLLINS: I refer to this matter, because of the hon. Member for Carlisle having brought it before the House, and having caused me to receive these annoying letters. I am not a thin-skinned man. But, at the same time, the noble Lord, a Member of the late Government, and the Member for the East Riding (Mr. Broadley) who introduced me, may have been caused some pain in being supposed to have introduced a man holding unworthy views. I hope that, after this explanation, I shall have no more of these Petitions, and no more statements of this kind alleged against me.

ORDERS OF THE DAY.

SUPPLY—COMMITTEE.

Order for Committee read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

BRITISH TRADE (FOREIGN TARIFFS).

RESOLUTION.

Mr. RITCHIE, in rising to move—

> "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the effects which the Tariffs in force in Foreign Countries have upon the principal branches of British Trade and Commerce, and into the possibility of removing, by Legislation or otherwise, any impediment to the fullest development of the manufacturing and commercial industry of the United Kingdom,"

said, there was an essential difference between his Motion and others on the same subject which had been brought before the House. All those other Motions had asked the House to commit itself to definite expression of opinion on the subject of our commercial policy, whereas he only asked for a Committee of Inquiry. His Motion was animated by no spirit of hostility to Free Trade principles; he desired simply an investigation into the causes of the depression in trade which had succeeded the brilliant and progressive period which preceded 1873. Since that period the country had not been progressing, but had, on the contrary, been going back, and all classes of the community had undergone severe trials and privations. Nothing was more remarkable than the quiet manner in which the working classes had borne those trials. Since 1880 there had unquestionably been signs of improvement. But, as far as the export trade of the country was concerned, he thought it was very questionable whether, on the whole, although it had been larger than for some years previously, it had been more profitable. The exports had increased in volume, but they had not increased in value; while, on the other hand, the imports had increased both in volume and value. But, granting that a considerable improvement had occurred in the last two years, he did not think the present was, therefore, a bad time for asking the House to appoint a Committee of Inquiry. On the contrary, he thought it it was probably better that the inquiry should be held at such a time as the present, rather than at a time of great depression. He feared, also, that the present improvement was not likely to be of long duration. There was nothing more notable during the last two years than the occasional spasmodic attempt—if he might use the expression—which had been made by trade to come round and improve. On every one of these occasions, however, owing to there having been little or no elasticity in the improvement, after making a short struggle, the improvement had died away. In asking the attention of the House to the condition of the trade of the country, he could not begin better than by recalling to the notice of the House the very grave and weighty words uttered by the Prime Minister when last year he introduced his Financial Statement. The right hon. Gentleman considered it necessary at that time to draw attention to the fact that the improvement which had gone on for so many years in the condition of the country had not only come to a standstill, but that unmistakable signs existed that we were going back instead of forward. In reply to a request made by the Leader of the Opposition, the right hon. Gentleman promised to lay on the Table the statement on which his assertions were based. Although he had applied for it more than once, it had not yet been presented to the House, and therefore he was unable to make use of a document which would doubtless supply a great deal of valuable information. But the statement itself was of a sufficiently grave character to warrant him in quoting it again to the House, and in asking the House to afford him the means of inquiring how that state of things had been brought about. The right hon. Gentleman said—

> "There is another point on which it is necessary to say a few words, because I think we have reached a period when I think it ought to be taken up. Changes are taking place which I believe neither the public nor Parliament are fully aware of. I wish Parliament to know that we are not making ground at present. Speaking for the last few years, without reference to Party differences, we are rather losing than making ground. The Revenue referred to is that derived from Customs, Excise, Stamps, and taxes. In the period 1842-58, the population increased ⅓ per cent; Revenue, 1¾ per cent; Expenditure, 2½ per cent. In the period 1859-73, population increased 1 per cent; Revenue, 3 per cent; Expenditure, 1⅓ per cent. In the period 1874-77, population increased 1 per cent; Revenue, 1½ per cent; Expenditure, 3¼ per cent. In the period 1878-9, population increased 1 per cent; Revenue went back 1½ per cent; and Expenditure increased 2⅙ per cent."

The right hon. Gentleman went on to say—

> "There is another result which will be more simple and intelligible than that which I have just given. The readiest and simplest of all methods of illustrating the growth of wealth in this country is to be found in a reference to the proceeds of 1*d*. on the Income Tax. In 1841-2 it yielded £772,000; in 1852-3, £810,000; in 1877-8, £1,990,000; in 1881-2, £1,943,000. It has gone back this year. No such period, so far as I am aware, can be founded since 1842. The 1*d*. in the Income Tax, which most strictly represents, not the general condition of the people, but of the wealthier classes of the country, has gone back for the first time since it was imposed."

This statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer was, of itself, sufficiently alarming; but if examined in greater detail it would assume a still more alarming aspect. The Income Tax, as a whole, gave a sufficiently unsatisfactory indication of the condition of the country; but what of that portion of the Income Tax which was obtained from the manufacturing and trading community under Schedule D? The income assessed to the tax under Schedule D amounted in 1875 to £267,000,000, in 1876 to £271,000,000, in 1879 to £257,000,000, and in 1880 to £249,000,000. As, however, the population had increased 5 per cent since 1876, the decrease of 8 per cent between that year and 1880 did not fully describe the actual decrease. The income in 1880 under Schedule D, corrected according to the increase of population, should be £285,000,000. These figures showed a decrease of 13 per cent in four years under Schedule D. There were other indications of the condition of the country that were equally important. The Customs and Excise revenue amounted in 1876 to £47,000,000, and in 1881 to only £44,000,000. Thus the House would see that in 1881 the consumption of articles under the head of Customs and Excise decreased £3,000,000; but, correcting the figures according to the increase of population, there was a decrese in 1881, as compared with 1876, of no less than 11 per cent. The consumption of coffee in 1880 was lower than it had been in any year since 1876. The consumption of tea, also, was smaller now per head of the population than it had been for four years. The same remark would hold good with reference to tobacco; while, with reference to spirits, the quantity had not been so low since 1871. No doubt there was much reason for gratification in that circumstance; but, at the same time, the consumption of spirits had always been considered an indication of the amount of money which the working classes had to spend. The consumption of malt was also lower than it had ever been since 1866. That was, of course, not unsatisfactory in itself; but it was an indication that the working classes had been earning less money. Then there had been a considerable increase in the pauper population, both indoor and outdoor. Scotland remained about the same in this respect; but England and Ireland had greatly increased. In England alone the increase of pauperism was considerable, even allowing for the increase of population, showing, as it did, an increase between 1876 and 1880 of 42 per cent in indoor, and 20 per cent in outdoor, able-bodied adult paupers. Ireland showed an increase of 30 per cent in the indoor paupers, and 70 per cent in the outdoor. There had been, on the whole, a steady and large increase of pauperism in the United Kingdom until 1881, and that notwithstanding the fact that there had been a much more rigorous application of the Poor Law. Emigration had also increased from 109,000 in 1876 to

227,000 in 1880. Railway traffic afforded another indication of the commercial condition of the country. Since 1877 there had been a falling-off in the traffic receipts from £3,550 per mile to £3,453 per mile; but those figures did not show the full extent of the falling-off in the goods traffic, as there had been an increase in passenger receipts; and, if that were deducted from the total traffic receipts, the result would show a great decrease in the goods traffic. It would thus be seen, from everything generally acknowledged to be an indication of prosperity, that this country had not been progressing. The fact was that the country was going back, and, rightly or wrongly, that retrogression had been attributed by large numbers of the people to the commercial policy of the country, and a want of confidence had been engendered, which ought to be removed by a proper inquiry. This want of confidence had not been diminished by the unfortunate course adopted by France in reference to the negotiations for a Commercial Treaty. The hopes this country had indulged in as to the effect on other countries of our example had been falsified. So far from other countries following our example, they saw a country which had for upwards of 20 years been enjoying the benefits of Free Trade now putting an end to that *régime*, and adopting in exchange a Protectionist policy. No wonder, then, that a want of confidence was engendered in our commercial policy. Mr. Bright, in 1877, said that in France Protection was becoming weaker. So far from that being so, the action of France had shown, not that Protection was becoming weaker, but that it was becoming stronger. The negotiations with France had failed; but they might be sure that they had not failed for want of unremitting exertions on the part of Her Majesty's Government. This country had been represented on the Commission by a Gentleman who had inspired the highest confidence in the commercial classes of this country—the hon. Gentleman the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs; and, notwithstanding all his efforts, he had failed to conclude a Treaty equally good with that which had expired. This country was, therefore, left free to adopt whatever policy might be most conducive to its own interests; and, for his part, he thought this a very good compensation for the failure of the Treaty. It was, unfortunately, the case that this country, whenever it had attempted to obtain any relaxation of Foreign Tariffs, was placed at great disadvantage through having nothing to give in exchange. France was much the same as she was in 1846, when Mr. Disraeli said—

> "The republican party . . . . is opposed to what you call free trade as much as the commercial community. You have in France these two great interests, the politico-philosophical and the commercial, all working together against what they call the fatal principle of competition. There was but one way of ever gaining any relaxation of the mercantile system of France, and that was by diplomacy. The French Cabinet will do nothing without a treaty."—[3 *Hansard*, lxxxiii. 1331.]

In 1860 the French Emperor negotiated the Treaty in spite of the opposition of the French people, and in return for concessions on our part. The Republicans were now in power. We had nothing more to give them, and nothing could be done. The failure to conclude a new Treaty with France had, undoubtedly, increased the feeling of want of confidence existing in this country as to its commercial policy. He had no doubt he would be charged with advocating a policy of Protection. The charge was utterly groundless. He did not advocate Protection. He believed it to be impossible; and, further, it was inconsistent with the position he took up. Not one of the large manufacturing industries of the country would be benefited by it. Take cotton, for instance. We exported four-fifths of our total manufactures, only retaining one-fifth for home consumption. No amount of protective duties in this country would raise the selling price of the four-fifths exported; and, if not the four-fifths, how could they do so in the case of the one-fifth retained? If we could not compete with foreign manufacturers in our own markets, how could we compete with them in their markets; and, if not, of what benefit to us would the relaxation of their Tariffs be? He repeated that he did not advocate Protection, nor did he desire it; neither did the manufacturing nor the working classes desire it. He felt certain that we could successfully compete with all the world if our manufacturers could secure a fair field and no favour. He hoped the inquiry he asked for would be granted, though he had reason to fear otherwise. He confessed that he could not conceive, even from a Free Trade point of view, why an inquiry should be refused. The Government would probably take the same course in answer to his remarks as had been adopted on more than one previous occasion. A comparison would be drawn between the state of the country in 1840 and in the present year; and it would be shown, from the imports and exports, the consumption of articles of luxury, and the diminution of pauperism, that the country was now in a highly prosperous and satisfactory condition. It would, doubtless, be contended that the proper doctrine was to take care of the imports, and let the exports take care of themselves. But in that case the Government would be met by the difficulty of explaining the strenuous efforts made by them to conclude a Commercial Treaty with France, which was in direct opposition to such a doctrine. We always tried most earnestly to represent that all we did was done purely from philanthropic motives, and that we desired, above everything, to benefit the countries with which we endeavoured to make Treaties; but, somehow, those professions were unsuccessful, and only served to increase the suspicions of foreign nations. If the policy of the Government was that exports should be left to take care of themselves, why these efforts to make Treaties? If such be their policy, the only consistent course for them to adopt was that recommended under similar circumstances by an eminent authority—Mr. Newmarch—whose death he was very sorry to see announced in that day's papers. In 1877 that gentlemen wrote to *The Economist* as follows:—

> "Let the party of excellent and honourable men, whom we have foolishly sent to Paris, take a speedy farewell of their polite antagonists, and let Lord Derby, than whom no one has a better right to perform the duty, intimate, once for all, to the French and all other Governments, that, like the age of ruins, the age of Commercial Treaties is past."

That was the only legitimate course to pursue if the doctrine that we ought not to trouble ourselves about exports was correct. A Treaty was a bargain. It was nothing more nor less than Reciprocity, and was a flagrant violation of the principle that exports should be left to take care of themselves. He had said that there would probably be drawn a comparison between the year 1840 and the present year in order to show the triumph of Free Trade principles. No one could deny the immense progress that had been made since the former year; but he did deny that it was altogether, or, indeed, mainly attributable to our commercial policy. It had been far more owing to the industry and energy of the people, to the enterprize of our merchants, and to the development of our railway system. The fact was that for a long period of years this country was the emporium and the manufacturing centre of the whole world, and foreign countries had to come to us for goods which we alone could supply. Then, again, a network of railways was spread all over England before the foreign railway systems were in any way developed. In one of the speeches recently delivered at Leeds by the Prime Minister, the right hon. Gentleman, dealing with this point, after giving the volume of trade done between this and foreign countries, went on to ask why, if our prosperity was so largely owing to railways, the trade of the world had not been transferred to France, Germany, and the United States, which had as many railways and telegraphs as ourselves? But at the time of our great commercial advance, those countries were deficient in respect of railways, as a glance at the figures would show. In 1860 there were 988 miles of railway in Russia, and 14,000 in 1880; in Germany, 6,000, as against 26,000 20 years later; in France, 5,800, as against 14,000; and in the United States, 30,000, as against 86,000; and with the development of railways abroad so their demands for our manufactures had fallen off. But, after all, however interesting might be the comparison between 1840 and 1880, that was not really the point; the point was not whether the country was richer now than in 1840, but whether it was poorer than it was eight years ago. A very serious question to be borne in mind, in considering the subject of imports and exports, was that we were every year becoming more and more dependent on other countries for our supplies of food and raw material. Our wants were constantly increasing, and, in order to satisfy them, we could only give our manufactures in return. Our exports, then, ought to increase in a direct ratio with our imports, if we were to pay for the latter out of our national income. In 1872 the value of the animal and cereal food imported into the country was £75,000,000; and in 1879, £102,000,000, or an increase of 33 per cent; while our exports, which were our only legitimate means of paying for that supply, had diminished 20 per cent. In 1872 we grew 54,000,000 cwt. of wheat, and imported 47,000,000 cwt.; in 1879 we grew 28,000,000 cwt., and imported 70,000,000. And with respect to meat, in 1872 we grew 26,000,000 cwt. and imported 4,000,000; and in 1879 we grew 24,000,000 cwt. and imported 8,000,000. The House would thus see how, year by year, we were becoming more and more dependent on foreign supplies for our very existence. To enable us to pay for these supplies our exports should not only not fall off, but increase. Were they doing so? He proposed to compare the exports of the years 1872 and 1880; but the figures for 1871 and 1879 gave a precisely similar result. In 1872 the value of our exports was £256,000,000; in 1880 it was £223,000,000; or in the former year £8 1*s.* per head of the population, and in the latter only £6 9*s.* 5*d.* Comparing the year 1872 with 1879, the decrease was still greater, and amounted to 30 per cent. If he separated the exports to foreign countries from the exports to British Possessions, the diminution in the exports to foreign countries was very remarkable. The value of our exports to foreign countries in 1872 amounted to £195,000,000, or £6 2*s.* 11*d.* per head; in 1880, to £147,000,000, or £4 5*s.* 9*d.* per head, a decline of no less than 30 per cent, or almost one-third, in our foreign trade. But if we looked to the British Possessions, the story was entirely different. In 1872 our exports to our Colonies amounted to £60,000,000, and, instead of decreasing 30 per cent like our foreign trade, they increased in 1880 to £75,000,000, or 25 per cent. That increase would have been still greater if it had not been for a decrease of about 20 per cent in our exports to Canada, and 25 per cent in our exports to Victoria, which was an evidence of the effect of their Tariffs. But to India, which not many years ago some Members of Her Majesty's Government did not lay great store upon as a market for our trade, our exports had increased from £18,000,000 in 1872 to £30,000,000 in 1880, or no less than 70 per cent. Nothing could show more forcibly the immense value to us, as outlets for our manufactures, of our Colonies, and the great importance of doing all in our power to draw them closer to us. Taking now the principal articles of our manufacture, we find that our cotton exports in 1880 were of almost exactly the same value as in 1872; but, unfortunately, to obtain the same amount of money, we had to give our friends abroad 25 per cent more in quantity. If we analyzed our cotton exports a little closer, and took the various countries separately, it would be found they had decreased between 1872 and 1880 as follows:—To Germany, from £6,000,000 to £3,000,000; to Holland, from £5,500,000 to £2,500,000; to France, from £3,000,000 to £1,750,000; to Egypt, from £4,000,000 to £2,000,000. Taking these countries together, the decrease in the value of cotton goods exported was 50 per cent; while the increase to India alone—namely, from £26,000,000 to £42,000,000—amounted to 65 per cent. With respect to woollen goods, the decrease of our exports between 1872 and 1880 was as follows:—Germany, from £12,000,000 to £3,000,000; Holland, from £3,400,000 to £1,600,000; the United States, from £7,000,000 to £2,500,000—a decrease in the case of these three countries from £22,000,000 to £7,000,000, or one-third. How had the exports of foreign countries gone on in the time? It must be remembered that they were very considerably handicapped by the Protectionist Tariffs; but, in addition, they laboured under other disadvantages. France had been invaded and overrun by foreign Armies, and saddled with an enormous Indemnity unparalleled in modern times. Her National Debt had increased from £16,000,000 to £120,000,000; and, in consequence of internal disturbance, the whole country had been completely disorganized. In such a state of things one might expect a serious decline in her export trade. But the exports of France, which in 1872 were £150,000,000, in 1880 were £138,000,000, a falling-off of 8 per cent only as compared with 20 per cent on our part; and that falling-off had been mainly in grain, flour, and raw sugar. The falling-off in the latter being owing to the large bounties given upon raw sugar by Austria, the bounty in France being given only on the manufactured article. From Germany, during the period he had named, there had been a continuous annual increase. The exports had increased from £116,000,000 to £152,000,000—that was according to the Statistical Abstract; but in 1872 the prices of many articles were not included in the Abstract. If they had been, the figures would have stood £136,000,000 to £152,000,000. The exports from Russia had increased 80 per cent; from Belgium, 10 per cent; and from the United States, 45 per cent. It thus appeared that while the exports of Germany had increased by £16,000,000 sterling, or 2½ per cent, those of Austria by £11,000,000, or 17½ per cent, those of Russia by £47,000,000, or 80 per cent; those of Holland by £13,000,000, or 25 per cent; those of Belgium by £6,000,000, or 10 per cent; and those of the United States by £71,000,000, or 45 per cent—while the exports of France had decreased by £12,000,000, or 8 per cent—the decrease in the exports of this country amounted to £33,000,000 sterling, or 20 per cent. Was not this a sufficiently serious state of things to justify him in asking the House of Commons to inquire why we fared so much worse than other countries? On the subject of our foreign trade, there had lately been a considerable distribution of literature by Her Majesty's Government, and especially by the Board of Trade; and it seemed to be a recognized duty of the permanent officials of that Board to write and circulate disquisitions on Free Trade. He had been informed that a gentleman representing the Board of Trade had recently addressed a meeting of Trade Unionists on this question. ["No, no!"] He had been told so by one who said that he was present.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: Will the hon. Member give me the name of the gentleman to whom he refers?

Mr. RITCHIE: Mr. Giffen.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: It is not true.

Mr. RITCHIE said, he, of course, accepted the contradiction, and withdrew his statement. But, at all events, the Board of Trade dealt largely in the distribution of Free Trade literature, and considered it its duty to circulate its Papers at the head-quarters of the trades' unions throughout the country. [Mr. Broadhurst: No.] He wished especially to direct the attention of the House to a Paper recently laid on the Table of the House and signed by Mr. Giffen, entitled—

> "Report to the Secretary of the Board of Trade on recent changes in the amount of the foreign trade of the United Kingdom and the prices of imports and exports."

If this document gave an accurate description of the state of things, then the complaints of our manufacturers were absolutely groundless, because in that Paper Mr. Giffen contends that if the prices of our manufactured articles had been largely lower of late years, the manufacturers had been recouped by the lower prices they paid for the raw materials. Before dealing with that contention he wished to say a few words on another contention of Mr. Giffen's in the same Paper. Mr. Giffen said—

> "Quantities are the main question in such a matter, for it is the things produced which make wealth, whatever may be the money standard by which the wealth is nominally measured."

That he entirely denied. It was certain that if the values of goods fell without a corresponding fall in the price of the raw materials, all classes interested, workmen and manufacturers, must suffer. The subject was of vast importance to the working classes, because, if the value of goods fell, wages must fall. Increase in quantity and decrease in value meant bad trade and low wages, and indicated, not prosperity, but the reverse. That, however, was always on the supposition that the decrease in value was not brought about by a decrease in the cost of the raw material. There were two kinds of export trade—one the result of there being no demand at home, which was a bad trade, and another the result of a demand abroad, which was a good trade. The former was the description of export trade that had been carried on in this country for some years past. In the latter case, values were maintained, and in the former values fell often below cost price with the consequent loss to all interested. Mr. Giffen denied that such loss has been incurred in our export trade, and endeavoured to show that manufacturers had done almost, if not quite, as well in 1879 as in 1873. A more incorrect and misleading statement had rarely been made by one in Mr. Giffen's position, as he believed he could show conclusively. The paragraph from Mr. Giffen's Paper to which he desired to direct the attention of the House was as follows:—

> "In my two former Reports I touched upon, but did not discuss at any length, the question of the relative profitableness of our foreign trade at different times, allowing the assumption to pass that the years in which we exported at high prices would be more remunerative than the years at which we export at nominally low prices. It was hinted that this might not be the case, the actual returns in the years of export at high prices being possibly no better than the actual returns in the years of export at nominally low prices, since the official figures of imports and exports are obviously not the same as the prices realized by importers and exporters; but, as bearing on the question of relative profitableness, it may be interesting likewise to point out that, to a large extent, the apparent reduction of our export trade between 1873 and 1877 and 1878 must be apparent only, and is due to a change in which British labour and capital are not directly concerned. For instance, the real British produce exported in our cotton manufactures is not the whole nominal amount, but only that amount less the value of the raw material imported. It may possibly happen, then, that if the value of the raw material previously imported and used in the manufactures we export could be deducted from the exports, the real exports thus shown would exhibit a steady advance. The decline in our exports would in that case have been exclusively due to the diminished value of the raw material which we had paid for. That this is the real explanation of a large part of the apparent diminution of the exports between a year like 1873 and years like the last four is also obvious. Altogether, in 1873 we imported 13,639,000 cwts. of raw cotton, at a total cost of £54,704,000, while in 1879 we imported very nearly the same quantity, viz. 13,119,000 cwts. at a total cost of £36,180,000, the exact cost in 1879 for exactly the same quantity as in 1873 being about £37,500,000. There is consequently a difference of £17,200,000 between the value of the same quantity of raw cotton available in 1879 and 1873; and allowing that four-fifths of the raw cotton is manufactured for export, four-fifths of this sum of £17,200,000, or £13,760,000, must represent in the exports of cotton manufactures a mere difference in the value of the raw material contained in them, the raw material thus contained being, of course, neither the produce nor manufacture of the United Kingdom. Actually more raw cotton was used and exported in a manufactured form in 1879 and 1880 than in 1873, the exports of piece goods, for instance, increasing from 3,483,000,000 to 4,495,000,000 yards, or about 30 per cent; but even if only the same quantity had been used, the different value of raw material used would have made a difference of about £14,000,000 in the value of the exports. Of course, there are some exports of British produce and manufactures, such as coal and iron, to which this explanation would not apply; but it applies, apparently, to about two-thirds of our whole exports of British and Irish produce."

It would thus be seen that Mr. Giffen took cotton as the illustration from which he drew the inference that manufacturers had been recouped for the lower price of the manufactured article, by the reduction in the price of the raw material; but the fallacy of the inference would be shown on examination. In 1879 the value of the cotton goods exported was £64,000,000, and in 1873 £77,400,000, showing a deficiency of value received by manufacturers in the former year, as compared with 1873, of £13,400,000; but against this Mr. Giffen stated that the cost of raw cotton imported was £13,760,000 less in 1879 than in 1873, thus, if his theory was correct, the manufacturers actually made £360,000 more in 1879 than in 1873; but taking 1880 the result would be still more startling. In 1880 the value of the cotton manufactures exported was £75,500,000, as against £77,400,000 in 1873, a deficiency of value received by them in the former year of £1,900,000 as compared with 1873; but if against this was put the lower cost of the raw material received in 1880, estimated by Mr. Giffen at £14,000,000, the result to the cotton manufactures in 1880 would be a larger profit by £12,000,000 than in the year 1873, which was one of the best years ever known. A further proof of the fallacy of Mr. Giffen's inference that cotton manufacturers have been recouped for the low price of their manufactures by the low price of the raw material was given in the very Paper itself, for it would be found in the tables annexed that the cotton yarn exported in 1880 was 25 per cent lower in price, and the cotton cloth 20 per cent lower in price than in 1873, while the raw material was 25 per cent lower; but as on every pound of cotton valued at 7*d.* there has to be expended 5*d.* in labour and charges before it was made into cloth, a fall of 20 per cent in the cloth meant a fall of 35 per cent in raw cotton, and as the fall was only 25 per cent, it would be seen that the manufacturer was worse off by 10 per cent in 1880 than in 1873, instead of being much better off. If Mr. Giffen was wrong in his inferences with reference to cotton, how much more wrong was he with reference to all the other principal articles of our manufacture? Mr. Giffen says that with reference to two-thirds of our manufactures his statement would hold good. He had, he thought, shown conclusively that Mr. Giffen was entirely wrong as to cotton. He would now take the other principal articles of export. To coal, iron, fish, cement, and alkali, which, together, amounted to £46,000,000, being entirely of British origin, it could not be applied, the entire reduction in value being a loss to this country. In jute goods, amounting to £4,000,000, he found the reduction in the price of the manufactured material had been 25 per cent, while the raw material had been positively 12½ per cent higher. In flax goods, which amounted to £6,000,000, the reduction in the price of the manufactured article had been from 7 per cent to 12½ per cent, while the reduction in the price of the raw material had been 8 per cent. In wool, the reduction in the price of the manufactured article had been 20 per cent, while the reduction in the price of the raw material had been 7 per cent, the woollen exports amounting to £19,000,000. In refined sugar, the reduction in the manufactured article had been 20 per cent, and in the raw material 12 per cent. In oil, the reduction in the manufactured article had been 15 per cent, and in the raw material 10 per cent. In paper, the reduction in the manufactured article had been 25 per cent, and in the raw material 12½ per cent. In leather goods, the reduction in the manufactured article had been 12½ per cent, and in the raw material the same. It must not, of course, be forgotten that the reduction in the manufactured article was a reduction on the goods after all the expense of manufacture. Of these articles the total amount of the exports was £82,000,000, and, adding the amount of the cotton exports, the entire sum came to £152,000,000, out of a total sum of £162,000,000 dealt with in Mr. Giffen's Paper. It would thus be seen that the statement made by Mr. Giffen that manufacturers have been recouped for the low prices of their goods by the low price of the raw material was entirely fallacious and misleading. He had endeavoured to discover where the fallacy in Mr. Giffen's calculations lay; and he had found that that gentleman, not knowing the quantity of cotton which had been worked up into the manufactures exported, had taken the weight of cotton imported in the previous year as the weight of the manufactured goods exported. Every commercial man, however, would know that the weight of the raw material was no indication of the weight of the manufactured goods exported. To arrive at a sound conclusion on the point they must know what the stocks were at the commencement of the year, and what they amounted to at the end of the year. The best proof of the incorrectness of Mr. Giffen's calculation in this respect was the fact that we only imported 6 per cent more in weight of the raw material in 1880 than we did in 1873, while we exported 30 per cent more in weight of the manufactured article. He now proposed to consider the question of the adverse balance of imports over exports, which had been so much dwelt upon recently. He was not one of those who held that our imports exceeding our exports was to be regretted. What was so unsatisfactory was that our imports increased, while our exports diminished. Our imports must exceed our exports. There could be no profitable trade without it. So long as excess imports represented legitimate earnings it was well. If we went beyond that, we should be spending capital, which was bad. Was that the case with us. In the years 1866-70 the adverse balance was £290,000,000, or, per annum, £58,000,000; in 1871-5, £312,000,000, or, per annum, £62,000,000; in 1876-80, £622,000,000, or, per annum, £125,000,000. In our most profitable years the adverse balance was the smallest — namely, £60,000,000—while in our years of greatest adversity the adverse balance advanced to £125,000,000, which was more than double. The change had been very sudden, and had been coincident with depression. Had the additional imports been paid for by legitimate means, or were we spending our capital? That question certainly called for investigation and explanation. The adverse balance was attempted to be accounted for by three different items —first, cost of carriage; secondly, profits; thirdly, interest on foreign investments. In the discussion last year on this subject, the hon. Member for Bolton (Mr. J. K. Cross), in order to show the necessity of our imports largely exceeding our exports, took three examples—namely, cotton, iron, and wool, of which he assumed shipments had been made of the value of £1,000 each.

The hon. Member contended that, to recoup himself for this £3,000 exports, he must import goods for £6,920, so that in the tables of exports and imports the £3,000 exports must be represented by £6,920 of imports. How was that conclusion arrived at? Why, by calculating an outward freight of £3,050. But, as a matter of fact, the exporter did not receive that back. It was paid to the agent abroad. He had only his original £3,000 to get home. But did not the agent for the shipowner remit the freight? No; it was spent in coal, wages, charges, loading, &c., only the homeward freight and charges must be allowed for. For that M. Mongredien allowed 11 per cent; but, as one-third was in foreign bottoms, only two-thirds of the £11 could be reckoned, which was £7 per cent. Mr. Newmarch, to whose death he had already alluded, calculated 5 per cent, Mr. Bourne calculated the same, while Mr. M'Kay calculated 8½ per cent. It would be fair to take the medium, say 7 per cent. The £3,000 sent out would, therefore, be represented by an import of £3,210, and not £6,920, as stated by the hon. Member. Assuming, therefore, that the exports must exceed the imports by 7 per cent for homeward freight and charges, this would reduce the adverse annual balance by £27,000,000. Then there was the second of the two heads—profit. In a little book called *Popular Fallacies regarding Trade and Foreign Duties*, by E. J. Pearce, issued by the Cobden Club, he found that Mr. Pearce had corrected the figures of the hon. Member for Bolton. He had pointed out the error about outward freight; but he found fault because the hon. Member for Bolton had left out "profit." Why was that left out? For a very good reason. Because, as a rule, there had been none. It was lucky if the goods realized the invoice price. Mr. Pearce was determined not to err in this way. He supposed a case of a hardware cargo sent to New Orleans. The voyage would occupy three months, and he calculated there would be a profit of 20 per cent out, and 20 per cent home, equal to 160 per cent per annum. He congratulated Mr. Pearce on that result; he would like to be a partner with him in such an undertaking. The adverse balance would soon be accounted for in this manner.

Mr. Ritchie

He need hardly say, however, that such a calculation was an absurdity. There were three different methods of shipping goods—firstly, where the merchant bought and consigned; secondly, where the manufacturer consigned; and, thirdly, where the shipment was on account of a foreign buyer. In the third case there was, of course, no profit at all to be reckoned. The profit, if any, was retained in the foreign country. In the second case, when the manufacturer consigned it was a sure sign that no profit could be made. In such a case he was only too glad to receive the invoice price. In how many instances did this happen, and was there not more generally a loss? Was it not certain that in times of depression there was a loss? In the first case, that of the merchant buying and consigning, as for the last few years prices had been gradually but steadily falling, the turn was always against the buyer, so that even in the case of the merchant consigning there had of late years been more commonly a loss than a profit. Looking, therefore, at all the various modes of shipping goods, he thought it was much safer to accept the conclusion of the hon. Member for Bolton, founded on experience, and calculate on no profit having been made in recent years on the export trade, rather than accept the figures given by Mr. Pearce. There remained the question of interest on our foreign investments. It was assumed that the amount we had to receive on this account was from £30,000,000 to £35,000,000 per annum. The receipts from India amounted to about £10,000,000. That made a total of £40,000,000 to £45,000,000. If to that were to be added £27,000,000, the profit of our carrying trade, we arrive at a total of £72,000,000. If we deducted this sum, therefore, from the gross adverse balance of £125,000,000 per annum, it would still leave an adverse balance of £53,000,000 per annum. Mr. Giffen had recently read a very interesting Paper before the Statistical Society on the subject of our imports and exports; and, dealing with the subject of our loans abroad, he expressed views which were contrary in many respects to those of M. Mongredien and others who agreed with him. M. Mongredien expressed an opinion that, of late years, foreign countries had not increased their indebtedness to us; but, in Mr. Giffen's

Paper, he contended that foreign countries had increased their indebtedness to us to the extent of £209,000,000 during the last few years. If Mr. Giffen was right, we ought not to calculate on having to receive the £45,000,000 we had assumed to receive during the last five years as interest. This £45,000,000, instead of being received in the shape of imports, was left abroad and lent out again; and, if this were so, this sum must not be calculated in reduction of our adverse balance, so that we were thus left with only £27,000,000 for freight to reduce the adverse balance of £125,000,000. Mr. Giffen, however, in the Paper referred to, contended that, instead of amounting to £27,000,000, the freight and charges to be remitted home amounted to £80,000,000 per annum. Even so, the adverse balance would be still £45,000,000. Mr. Giffen, however, calculated both inward and outward freight. He had already shown that we had no right to calculate outward freight, so that, even assuming Mr. Giffen's calculation of £80,000,000 outward and homeward freight and charges to be correct, a very large deduction had to be made from this on account of the outward freight; but could it be doubted that Mr. Giffen's estimate was greatly in excess of the actual amount, which no one had previously estimated at more than £42,000,0000? According to his calculations, the annual excess of imports unaccounted for was £53,000,000, if we calculated that the interest on foreign loans had been remitted in goods, or £100,000,000 if the interest had been retained abroad, and re-lent, as Mr. Giffen said had been the case. Mr. Giffen admitted that the adverse balance amounted to £45,000,000. If the lower figures were correct, the aspect of the case was very grave; if the higher, it was most alarming. How was that excess paid for? It was certainly not paid for by bullion; the only other way would be by parting with our securities. Now, in a work recently published by Mr. Bourne, an eminent statistician, and sub-head of the Statistical Department of the Customs, he asserted that there was good reason to fear that payment for our excess imports was being made in this way; and he had the authority of the manager of one of the largest banks in London for the statement that the amount of foreign securities deposited with bankers had largely diminished. The net practical result of what he had been endeavouring to show was, firstly, that all the usual indications showed the state of the country to be very grave, and that, instead of continuing to advance, we were receding; secondly, that the falling-off in exports was most serious, looking to the fact that we were yearly becoming more dependent on foreign countries for the necessaries of life; thirdly, that reduction in value had not been compensated for by reduction in the price of raw material, but that, on the contrary, we were compelled to give, year by year, more of our labour for less money; and, fourthly, that the yearly increasing adverse balance of imports was not to be accounted for by our carrying charges or by our foreign income, but was, it was greatly to be feared, coming out of the accumulations of the country. Whatever objections might be taken to his statements, it could not be denied that, at least, he had made out a case for inquiry. It might be contended that he had not proved this state of things to be the direct consequence of Foreign Tariffs. It was difficult to do this; but, surely, *primâ facie*, it could hardly be disputed—at least, it could hardly be denied—that a reduction in Foreign Tariffs would stimulate our export trade. This was shown by our trade with France. In 1860 our exports to that country were only £5,000,000; in 1880 they were £16,000,000. It was essential to our very existence that our foreign export trade should be increased. The question was, how was this to be done? Would it have the desired effect if we threatened retaliation in the event of a continuance of hostile Tariffs? All this was a legitimate subject for inquiry. There was nothing against the principles of Free Trade in Retaliation. Indeed, the President of the Board of Trade himself had advocated that policy in regard to French wines in the speech which he made in that House last August. Again, was it not important to inquire whether our fiscal legislation was as sound as it might be, and whether it would not be possible to relieve the taxpayers of this country of some share of the taxes they paid by increasing the duties on some of the articles we imported? Then there was the ques tion of drawing closer together the bonds which united us with our Colonies. If that were feasible, he was sure it would meet with the assent and support of all classes in the country, and of hon. Members on both sides of the House. He did not say the subject was free from difficulties; but, at any rate, it was worthy of investigation. He was not absolutely wedded to the terms of his Resolution, but would assent to any modification of them, as long as they enabled the investigation to be full and thorough. The matter was one of vital importance, which ought to be cleared up by full inquiry. In the remarks he had made he had confined himself solely to the commercial and manufacturing part of the subject. If, however, he had not referred to agriculture, it was not because he did not feel the enormous importance of the subject and the sufferings which had been borne by all those interested in this, the greatest of our industries. He had sat upon the Agricultural Commission now for many months, and it had been sufficiently demonstrated to him that much suffering had been entailed upon all classes of the agricultural community, except, perhaps, the labourers. He had said nothing on this subject, because he felt that while the Commission was sitting specially to investigate this very matter, and while its Report was even now in course of preparation, it would have been unbecoming for him, as a Member of that Commission, to enlarge on this most important subject. In conclusion, he appealed to the House, in the interests of all classes of the community, that they would grant him what he asked—namely, simply and solely a Committee of Inquiry into the whole subject of the state of the country and the adverse times we had encountered for some years, with a view of finding out the means of restoring that prosperity to the country which it was essential that it should enjoy. The hon. Member concluded by moving the Resolution of which he had given Notice.

Amendment proposed,

To leave out from the word "That" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words "a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the effects which the Tariffs in force in Foreign Countries have upon the principal branches of British Trade and Commerce, and into the possibility of removing, by Legislation or otherwise, any impediment to the fuller development of the manufacturing and commercial industry of the United Kingdom,"—(*Mr. Ritchie,*)

—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. CARTWRIGHT said, that, although according to the Forms of the House he was unable to move the Amendment of which he had given Notice, and which ran in the following terms:—

"That, in the opinion of this House, the commercial relations between the United Kingdom and Foreign Countries are not in a state to demand an inquiry by a Select Committee,"

still, he would briefly explain why he thought the opinions enunciated by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) were such as should not recommend themselves to the House, but were unsound and mischievous. He maintained that not one of the hon. Member's propositions had been borne out; and he believed, in fact, that the real and main purpose of the Motion was in the direction of Protection in the shape of a reversal of the commercial policy that had been pursued by this country for many years. That aim and purpose was clearly expressed in the friendly Amendment, as he had every reason to believe, which had been put down by the hon. and learned Member for West Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill). That Amendment distinctly advocated imposition of retaliatory duties against foreign nations, with the view of affording relief to the British taxpayers from burdens, and of artificially stimulating a development of trade with our Colonies. The latter allegation rested on a fallacy. It assumed that a certain extension of our trade must follow on the adoption of such a line of commercial policy by this country, from the alleged greater readiness of the Colonies to take British goods. That was a statement which had been very much put before the country by people who were seeking for Protection under the disguise of calling themselves Fair Traders. There was a gross delusion in the statement. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets had compared our trade to the Colonies in two distinct years. No comparison of any real value could rest on the data of two distinct years. The only data of real value for any comparison between the relative elasticity of our trade to foreign countries and to the Colonies could be furnished by the Returns not of single years, but of a series of years. Now, the examination of the amount of our Colonial trade during a period of 25 years would prove that its proportions to the total of our trade has, practically, remained stationary. In 1856 our trade with the Colonies was about 25 per cent, and in 1880 it remained 24 per cent, of our total trade. There were fluctuations, no doubt; but he denied that the fluctuations were greater than those which marked our trade with foreign countries, and there was no indication of a greater elasticity in our Colonial trade. The reference to the undeniable extension of our trade with India was beside the purpose, for our Indian trade could not serve as a fair gauge for our Colonial trade. The Indian Tariff was made by ourselves according to our commercial views. But the Colonies were self-governing, and made their own Tariffs according to their views. Now, it was an incontrovertible fact that, with the solitary exception of New South Wales, in every British self-governing Colony the present Tariff was higher than the Tariff as it stood in 1859—the year before the conclusion of the Anglo-French Commercial Treaty — and, therefore, the point of time when commenced the commercial relations against which the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets inveighed. But, while he asked us to believe that English trade was being crushed out by the adverse and hostile action of a re-actionary and protective system adopted of late years by foreign countries, how did the matter really stand? Why, whereas every English-speaking self-governing Colony, with one exception, at present imposed higher duties on British goods than in 1859, notwithstanding the unfortunate return towards a protective system in many Foreign States, there was only one which at present still had a Tariff with duties notably lower than they were in 1859—and that one State was the great English-speaking Republic in America. He wanted to know, then, how a law could be made out from these facts in favour of a discriminating Tariff against foreign countries, with their higher Tariff for the benefit of the Colonies with their pronounced Protectionist systems? The whole question of whether Protective Tariffs had done much injury to, and were really crushing out, British industry and manufactures might be tested by our commercial relations with the United States. The United States had been exactly following out the policy which certain hon. Gentlemen opposite wished to see prevail in this country; and what had been its effect there? A comparison between the industries of the United States and of Great Britain afforded a crucial test for the two systems. We, under Free Trade economy, produced and exported something like £190,000,000 worth of manufactured articles; the United States exported something less than £18,000,000, under the fostering care of Protection. In 1880, notwithstanding the high Tariff of the United States, we exported upwards of £24,000,000 of manufactured articles to the United States; whereas the United States, despite Protective stimulants, did not import £3,000,000 of manufactures into Great Britain. The case was still more strikingly illustrated by reference to the relative positions of British and American shipping. There was no country in the world so favourably situated for becoming a first-class shipping country as America; and yet, notwithstanding Protection, upwards of 50 per cent of the American trade was carried in British bottoms, and only 16 per cent carried in American vessels. That was most conclusive as to the relative action of Protection and Free Trade. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets, throughout the whole of his speech, had taken not normal, but abnormal years as tests, without making any allowance for that fact. For instance, he did not hear the hon. Member say a single word as to the inflated development of British trade in the years 1871 and 1872, to which he kept referring. In bringing an indictment against the commercial policy of the country, it was not quite fair to base sweeping arguments upon abnormal years, and on exceptional circumstances. The hon. Member did not grapple with the subject of British shipping at all, which had grown immensely; and he omitted to take any account of the interest of British trade arising from monies invested abroad. Upon the question of duties it was really impossible to draw a distinction between raw material and manufactured material; for what was called raw material one day was called manufactured material another day. Some articles which constituted the material for important branches of our industries were ranked as manufactured articles in Foreign Tariffs. Towards the end of his speech the hon. Member touched on the subject of agricultural depression; but said he would not go into the subject because he was a Member of the Royal Commission on Agriculture, and, therefore, he thought it right not to advance any opinion; but, not being himself a Member of the Commission, he would say a word upon the subject. In his opinion, the agricultural depression had been mainly instrumental in producing the commercial depression of the country; for everyone connected with agriculture, whether landlord or tenant, had heavily suffered, and those losses had necessarily involved stringent retrenchment. But this stringent retrenchment on the part of the agricultural classes had also necessarily affected the home market, which, in a large degree, dealt with those classes. He was not about to discuss the whole question of all the causes which had led to our agricultural depression. He only wished to dwell on one point closely connected with the commercial fallacies of those who advocated Protection. It was not the case that the depression of farmers in England was wholly due to foreign competition—to their being undersold by American importers. That this was not so could be proved by figures. The hon. Member for South Leicestershire (Mr. Pell), in his Report as a Commissioner to investigate the agricultural resources of the United States, had given elaborate calculations to the effect that it would not pay to import in the long run American grain into this country for less than 48*s.* a-quarter. His figures were much canvassed at the time; but they had been proved correct by fact. He held in his hand a Return with which he had been favoured of the price of wheat in Mark Lane month by month since the time when their calculations had been made; and from this Paper it appeared that only on three occasions—in September, October, and November, 1880—had the price temporarily fallen below 48*s.* But what had ruined many a farmer was the circumstance that he never was in a position to offer any article that would fetch any price at all in consequence of its deterioration through quite exceptionally disastrous atmospheric conditions. The fact was a number of circumstances concurred to aggravate the agricultural conditions. The wild and gambling speculation which had seized our industrial classes, and led to inflated periods of so-called prosperity, had also extended to farmers. They took farms at rents which were excessive, and so in evil times they found themselves involved in money engagements beyond their means, and in possession of an article so damaged as to be unsaleable. This was what had broken so many farmers in this country; but not the fact of any importation of American grain at prices of excessive lowness, for that grain, as a rule, fetched only 48*s.* a-quarter; whereas the British agriculturist, from the disastrous seasons, came into Mark Lane with grain that was not fit for sale at all. There were, as it seemed to him, as many fallacies as could be crammed together in the Resolution of the hon. Member. Apparently, he feared any development of foreign industry, and thought a monopoly necessary for the prosperity of the country, though the only way of securing that monopoly was by imposing duties which he called retaliatory, but which would be paid, in reality, not by foreigners, but by the British consumer. The true test of Free Trade was whether, in the same circumstances, the position of the country would have been bettered by Protection; and he held that no arguments could be adduced in support of that proposition. He would only add, in conclusion, that he also took exception to the hon. Gentleman's statements as to pauperism, for he maintained that at no time had pauperism weighed so little as at present.

Mr. MAC IVER said, he was glad that the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was in his place, as he should have to refer to him in very pointed terms. With reference to the speech that had just been made, it was almost altogether nonsense, although there were one or two remarks worth attention, as they might be taken in connection with a speech made some time ago, at Leeds, by the Prime Minister. It was then pointed out by the Prime Minister how American shipping had disappeared from the seas and its place taken by British ships, and he argued that it was because the Americans were Protectionists. He (Mr. Mac Iver) said, without hesitation, that this question between American and English shipping was simply one of materials. Years ago, when wooden vessels were used, the Americans could build them very cheaply, having the wood at their doors; but now, when ships were nearly all of iron or steel, the cost of importing the material and the higher rate of wages in the United States made it impossible for the Americans to compete with us in that respect. Free Trade, if it existed to-morrow, would not annihilate the cost of freight across the Atlantic, or of a long railway journey from the iron-producing districts of America to the seaports. He rose in no spirit of hostility to the Motion of his hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie), who had, in a speech free from allusion of a Party character, called attention to a subject which the working population of this country properly regarded of greater importance than mere political considerations. The Motion was practically the same as one which he (Mr. Mac Iver) presented to the last Parliament on the 4th July, 1879, and which at that time received but scant support even from those who would now cordially support the same proposition. Since that time, however, public opinion had advanced, and was advancing, and a Motion defeated in the present House might not improbably be carried in the next Parliament. His main object in rising was to call attention to some of the replies lately given him by the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on the subject of the French Commercial Treaty. The subject naturally was distasteful to hon. Members opposite; and if the *clôture* existed, it might be that the noble Lord the Secretary of State for India would, supported by his undoubted majority, decree that they wanted to hear no more of it. But, while free speech was still possible, he desired to show the House that he had a perfectly good case. The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, replying to a couple of questions which he ventured to address to him last week, one of them in regard to shipping bounties, and the other in regard to the *surtaxe d'entrepôt*, raised a cheap laugh against him by referring him to the Blue Books. There was, however, a question of fact involved.

MR. SPEAKER: I must point out to the hon. Member that he is travelling beyond the limits of the Question before the House.

MR. MAC IVER wished only to illustrate the commercial relations of England and France. Now, the answers of the hon. Baronet——

MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not in Order in referring to past debates of the present Session.

MR. MAC IVER said, he was not aware that the answers of Ministers were, for the purposes of Order, regarded as parts of past debates. His purpose was merely to refer to the Blue Books, and to say that the case which he desired to present could not be better put than in the words of M. Challemel-Lacour, as contained in one of the Blue Books issued the other day. M. Challemel-Lacour, at the Conference held in London, June 30, 1881, and reported on page 289 of Blue Book "Commercial—No. 37 (1881)," used these words—

> "As to the criticisms of the French bounties to the Mercantile Navy, they are really quite out of place, the question having just been definitely settled by the Legislature. At the time of the preparation and voting of the law, the English Government might, perhaps, have sought, by diplomatic means, to influence the resolutions of the Government of the Republic; but now that it has to deal with an accomplished fact, it is impossible to see the fitness or the use of their observations, and the French Commissioners consider it necessary to decline to discuss the subject."

He, therefore, contended that not only had this country not received any valuable concessions from France as regards the bounties on shipping, but that there was a time when Her Majesty's Government could have made diplomatic representations which might have brought about valuable concessions. He had now accomplished the purpose for which he rose, and he asked the House that the Motion of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets should not suffer by anything he (Mr. Mac Iver) had said, because that Motion had really nothing whatever to do with those questions of fact on which he was at issue with the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Many men of all shades of politics regarded the Motion of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets as raising questions of more importance than Party considerations, because it vitally affected the prosperity of our people; and he appealed to the House to deal with it in that spirit. But before sitting down he desired to point out that the ships which, under the bounty system, the French were now having built in the yards of this country and of Scotland, and which for the moment provided employment for our workpeople, were built here simply because every shipbuilding yard in France was full, and only the surplus orders came to this country. That was not a state of things that was likely to last, and those who relied upon its continuance were like the person in the fable who killed the goose that laid the golden egg. The rolling mills of America were increasing rapidly, and in a few months they would be able to make more rails than they could use. The trade of Sheffield was only temporarily brisk, and the revival would not last. He thought that every thoughtful man, knowing the condition of things, would feel in sympathy with the Resolution before the House.

Sir CHARLES W. DILKE said, he felt a difficulty in replying to the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken, because he wished to avoid being called to Order, as the hon. Gentleman had been twice in the course of his speech. Perhaps, however, he might be allowed the same latitude as was permitted to the hon. Gentleman. The hon. Member had referred to the question of shipping bounties; but the question now under discussion related to Foreign Tariffs, and shipping bounties were not made the subject of Foreign Tariffs at all, and never had been so treated. The hon. Gentleman had quoted the words of M. Challemel-Lacour at the London Conference, and had said that Her Majesty's Government might have sought by diplomatic means to influence the views of the French Government in regard to those bounties. Now, the hon. Member was informed long ago that such diplomatic representations had been made. [Mr. Mac Iver: But made without result.] What did the hon. Member think ought to have been done? The hon. Member said that the observations of M. Challemel-Lacour concluded the matter. He had advised the hon. Member to read the Blue Books, and he must repeat the advice. At the Conference in Paris he had returned to the subject and made a speech; and the hon. Member was not correct in saying that those were the last representations made on the matter. It would be out of Order, however, to discuss that question at length, because it did not fall properly within the scope of Foreign Tariffs, the subject immediately before the House. The speech of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) had been already admirably dealt with by his hon. Friend the Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Cartwright), whose remarks he was very sorry to hear characterized by the hon. Member for Birkenhead (Mr. Mac Iver) as nonsense—a word seldom used in the House, and one certainly very inapplicable to the carefully-reasoned speech of his hon. Friend. The observations of the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets would be further dealt with by his right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade; but he could not help remarking that the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets had proved nothing; but he had simply stated the case of his opponents, and had wound up by alleging that their observations were absurd, full of fallacies, or unworthy of the attention of the House. His speech was evidently intended to be popular with the Protectionist Party, without courageously and distinctly raising the flag of Protection. By hinting not obscurely in his closing words at the policy of Retaliation, he showed that he had that Protectionist leaning which he had earlier disclaimed.

Mr. STAVELEY HILL said, that the controversy between the hon. Member for Birkenhead and the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was an incident in the debate with which the Resolution before the House had but little to do. He should contend that there might very well be Retaliation without any view to Protection at all. Retaliation had not necessarily anything whatever to do with Protection. Protectionists advocated the imposition of duties either to foster exotic trades, or to unduly encourage natural trades; but a retaliatory duty might be put on for fiscal purposes, without its being a protective duty. It did not follow that because a duty which was put on for one purpose might incidentally and partially have another result, that it was to take its character from that result; it would be just as reasonable to speak of drying the skin as the wetting of a towel. The hon. Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Cartwright) had spoken of farmers giving speculative rents in 1875. What he believed from the instances within his own knowledge was, that farms were taken speculatively and money borrowed to carry them on with, and that the loans involved the borrowers in difficulties. But he believed there were very few instances in which farms were taken at enhanced rents on the faith of a future prosperity. The Amendment of which he had given Notice was in the following terms :—

> "That, with a view to bring about a reduction of the heavy Duties now levied in many Foreign Countries upon British products and manufactures, and an assimilation of the fiscal system of the Colonies with that of the Mother Country, it is desirable for the purposes of Revenue, and to provide means for relieving many of the heavy burdens now pressing upon the producers and consumers of this Country, that Duties should be levied upon goods imported from such Foreign Countries: Provided that such Duties do not interfere with the amount of food required by the people of this Country."

This had been spoken of as a friendly Amendment; but he had nothing at all to do with the Motion, and he thought the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets would rather regard the Amendment as unfriendly. He would not now support inquiry by a Committee, unless the proposed terms of Reference could be very much enlarged. Although he might on other grounds advocate the appointment of a Committee, he would not do so if it were only to inquire into the question of duties levied by foreign countries, and were not to inquire whether, in any circumstances, import duties might not be levied by this country without their having a protective character. It was in May, 1869, that he moved for a Committee to inquire into the working of the French Treaty. He had just been returned for Coventry, which had been vitally affected by it; and as the term of the Treaty was to expire in a year, he thought he might fairly move for a Committee of Inquiry. The Motion was opposed by the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster on the ground that the time was hardly suitable; and he was led to believe that the Motion might be renewed in the following Session with more hope of success. He, however, went to a division, in which the numbers were less than they would have been had it not been that at the time it occurred Lord Cairns was speaking on the Irish Church in the other House, and many Members were listening to him. The proposal was renewed in May, 1870, by way of Amendment, to a Motion by the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Birley), and since then he had not troubled the House on the subject, but had patiently waited until it should have fully ripened. What had been the result of our experience of the Treaty? It had expired, and it had had no mourners at all. There was no mistake about the depth of the feeling that pervaded the country on the subject. He had never mentioned it at meetings in Staffordshire and Lancashire, in manufacturing or agricultural districts, but the reference had been received with enthusiasm. He had been urged to bring it forward earlier, and in not doing so had subjected himself to violent restraint. He was no Protectionist at all; and he had never said a word in favour of protective duties, not even when he was Member for Coventry. If anything like protective duties were to be levied, they must be levied for a purpose wholly different from Protection, and that must be only of an incidental character. The title of the pamphlet which had been alluded to assumed that there was a question of "Free Trade *versus* Fair Trade." He denied that there was any such suit. The advocates of Fair Trade were out-and-out Free Traders in the fullest and most complete sense of the term. If they advocated Fair Trade, it was simply in order that they might bring about more complete Free Trade than we had had up to the present. He was sorry that a pamphlet containing such controversial statements had been issued by a permanent Under Secretary for whom they had the highest regard. In one paragraph, on page 4, sentiments were imputed to the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd), which he disavowed; they were put into turned commas, as if they were a quotation from a speech; and the hon. Member declared that he had never spoken the word, nor held the views that were attributed to him. He would pass away from this part of the subject with the remark that, Free Traders as they were, it was absurd to suppose that the people of England could be induced to accept Free

Trade by such childish nonsense as was put forward in this book. There was one further point he would mention as an instance. Mr. Farrer went through the countries of the world which were Protectionists, and which, therefore, constituted the bulk of the world, and said that they sinned against light and against knowledge. It was nonsense for him to assert that a country could not be Protectionist and yet be successful; it was nonsense for him to state that countries were becoming more and more inclined to Free Trade. What was the case? France had put an end to the Commercial Treaty with this country, because she found that our imports into France were slightly increasing. On every item on which a somewhat increased import was shown she had pressed for increased duties. In three years the import of paper into France had increased by £490,000 a-year; that was stopped by the imposition of a high duty. It was obvious that France was determined to prevent any increase in our importations to her, and to become, in an evil sense of the word, Protectionist. With regard to Canada, Mr. Farrer asserted that she had greatly increased her Tariffs, and that they bade fair to rival the monstrous Tariffs of the United States. Did he mean to assert that Canada was not prosperous? She had to put on duties simply to bring her up to the level of the United States, and to prevent capital which might otherwise come to her going to the United States. She tried, under the Mackenzie Government, the policy of pure Free Trade, and the result was that nearly everyone in Canada was being ruined and made bankrupt. Then, in 1879, Sir John A. Macdonald went through the country advocating his National policy, which was Protectionist. It had been adopted, but the authors had distinctly disclaimed that it had been adopted against the Mother Country, and alleged that it had been introduced only as a protection against the United States. What had been the result of that policy? When he travelled through the country with the hon. Member for Oxfordshire, a short time back, they scarcely found one poor person. Instead of the difficulties with which the country had to contend, when the Mackenzie policy was the rule, Canada now was one of the most prosperous countries in the world. But it was upon the United States that Mr. Farrer poured out the full vials of his wrath. They were the greatest sinners, for they were the most intelligent, and ought to know so much better than to adopt Protection. Yet their present Tariffs ranged from 35 to 100 per cent, which, said Mr. Farrer, "was probably as near Protection as a working Tariff could be." Yet in the United States, in 1880, the imports exceeded the exports; £64,000,000 were paid off the Debt, and £20,000,000 were borrowed at 3 per cent. That was the effect of Protection upon the United States. How did Mr. Farrer account for the prosperity of the United States? He said that such were the magnificent natural advantages enjoyed by the country, and such the blessings of Providence, that, in spite of the folly of man, the United States did an enormous trade with us, and were in a prosperous condition. Did Mr. Farrer suppose that Providence was unduly kind to the United States? It would be very much better if Free Traders were to argue this question in a different manner. It would be very much better for them to admit, as all must admit, that it was possible for a country, and especially for a new country, to be Protectionist and yet to be prosperous. In discussing this question they naturally came to the consideration of the relation of imports and exports. He believed that a country might become very rich, so far as money went, by reason of cheap imports. To quote the words of the hon. Member for Manchester (Mr. Birley), in 1870—

> "However beneficial it might be to the moneyed circle, to the trading class, as distinct from the manufacturing class, and to the commercial and shipping interests, it had not given any additional employment to the workpeople of this country, but had had rather the opposite effect."—[3 *Hansard*, cci. 113.]

If that were so, he did not think that the manufacturer should be protected at the expense of the two former classes; but they had to consider whether the State owed the manufacturer anything. What were the burdens which had been placed on the manufacturing classes? By their different sanitary laws they had laid upon the manufacturing classes very heavy and expensive burdens. The Mines Regulation Act, the Factory Acts, and many other Acts of Parliament had laid great and expensive burdens upon the manufacturing interests. He was not alone in holding that view. He held in his hand a Report containing the views of the largest ironmasters in England and Scotland. They said that one of the arguments used in 1860 by the French, in the discussions on the high duties on iron imports into France, was that the French ironmasters were then at a great disadvantage, in consequence of the legal restrictions placed upon them. The French ironmasters, therefore, claimed to be entitled to put forward the extra cost of production thrown upon them as a reason for the duty. That argument was accepted by Mr. Cobden as a reason why the French should put high duties on iron. The Report then went on to say that there was no longer any necessity for the imposition of that duty. Affairs had now changed, and it was the English manufacturers who were put to considerable expense in the production of iron ore; and the Report urged, therefore, unless the French duty were reduced, a retaliatory duty should be put on by this country. He might say that he had not selected that instance because it was the strongest. He thought that there was a right to place a certain import duty on goods coming into this country under circumstances such as these without it being considered a Protectionist duty. Very heavy expenses were laid upon the manufacturers by the Sanitary Laws; and how did they find other countries acted in the like circumstances? He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade would have obtained details from their Ambassadors abroad as to the cost of production in France, Switzerland, and Germany, and of any sanitary regulations in force in those countries tending to increase the cost of production. Though they had not that information before them, yet they knew that there was no law in France such as that which most properly existed in this country for protecting the health of workmen and shortening the hours of labour. He believed that a Bill regulating the hours of labour was lately introduced into the French Assembly and rejected. The proposition was rejected on the ground that it would be a burden on labour. A foreign producer could, as it were, smuggle into this country articles free from sanitary requirements, which could not be produced here without those sanitary requirements which our Legislature had imposed. Now, then, came the question, could we determine upon any figures that would represent the cost which the law put on ordinary manufactures which did not fall upon such articles in foreign countries? He said we could. He had carefully gone through the figures presented to him, and he ventured to say that the bulk of the goods manufactured in England were produced at a greater cost by 10 per cent in consequence of sanitary regulations such as he had referred to. Were we not, therefore, entitled to place an import duty of 10 per cent upon similar goods coming from countries where there were no sanitary regulations? He, for one, would not put forward any desire that there should not be a considerable import of manufactured goods from foreign countries. There were many things produced by foreign countries which we required, and which it would be absolute folly, by protective duties, to foster the manufacture of here. There was an import of manufactured goods, as far as he could ascertain, of from £60,000,000 to £70,000,000. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade agreed in that; but that was the figure, as far as he had been able to get it from Mr. Farrer's book.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The imports of manufactured goods amount to £35,000,000.

MR. STAVELEY HILL: The right hon. Gentleman had knowledge on these matters; but he (Mr. Staveley Hill) had gone through the figures many times and put the amount higher. However, taking the amount at £35,000,000, a 10 per cent duty would yield £3,500,000. There were many things which might be done with the £3,500,000. There were taxes which might be made light, and which at present pressed heavily on the shoulders of people. The Chancellor of the Exchequer might deal with the great question of tea, and also with the question of beer; and not only that, but he could easily understand that the very placing of such a fiscal duty upon foreign countries, while it would not in any way be a protecting duty, or at all interfere with the importation of any manufactured goods from abroad, would act as a deterrent against the raising of Foreign Tariffs. It would not bring about a war, nor should we look to its bringing about a war of hostile Tariffs. He hoped he would not be regarded in what he was going to say as unduly pandering to working men. He was not one of those who wished to put the working man in any way above his fellows. As far as they were a numerous body, they were entitled to greater consideration than any other set of men; but he was not one of those who would urge any argument in favour of the working man, simply because he happened to be one of a most numerous body. But this was a question essentially for working men, because an increased importation of manufactured goods affected the demand for work of the wage-earning class. Imports during the year 1880 had risen from £258,000,000 to £318,000,000, being an increase of £60,000,000, and the import of manufactured goods had increased £23,500,000. How did that affect the labour of the wage-earning class, because the proposition which he had before him was that the importation of manufactured goods increased the demand for labour of the wage-earning class? He took as an instance of that what took place in Germany during the Franco-German War. In 1870 there broke out that war of desolation—the Franco-German War—and during that war there were drawn from productive industry in Germany 1,250,000 men. Those were men who were absolutely engaged under arms; but when he added to them those persons who were not employed in productive labour, the total of the men withdrawn from productive industry was close upon 2,000,000. Before the war the excess of imports into Germany over exports was about £15,000,000. In 1876, when productive labour might be supposed to have returned to its ordinary channel, the excess of imports over exports was about £13,000,000. In five years, from 1871 to 1875 inclusive, we might take the total excess of manufactured goods imported into Germany over those exported at £115,000,000, and, dividing that by five, we got an average excess of 23,000,000 a-year. How was that paid for? France paid to Germany a War Indemnity of £200,000,000, and out of that was paid by Germany about £100 per man for two years to the 1,365,000 who were under arms. A portion of the £200,000,000 was paid by France out of capital; but the remainder was paid in goods supplied to Germany. If we knew how that excess of imports diminished the employment of productive labour, we had gone far to show that the excess of imports from France lessened the demand for productive labour. He argued that, as an excess of unemployed labour led to an excess of imports, so was an abnormal excess of imports the measure of the unemployed labour in a country at a given time. If, during one of the years alluded to by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie), there was an excess of imported manufactured goods over exports to the extent of £24,000,000, the effect must have been that £18,000,000 were taken from the wage-earning class, if 75 per cent were understood to represent the labour upon manufactured goods. It was clear now that the French Treaty was unsatisfactory; it was not really based upon the principle of reciprocal advantage, as such Treaties ought to be, according to the dictum of Mr. Huskisson in 1830. He held that we should either become parties to a Treaty which was a fair bargain or have our hands untied. England, however, might with advantage enter into a Commercial Customs Union with her Colonies, which in a few years time would be able to supply the Mother Country with as much corn as she could wish for. Though he could not move the Amendment of which he had given Notice, he maintained in the terms which he had placed upon the Paper that, with a view to bring about a reduction of the heavy duties now levied in many foreign countries upon British products and manufactures, it was desirable that duties of a light character, amounting, say, to 10 per cent, should be levied upon manufactured goods imported from such foreign countries, provided that such duties did not interfere with the amount of food required by the people of this country.

Sir JOHN LUBBOCK: Sir, the hon. Gentleman the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) proposes a Committee with so wide a reference and so vast a subject that, in fact, to go into the whole question not one, but half-a-dozen Committees, would be required. The Resolution as it stands would cover all fiscal enactments—not only our own, but those of all foreign nations—nay, it would include all measures bearing on commerce and manufactures—such, for instance, as the Mines Regulation, Factories, and other similar Bills. I cannot imagine that it could ever be wise to appoint a Committee with functions so indefinite; but even if some reasonable limitations were imposed on the scope of the inquiry, we ought to ask ourselves what ground there is for hope that such a Committee could lead to any good result. I do not, indeed, wonder that the hon. Member should propose such a Resolution. During the Recess we heard, over and over again, that Free Trade had failed, that Fair Trade was necessary for the interests of the country. These views were industriously circulated throughout the Provinces; and in agricultural districts hints were thrown about of a 5*s.* duty on corn, which was to bring in a considerable revenue, and raise the value of wheat, but not the price of bread. When Parliament met, the hon. Member for South Nottinghamshire (Mr. Storer), who accepted these statements in good faith, placed on the Notice Paper an elaborate Resolution, which set out all these arguments, and having secured the first place on a Tuesday evening, naturally expected that he would be supported by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North Lincolnshire (Mr. J. Lowther) and his Friends. They were not, however, prepared in this House to defend the views advocated on Provincial platforms, or to recommend a 5*s.* duty on wheat. In hopes of encouraging them, the hon. Member for South Nottinghamshire, only the evening before his Resolution was to come on, threw overboard half of it; but, notwithstanding this concession on his part, his Friends could not be induced to face a discussion here. They left the House, and allowed it to be counted out. The country will draw its own conclusions. But it was necessary to do something, and the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) now comes forward with a Motion intended to cover the retreat of his hon. Friends. What can the hon. Member seriously expect from an inquiry so vaguely indicated and so unlimited in its scope? I fear, indeed, that to accept the Resolution would defeat the very object professed by the hon. Gentleman. It would be interpreted abroad to mean that our experience had created doubts, after all, as to the wisdom of Free Trade; and it might, therefore, tend to weaken the Free Trade Party in foreign countries. The hon. Member confines his Motion to the duties imposed by foreign countries, and wishes, as I understand, to encourage our trade with our own Colonies rather than with foreign countries; but if we are to commence a war of Tariffs, we should be acting in the very opposite direction. According to Returns recently obtained by the noble Lord the Member for Liverpool (Viscount Sandon) and the hon. Gentleman the Member for the University of Oxford (Mr. J. G. Talbot), it would appear that, with the exception of Russia, most foreign countries have lowered their Tariff in the last 20 years. That is the case with Holland, Belgium, France, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Italy, Austria, and Hungary. On the other hand, it is a melancholy fact that our own Colonies show a tendency towards Protection. The duties in Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, New Zealand, Queensland, Canada, and the Cape of Good Hope are all higher than they were in 1860. New South Wales and the West Indies are honourable exceptions; but the result is that in any system of differential duties the tendency would be to raise the taxation on imports from most of our own Colonies, and lower them on those from most foreign countries. It seems to be generally assumed that our trade suffers from the Protectionist policy of other countries. Speakers often say they are for Free Trade, but not for one-sided Free Trade. But how does this matter really stand? Suppose the simplest case—that all the world was Protectionist except ourselves. What would be the result? Every country would produce some commodity in excess of its requirements, which it would export. How is it to be paid? Our manufacturers, obtaining, as by the hypothesis they would, food, raw material, and semi-manufactured products duty free, would be placed at an overwhelming advantage as compared with other manufacurers; every other country would find they could purchase most satisfactorily in Great Britain; and our manufacturers would, therefore, gradually absorb the trade of the world. This is, in fact, what, to a certain extent, happens even now. I should like to ask the hon. Member distinctly—What is the country with reference to which he would desire to raise our Tariff? It cannot be France, who has just passed a Bill to place us on the most favourable footing. I have shown that, unfortunately, our own Colonies—the countrymen of Cobden and Bright—are at present most behindhand in the science of political economy; but I presume the hon. Gentleman does not wish to interpose any artificial barriers between us and them. Probably he is thinking either of Russia or of the United States. But, as regards Russia, we import from that country no appreciable quantity of manufactured articles—less, I believe, than £250,000. She supplies us mainly with food and raw materials, which no one seriously proposes to tax. Moreover, the only effect of putting a differential duty on Russian produce would be that it would come round through Germany, and we should pay the railway fare. Let us, then, turn to the United States. I must say, in commencing, that I doubt if England would ever consent to impose differential duties as against any English-speaking race. For the moment, however, we will discuss the question purely on economical grounds. We export to the United States £38,000,000; while our imports of manufactured articles are less than £3,000,000, a large proportion of which consist of ingenious American devices. The importation of American manufactures, therefore, is so small, that it cannot have any appreciable effect on the gigantic proportions of our national commerce. But let us look into the matter a little further, and consider the effect of the American protective duties on her own interests. The United States produce great quantities of food and of cotton. These she exports. How is she to be paid? She does not require gold or silver, for her own mines supply her. She must, therefore, import manufactures. What, then, is the result of her protective duties? Who pays them? Our manufacturers, of course, send their goods to the best market. They will not sell them to the United States if they can get better prices elsewhere. The American consumer, therefore, pays in the price of the article not only the whole cost of the production, but also the so-called protective duties imposed by his own Government. The effect of those duties is to raise prices in the United States, to a certain extent to divert American capital from more profitable to less profitable employments, and to exclude American manufactures from the markets of the world. For, though the Protectionist policy of America does not, as a matter of fact, shut us out of her markets, it does exclude her manufactures from the markets of the world, because her manufacturers, having to pay so much more for their raw materials, are incapacitated from competing with ours. And what is true of the United States is true of other countries. They cannot and do not exclude our manufactures; but their protective duties, raising the price of raw materials, place their own manufacturers at a disadvantage as compared with ours, and shut them out from the markets of the world. It may be said that this is theoretical. Let us, then, contrast our figures with those of the United States—a country which has all the elements of prosperity, but which has, unfortunately for herself, adopted the Protectionist Tariff. The population of the United States is 50,000,000, while ours is only 35,000,000. But the American manufacturers, who are protected, only export £17,500,000; while our manufacturers, who are unprotected, export £191,000,000. If we take the whole exports from the United Kingdom and the United States, per head of the population, for the year 1840, they were—For the United Kingdom, £1 18*s*. 9*d*.; for the United States, £1 11*s*. 1*d*. Last year they were—For the United Kingdom, £6 9*s*. 5*d*.; for the United States, £3 8*s*. 1*d*. Thus, while in the case of the United States they had risen £1 15*s*. per head, in the United Kingdom they had risen £4 10*s*. per head. If, on the other hand, we take the imports, the amount of foreign productions brought into the country to promote the comfort and well-being of our people, the amount per head last year was—For the United States, £2 13*s*. 3*d*.; for the United Kingdom no less than £11 18*s*. 7*d*. But then our opponents say—"Oh; but that is just what we complain of. We imported last year £411,000,000, and we only exported £286,000,000; we imported, therefore, £125,000,000 more than we exported; and if this goes on the country must be ruined." Why should it be ruined? It is estimated by the best authorities that we have to receive £75,000,000 a-year as interest on our foreign investments. Freight, commissions, and other items, make up, at least, £70,000,000 more; and, in fact, if it were not that we are continually investing capital in our Colonies and abroad, the difference between our imports and exports would certainly be even greater than it is. But the whole complaint is most extraordinary. We imported these goods because we wanted them. Nobody complains that we had too much foreign produce; but they lament that we did not pay enough for it. They complain that our exports were not larger; they would like us to have given more of our British manufactures, more coal and iron, and Manchester goods. If we had exported £100,000,000 more—that is to say, if the imports had cost us £100,000,000 more—I suppose they would have been satisfied. But who ever before heard of a great Party making it a serious complaint that we did not pay enough for what we consumed? Our exports are what we sell, and our imports are what we buy. If our Fair Traders would carry their principles into private life, and endeavour to enrich themselves by paying more for all they buy, they will probably see the singular error into which they are falling. They give to Canning's well-known lines quite a new application. We used to be told that—

> "In matters of Commerce the fault of the Dutch,
> Was giving too little and asking too much."

But our Fair Traders have entirely reversed this complaint. The fault, not only of the Dutch, but of all other nations, now is, according to the Fair Traders, that they give us too much of their produce in exchange for ours. If the £400,000,000 which we imported last year had cost us £100,000,000 more than it did, the hon. Member would, apparently, have been perfectly satisfied. The motto of the Fair Traders seems to be that the way to make money is to buy in a dear and sell in a cheap market, which will give you the great satisfaction of "increasing your exports." Was there ever in this world a more singular fallacy? I observed that the other day a noble Lord, arguing nominally for Fair Trade, drifted unconsciously into Protection, and frankly said that he thought almost every trade required protection. Well, if he went a little further and protected them all, he would see the absurdity of his proposal; for if everybody, by an elaborate machinery, is to pay for everybody else, surely it is better to let things take their natural course. The hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd), in his article in *The Nineteenth Century*, argued in favour of cultivating our trade with the Colonies rather than with foreign countries, because, he said—

> "In buying food from our Colonies we enjoy a return trade in our manufactures at least 20 times larger per head than with the Americans or Russians."

But in such an argument there is a most singular confusion of ideas. When we import food, the "return trade," which, as he quaintly puts it, "we enjoy," is, in simple language, the price we pay for our provisions. I am not prepared to admit that for every quarter of wheat we import from a Colony we should export 20 times as great a value in manufactured articles as if we imported the same quantity of wheat from Russia; but suppose it was so, that is, after all, only to say that we should pay 20 times as dearly for it, which would surely be a singular advantage. Suppose foreign countries sent us food, and that we "enjoyed" no return trade, they would, in fact, be giving us the food for nothing. Germany, we know, has recently adopted, in some measure, the policy of hon. Gentlemen opposite. And what has been the result? Has trade improved? On the contrary, the Reports of the German Chambers of Commerce have recently been collected together, and the result is that they express an almost unanimous opinion that the New Tariff has proved injurious. I observe that the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) limits his Resolution to foreign countries, probably because, if he did not do so, his Amendment would give in practice differential duties in favour of foreign countries as against our Colonies. He limits his Amendment, therefore, to foreign countries. Then, again, I believe he would not tax food. Does he intend to levy duties on raw materials? To tax raw materials would certainly be no boon to our manufacturers. But if they are also to be excluded, what remains? Out of a total importation of £411,000,000 there are only £35,000,000 of manufactured articles retained for our own use. Moreover, this comparatively small sum is divided among so many countries, that there is no one on which we could exercise any effective coercion by imposing a duty on manufactures, even if we were disposed to do so. That any such attempt, however, would be most dangerous and even suicidal is, I think, conclusively shown by the fact that while our whole import of foreign manufactures is only £35,000,000, our export of manufactures is £190,000,000, of which nearly £95,000,000 is to countries with Protectionist Tariffs. To engage in a war of Tariffs under such circumstances would be dangerous indeed. But what is really the state of our commerce? What has been the course of our export trade of British products? It had gradually increased, until, in 1873, it amounted to £255,000,000. But in 1874 there was a change of Ministry. From that time we were disturbed by wars and rumours of wars. Whether right hon. Gentlemen opposite were to blame for this, or whether, as they of course maintain, these alarms were not due to any fault of theirs, is not the question now before the House. Unquestionably, however, the uncertainty thus created affected our trade most prejudicially. From £255,000,000 in 1873, it fell to £240,000,000 in 1874, £223,000,000 in 1875, £200,000,000 in 1876, £198,000,000 in 1877, £192,000,000 in 1878, and £191,000,000 in 1879. Last year, happily, it rose again to £223,000,000. Nay, if the exports of last year were estimated at previous prices, the total would, perhaps, exceed that of any former year. Sir, the immense increase in our commerce since we adopted Free Trade is patent to everyone. To a certain extent, no doubt, that increase is due to the increase in population, the improvement of machinery, the use of steam, and the improved means of locomotion—in fact, to the applications of practical science. But those advantages foreign nations share with us. Now, if we contrast our foreign trade under the system of Free Trade with that of the principal countries of the world which have that system of restricted imports to which the hon. Member wishes us to revert, what do we find? Russia, with a population of 86,000,000, has a foreign trade of £183,000,000; the United States, with a population of 50,000,000, has a foreign trade of £290,000,000; Germany, with a population of 44,000,000, has a foreign trade of £350,000,000; Austria, with a population of 38,000,000, has a foreign trade of £128,000,000; France, with a population of 37,000,000, has a foreign trade of £340,000,000; while Great Britain, with a population of only 35,000,000, has a foreign trade of £700,000,000. I do not deny that some great interests are suffering. It is, unfortunately, too clear that farmers especially have lost heavily from bad harvests during the last five years. But, Sir, what is, on the whole, the condition of the country at the present time? In spite of the bad harvests, in spite of our enormous National Expenditure, which I am sure no one regrets more than the Prime Minister, we are making money and saving money. No doubt there have been more prosperous times; but yet every indication shows that the country is increasing in wealth. The total annual value in property assessed for the Income Tax in 1870 was £445,000,000; in 1879 it was £578,000,000; during the last 10 years we have laid out over £100,000,000 in railways in Great Britain and Ireland; our shipping has increased from 5,700,000 to 6,700,000 tons; and it is surely a proud boast that more than half the shipping on the high seas carries the Queen's flag! The total of coal and metals produced in 1870 was £46,000,000; in 1880 was £64,000,000. The Clearing House transactions in 1870 were £3,900,000,000; in 1880, £5,718,000,000; and this year, I believe, will show an increase of no less than £500,000,000. The numbers of cotton piece goods exported in 1870 were 3,250,000; in 1880, 4,500,000. We have heard a good deal about the wool trade; but the amount of raw wool used was, in 1870, 323,000,000 lbs.; in 1880, 370,000,000 lbs. The deposits in savings banks have increased from £35,000,000 to £77,000,000. The number of able-bodied paupers in 1849 was 200,000; in 1880 it had fallen to 110,000, although the population had increased more than 30 per cent. The improved scale of comfort of our people is shown by the increased consumption per head of such articles as tea and sugar, butter and cheese. Lastly, I think every banker will confirm me when I say that our investments in foreign securities are increasing every day. I do not deny that some trades are suffering; but, on the whole, whatever test you take, all tend to show that the wealth and prosperity of the country, as a whole, is increasing. Moreover, it must be remembered that this general improvement is the more significant and remarkable when we reflect that it has taken place in spite of a succession of bad harvests. If it can be proved to demonstration, as I think it can, that, on the whole, the country is richer than it was 10 years ago; and if it is admitted that, unfortunately, our harvests have been disastrous, it follows, of course, that our commerce and manufactures must have prospered. I do not say that that prosperity is wholly due to Free Trade; but that Free Trade has largely promoted it I firmly believe. When foreign nations endeavour to exclude us from their markets, they shut themselves out from the markets of the world—nay, rather, as experience shows, their so-called system of Protection, while it cannot keep us out, shuts them in. So long as there are no differential duties against us; so long as each foreign nation admits our goods on as favourable terms as those of other countries, I doubt not that our manufacturers will be able to hold their own. The "Most Favoured Nation" Clause is, therefore, what I think we should contend for. In conclusion I trust that this House will give no support to any Motion which would in any way tend to imperil that wise system of Free Trade, under which our manufactures and commerce have attained to a magnitude and prosperity unparalleled and unexampled in the history of the world.

MR. ECROYD said, that, if he were disposed to go into the question, he could bring clear proof to show that, if a marked fall in the manufacturing industries of the country had taken place while the Conservatives were in power, a recovery in manufacturing industries took place many months before the fall of the Government of Lord Beaconsfield. But such considerations were really beside the question now before the House. He proposed to deal with the hon. Baronet's argument, and to examine the effect of Foreign Tariffs on trade, and then to go on to see what could be done in the way of legislation for the promotion of the trade and industries of the nation. They had just witnessed the failure of the attempt to negotiate a Treaty with France. That was a matter for surprise, for one would have thought that the 20 years' experience that France had enjoyed in connection with this country would have induced her to adopt Free Trade, and to become the precursor of that policy throughout Europe. He had felt the most complete confidence in the efforts the Government had made to negotiate a new Treaty of Commerce, and in the ability of the hon. Baronet the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who had acted on behalf of the Government in the negotiations; and those negotiations had only failed because France had determined to have a retrograde Treaty or none at all, and to fall back again upon that policy which the Emperor Napoleon was induced, by the arguments of Mr. Cobden, to abandon some 20 years ago. The hon. Baronet had challenged them to state some definite policy. He accepted that challenge, and would, in the fewest possible words, state what was the policy they believed should be adopted by this country. In the first place, they had to consider whether the present state of things was not due to the action of Foreign Tariffs. He would, therefore, proceed to deal with the question of productive industries. He believed those who said that the manufacturing classes were much more prosperous than they were 20 years ago. That was the opinion of experienced men of business. The statistics, in many cases, were completely irrelevant to the issues raised in the present debate. Statistics told them what the amount of the trade of the country was; but they did not state what would be the effect of assisting the development of the resources of the country. Again, with regard to the improvement that had shown itself in our foreign investments, it was impossible to say whether we were not thereby losing some of the resources of the country. We were absolutely without any information which would enable us to arrive at any safe conclusion upon that important element. Again, upon the question of paupers, in spite of the long period of depression of trade, only a comparatively small number of the population were thrown on parish relief. During the prosperity of the last 20 or 30 years, for which he would give credit to the Free Trade policy of the country, he and others who were engaged in manufacturing industries in the North were well aware that a considerable change had taken place in the condition of the manufacturing population, and that they were now able to bear a considerable amount of depression without being driven to seek parish relief. When depression took place, they first of all had recourse to their previous savings; then they took to restricting their expenditure; then, he was sorry to say, they gradually parted with their stock of furniture; and then, finally, they had to get into debt to obtain the necessaries of life. He could speak from his own personal experience of the honourable manner in which the people faced their difficulties. Not many years ago, when, in consequence of the depression in trade, he and those who were connected with him had to restrict production, they made advances to their workpeople without any security, in order to enable them to tide over their difficulties; and they were afterwards repaid without the loss of a single farthing. Taking that case as an example, we should look in vain to the statistics of pauperism to ascertain the losses suffered by the productive industries of the country. Then, as to the Income Tax, would anyone be found to assert that the landowners were not paying much more Income Tax on the same income than formerly? Had they had an allowance made to them of Income Tax anything like in proportion to the losses they had sustained? We knew they had had nothing of the kind. As regarded Schedule B, a large number of the farmers, no doubt, made accurate returns; but in many cases the return was made at random, and they were satisfied if the Commissioners reasonably assessed the Income Tax to be paid. He was satisfied that those returns did not present a safe foundation for drawing conclusions as to the losses sustained by productive industries. With reference to the effects of the Tariffs, the alterations in the Foreign Tariffs afforded no guide as to their effect in restricting British exports. The duty of 10 per cent levied on our manufactures had no restrictive effect on the trade of the English manufacturer; but the longer it was maintained the greater effect it would have, until ultimately English goods would be kept out; so that the 10 per cent, which was now comparatively harmless, became, in the course of time, absolutely prohibitive. The Foreign Tariff injured us by limiting our productive industries. The hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), who preceded him, had stated that we obtained imports in exchange for exports. There could be no doubt as to that; but they said that the productive industries depended in great measure on the ability to purchase imports; and, therefore, by placing restrictions on the productive industries, and crippling the manufactures, a distinct injury was done to the trade and prosperity of the country. Hon. Members, if they would refer to the Commercial Blue Book, No. 38, page 72, would find a letter from Mr. Kersham, the President of the Luton Chamber of Commerce, with regard to the French Tariffs. He said there that the proposed duty would entirely prohibit the exportation of straw hats; and he further remarked that as a large quantity of those goods would be exported to France when there was no demand for them, he earnestly desired that they would urge on the French Government the importance of re-considering the matter. On page 113 of the same Blue Book the President of the Central Chamber of Agriculture, speaking of the duties on woollen goods, said that it was a matter which concerned the agriculturist as well as the manufacturer. The injury to agriculture was of a secondary nature; but it was distinctly felt, nevertheless. A reference had been made to the disastrous influence on the Bradford trade by the increase in the German Tariff. There could be no doubt that that was partly the cause of the falling-off in that trade, and that it was not wholly due to the change in fashion to soft goods, which required Colonial wools for their manufacture. Another influence of the Foreign Tariffs was the exaggerated fluctuations of demand. In the coal and iron trades, for instance, that was seen, especially as regarded the demand from America. The effect of the overflow of the American demand was that it unduly stimulated the labour of those industries in this country. The moment that demand failed, the American workmen would still be employed, owing to the Protective Tariff which existed there; while our workmen would cease to be employed, and the ultimate effects must therefore be disastrous to our trade. Another effect of these exaggerated demands was that on the moral condition of the population. The moment the demand ceased a depression followed, and the avoidance of such unhealthy fluctuations as that could hardly be bought too dear at any price. In a pamphlet which had been published recently by Mr. Farrer, that gentleman reminded the Protectionists that the cheapness of goods was owing to foreign competition. They had often been accused of being Protectionists, and had been called by that name. An endeavour had been made to prove that he and his Friends had complained of foreign competition. He had never done so. Mr. Farrer had made that assertion, and, as evidence, had quoted an article in *The Nineteenth Century*, which really proved the reverse. He had not complained of foreign competition, but of Foreign Tariffs, and had said that we ought to free ourselves from the effect of Foreign Tariffs. Mr. Farrer had absolutely misquoted him, and imputed to him opinions the very contrary of those which he entertained. If an opponent had recourse to such methods, he must be reduced to desperate straits indeed. Those Foreign Tariffs had caused a lamentable deterioration in our fabrics. In the same Blue Book, on page 59, would be found the evidence of Mr. John Merry, the President of the South of Scotland Chamber of Commerce, and which was to the effect that the prohibitive duties charged by foreign countries compelled the production of an inferior article. Ten per cent had to be taken off the cost of production, representing 5 per cent in inferiority of quality, and 5 per cent in reduction of wages. Wages had been reduced to the lowest possible rate consistent with the maintenance of the workman. He had found the necessity of manufacturing meretricious articles had told especially on our trade with Spain. The same effect had been produced in English plate-glass exported to France. The result was that the French consumers had to pay 20 per cent for English plate-glass above its natural price if there were no duties. Another consequence naturally was to encourage the production of an inferior kind of article. Thus, too, the French producer was enabled to pour his goods into this country without limit. He was not then discussing the effect upon the English consumers, who, it would be said, profited by this influx of foreign goods. Thus, an unfair and illegitimate competition was created, very detrimental to English industries. In periods of great prosperity the restraint thus put on our commerce with certain countries was but little felt, as the general trade of the country, spread over a wide area, tended to obscure the hardships in our trade with particular countries. He would compare our export and import trades in two series of years. In the years 1871, 1872, 1873, and 1874, which were exceptionally prosperous, the imports in meat, dairy produce, grain, and potatoes amounted to £305,500,000. In 1877, 1878, 1879, and 1880, the imports in the same articles amounted to £417,750,000, showing an increase of £112,000,000 in our imports of agricultural produce. He would next give the total exports abroad of our five leading industries—namely, metals, textiles, chemicals, railway carriages, &c., earthenware, china, and glass. Our total exports of these great products of our manufacturing industries in the first series of years, 1871, 1872, 1873, and 1874, amounted to £789,000,000. In the second series of years, 1877, 1878, 1879, and 1880, they amounted to £627,000,000. Thus the falling-off in the exports of these great products was £162,000,000 simultaneously with an increased import of agricultural produce to the extent of £112,000,000. He had always admitted that the income due to us from foreign investments and amounts earned on freights, and the profits on our foreign commerce, were all legitimate reasons why we should import a great deal more in value than we exported. It was not, however, that fact which we were now dealing with; but with the fact that in four years of disaster, when every source of our foreign income which ought to account for excess of imports had failed in an extraordinary manner, the excess of imports over exports was £284,000,000 more than the same excess had been in the four profitable years. It was quite clear that here was a phenomenon which required the most attentive consideration. It might be said, no doubt with truth, that the change in the amount of our foreign investments had much to do with this phenomenon; but no more damaging admission could be made by hon. Gentlemen on the other side of the House. The right hon. Gentleman the

First Lord of the Treasury made two remarkable speeches at Leeds on the 7th and 8th of October last; and, in regard to this particular question, the right hon. Gentleman spoke of the great falling-off in the export of our industries during this period of depression to which he had just been alluding. It was estimated by the right hon. Gentleman that in 1877, 1878, 1879, and 1880, the falling-off was £161,000,000. The right hon. Gentleman went on to analyze the effect of that falling-off in our exports upon the condition of the country; and he estimated the loss of profit at £16,000,000, or 10 per cent, and the loss of trade at £8,000,000, making a total loss of £24,000,000. But he must point out that, in his argument, the right hon. Gentleman failed to notice the enormous loss sustained by the cessation of wages and rent and interest and capital upon buildings, and the expensive machinery employed, which must in many cases have amounted not to 10 per cent, but to 50, or 60, or 70 per cent. Many of our mechanical industries, and the coal-mining industries, were reduced to half-work. At all events, this was the case in many districts. In South Wales the result was much worse than this, and the production of iron was actually brought to a standstill. This diminution of the national earnings, he might observe, could never afterwards be regained. If foreign nations would have accepted our goods on equitable terms, those industries would still have been employed. But for the alteration of the American Tariff, the Americans would, in exchange for the food they imported, have taken a large quantity of the manufactures and products of this country. Here we put our finger on the exact manner in which Foreign Tariffs diminished the resources of the country and injured its industries. Our loss from the failure of agricultural produce on occasions like this was aggravated by the artificial stoppage of our manufacturing industries. It was an unfortunate fact, which added seriously to the difficulty calling for solution, that not only were we liable to recurring depressions of trade, but agricultural employment was also being contracted, and land was being changed from arable to pasture, or it was allowed to remain fallow. Every thousand acres so changed displaced 28 families of agricultural labourers, and thus diminished the wages earned. Therefore, we had not only contraction of our manufacturing industries, and of the employment they afforded, but we had a serious diminution in agricultural employment, which was throwing the agricultural population more and more on the large towns, bringing them into competition with those employed in manufacture. In the last 10 or 15 years there had been a great reduction in the value of mill property and industrial works. The diminution of income sustained by the landed interest through the competition of American corn was a very serious injury to the nation at large, because it contracted the expenditure of an important class, and was felt through every branch of trade and commerce. These things told first of all on trade capital, which gradually melted away. As to the partial recovery of trade during the last two years, for the first time in the experience of living men a recovery of trade which brought employment to the working classes had been unaccompanied by a profit to the employers, such as would strengthen them and enable them to bear occasional pressure. The effects of these things were felt in the depreciation of the value, not only of mills and warehouses, but also of houses and shops in centres of industry. These were certainly indications of the decay of national resources and prosperity. It was, therefore, not surprising that there was a cry for Protection, not only from manufacturing communities and bodies of workmen, but also, and especially, from those engaged in the cultivation of the soil. With Protection he had not the smallest sympathy. He did not believe that the protection of any industry in this country could be of the slightest eventual benefit to that industry, while he held that it must be a disadvantage to the country at large. He had heard Protection demanded by staunch Liberals, and large numbers of Liberal working men and tradesmen held Fair Trade principles strongly. He was not surprised at the demands coming from these quarters. The production of wheat had been considered for generations by owners, occupiers, and labourers to be a safe and firm industry. But if any proposal were made for direct Protection, such as a 4*s.* or 5*s.* duty on imported corn, he should be obliged to vote against it. He was sure it was not Protection that could meet such a state of things. Still, we could not silence those who made the demand, nor suppress the conviction that the prosperity of the country was seriously imperilled. We could not get rid of the impression that it was much more risky than it used to be to put capital into our leading industries. We could not scold complainants into silence by telling them there was nothing the matter with them, nor re-assure them by the conclusions which Mr. Giffen drew from the Trade Returns. It might be that those with large foreign investments were saving money, that others were making large profits on our imports, and yet that there was a rapid diminution in the wealth of the owners of fixed property in this country. It seemed to him most unfair to charge those who proposed to put a duty on foreign manufactures only for the purpose of putting pressure on those who excluded our own with entertaining a desire for Protection. Nothing could be more legitimate than to impose a duty of 10 per cent, at the same time giving notice that it would be abolished in the case of those countries that admitted our goods. It would be an absolute offer of Free Trade in manufactures. Of course, by such a proposal we could not act on the United States or Russia; but it was good in its own limited area—as, for instance, between us and Belgium or France, whose manufactures we received, while they refused to receive ours on equal terms. No doubt it was more difficult to deal with the United States and Russia, from which we received large supplies of food and raw materials. He was not one of the Council of the National Fair Trade League, nor was he responsible for their programme; but he believed that all Commercial Treaties with foreign countries or our own Colonies should absolutely cease and never be renewed. But that would not preclude arrangements for the protection of mutual interests by Conventions. We ought to abandon all attempts to make any tariff bargains with any foreign country, colony, or dependency. We ought to impose a duty upon articles of food imported from foreign countries, perfectly uniform in character, not for the purpose of Retaliation or Protection, but simply to control the future course of our capital, and develop the resources of the Empire. In one of his speeches at Leeds the Prime Minister had spoken of the possibility of America prospering under a system of Protection. For his own part, he believed that Protection was always hostile to the interests of the country that adopted it; but the right hon. Gentleman had said that America was capable of flourishing under such conditions, because she had an incomparable field of commerce and exchange within her own limits. That was to a great extent true, and British statesmen would find that the greatest mistake they could commit was to withdraw all commercial preference from the component parts of our own Empire. It was much to be regretted that our Empire had not been so drawn together as to make all our great Colonies members of its free exchange, just as California and Texas, Minnesota and Florida, Pennsylvania and New England all shared the general commercial policy of the United States. The consolidation of the United States had been maintained 20 years ago by a fearful Civil War; but the unity of the interests that, after all, kept the States together was owing to the fact that the country could, to a great extent, subsist on its own internal commerce; and the same bond of commerce might easily be made to unite the parts of our own Empire. The greatest sacrifice we had ever been called upon to make was a very small one, and was merely the imposition of a trifling duty on foreign food, in order to drive the industry of producing it into the hands of our Colonial fellow-countrymen. It would be said, however, that our Colonies were more Protectionist even than foreign countries, and that we had no control over them. True, many of them had adopted a protective policy; but they had been thrown into the arms of Protection by the system adopted by the Mother Country, which would have the result, if it were persisted in, of forcing Canada into a Tariff like that of the United States. Had a different policy been adopted, and had the tie that bound the Colonies to the Mother Country been more satisfactorily recognized, there would have been little or no difficulty in maintaining the complete freedom of Colonial exchange and commerce. By the word "freedom" he did not mean that the Colonies would never have imposed revenue duties, but that such heavy duties would not have been levied as other countries—the United States, for example—placed upon the productions of this country. The comparative value to England of the foreign and the Colonial trade was shown by the following figures:—During the five years 1876 to 1880, inclusive, the United States, with 50,000,000 of people, had taken from us British manufactured goods to the value of 7*s.* 11*d.* per head of the population; Australia, with 3,000,000 of people, took goods to the value of £5 19*s.* 7*d.* per head; Canada and Newfoundland, with 4,000,000 of people, to the value of £1 12*s.* 6*d.* per head; Russia, with 80,000,000, to the value of 11*s.* 6*d.* per head; the West Indies, with a population of 1,330,000, to the value of £2 1*s.* 3*d.* per head; and the Cape Colony and Natal, with a population of 1,085,000, to the value of £4 19*s.* 7*d.* per head. That showed that we ought not to look merely to the absence of Free Trade, but also to the practical effect of the duties levied by our Colonies on our manufactures, as compared with the duties levied by countries like the United States; and that, instead of enforcing on our Colonies the abandonment of all duties, we ought to encourage them to find in their union with the Mother Country a continual advantage from the enjoyment of a comparatively free exchange, which should bind them for ever to this country. With those views he had never advocated the policy of dragging the Colonies into Free Trade, and had never held that it was our duty to make trade conventions with them. If that had been the commercial policy of the country, one of its earliest results would have been seen in the case of Canada. For 14 or 15 years Canada, living near a great Protectionist neighbour, had had the greatest difficulties to contend with. She had been imposing duties of 20 per cent on our manufactures, while the United States had been imposing 60 per cent on the same manufactures. The immediate consequence had been that if he sent £100 worth of goods to the United States of America, the duty of 60 per cent levied on them raised the price of them for internal circulation to £160; while, if he sent an equal £100 worth of goods to Canada, the duty of 20 per cent would raise the price for internal circulation in that country to £120. The effect of that was to raise the rate of wages relatively to the United States as compared with Canada, and also to raise the inducements for embarking capital in the United States as compared with Canada, depriving the latter of the advantage to which, as a child of this Empire, she was entitled. He believed that it was in order to draw capital and enterprize back to their proper channel that Canada had felt herself compelled to adopt the policy she had entered upon; and he had no doubt that the adoption of such a policy as he had described was the only course that could prevent the relative decay of our Colonies as compared with the progress of nations like the United States. There were two alternatives open to a people in the position occupied by the Canadians—either to approximate their Tariff to that of the United States and to seek a commercial union with them on a protective basis, or to seek from the Mother Country such a preference for their productions as would give proper inducements for capital and enterprize within our own Empire. We were driving Canada and our other Colonies into the worst of those alternatives; and we must not, therefore, be surprised if Canada, Victoria, and our other leading Colonies had adopted a policy which we greatly regretted. He apologized for detaining the House so long; but he had been associated with that movement, and he was expected to declare his convictions in regard to it frankly in that House as elsewhere. He entirely repudiated the charge which he much regretted that the Prime Minister had brought against him and other Gentlemen holding similar opinions, that they had said one thing in the manufacturing districts and another thing in the agricultural districts. From the first moment when the convictions that he entertained found a place in his mind he had frankly declared them on all occasions. He had declared them, in the first place, to great bodies of working men in his native county of Lancashire. He had not scrupled from the first to tell them he believed that a small duty upon foreign food was the only remedy for the ills they had to meet; and he had never addressed an important meeting—and in Lancashire he had addressed many—of working men who had not been completely and enthusiastically in favour of that policy. ["Oh!"] He should be delighted to meet any hon. Gentleman who thought that was an over-statement on any platform he chose in any town in Lancashire. It was said that movement was a spasmodic one, and that it was waning. It had, on the contrary, been growing for four, five, or six years past. It was never growing more surely and steadily than at this moment. They had sought quietly and patiently, and by legitimate means, to make their opinions known, and to advocate the policy which they believed would be for the advantage of all classes of the community. The thought that there had been something spasmodic in the movement on that matter might possibly be attributed to events which took place last year, and which were supposed to be the outcome of that movement. He said that the circumstances of his own election—and he thought it had been proved since in the election of his right hon. Colleague (Mr. Raikes)—had nothing to do with the Fair Trade question. The discussion of that question had been forced upon him in that contest. He had taken up the challenge gladly; and the people certainly gave an unmistakable answer. But they would, he believed, have given the same answer if the Fair Trade controversy had never entered into the matter. In other parts of the country there were evidences of the continual spread of those principles. He received the other day a report of the proceedings of a debating society at Dumfries. That society consisted of intelligent men belonging to both political Parties in the place. During last summer the question of Fair Trade was discussed in that society, when only 24 members recorded their votes in its favour. The same question was debated a week or two ago, and it was carried by 97 to 82. He could mention a number of facts of a similar character. Whatever hon. Gentlemen opposite might think, they would have to lay their account with the fact that that movement had firmly rooted itself in the minds of large masses of the people; that it was spreading, and would continue to spread; that there was only one circumstance that would deliver them from having to meet it and make terms with it, and that was the possibility that foreign nations might completely reverse their policy; that those things long ago predicted by hon. Gentlemen opposite should begin to show some signs of fulfilment, and that foreign nations should distinctly commence to reduce the duties they imposed upon our productions, and thus relieve our workmen and their employers from those fears and anxieties in regard to the fate of their industries which had created the movement of which he had been speaking.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN: I do not complain, Sir, of the length of the speech of the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd). On the contrary, as the head of an organization which has had this subject under consideration, the hon. Member's right to lay his views fully before the House must be admitted. I will say, further, that the fuller the hon. Member stated his views and the plainer the exposition of his principles, the better it is for those who have to meet him in fair discussion. I am grateful, among other things, to the hon. Member for the light which he has thrown upon what I must call the question of definition. The House has learnt from the hon. Member that the question whether a man is a Protectionist or not depends entirely upon his motive at the time. It is not a question of fact; but it is a question of intention; and if a man comes to this House and proposes to levy a 5*s*. duty on corn to protect the farmer, he would be a Protectionist; but if another man comes down and proposes to lay the same duty on foreign corn, and said, in the words of the hon. Member, that he did it "quietly and peacefully, in order to determine the flow of capital and labour by driving industry to the Colonies," and although the same results may follow, although the action is similar and the conditions are identical, in the one case it is to be called "Protection," while in the other the name of "Protection" is to be indignantly repudiated. That seems to be a question beyond ordinary comprehension. It is a problem in casuistry rather than a question of practical politics. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie), with his usual skill, has devised a Resolution so vague and indefinite, that it has caught very large fish indeed; and it has obtained the support of several hon. Gentlemen who profess opposite and inconsistent opinions. I have heard that the right hon. Baronet the Leader of the Opposition and other right hon. Gentlemen have promised their support to this Resolution. I admit that a Resolution for a Committee of Inquiry is always a specious proposal; but I shall state the objections to it in the words of the Leader of the Opposition himself. Two years ago—on the 13th of February, 1880—when the right hon. Baronet was the Leader of the House, there was a debate upon a Resolution proposed by Mr. Wheelhouse, then one of the Members for Leeds, almost identical in terms with the Resolution now under consideration; and to that Resolution, two years ago, the right hon. Baronet gave a most determined opposition. The right hon. Baronet said—

> "I wish distinctly to say, on the part of the Government, that they, of course, recognize the importance of the question; but, on the other hand, they think it would be wrong, by any doubtful proceeding, especially if countenanced by them, to raise a false idea, or to produce a wrong impression as to their commercial policy. . . . The appointment of such a Committee would seem to imply a change of opinion on the part of the Government which I think would be injurious."—[3 *Hansard*, ccl. 619.]

Now, if the right hon. Baronet is going to speak this evening, I hope he will inform the House what has happened since 1880 which makes him ready to countenance this doubtful proceeding, which, two years ago, he thought would be injurious? An inquiry of the kind proposed would be necessarily one-sided and incomplete; and I think, before it is granted, we ought to know what is the object which the promoters have in view, and to what change in the fiscal conditions they expect this inquiry to lead. I find among those who support the Motion the greatest possible divergence of opinion. It appears, if the inquiry is to be an efficient inquiry, we must go into Foreign Tariffs, in order to found thereupon some alteration in our own Tariff. But, then, what alteration? The hon. Gentleman the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) tells us he is opposed to anything in the nature of Protection. Every hon. Member opposite said so. [Mr. NEWDEGATE: No.] I am glad to see the hon. Member for North Warwickshire (Mr. Newdegate) in his place. If he had spoken he would have called things by their right names. The hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd) proposes to go much further than the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie). He wishes for this inquiry in order to show the necessity for levying a moderate duty of 10 per cent on manufactures and on food. The hon. and learned Member for West Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill), on the other hand, wishes to levy a duty upon raw materials and manufactures; but he expressly excludes food, which the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd) proposes to tax. They have thus entirely inconsistent proposals, which, however, amount to a practical reversal of the policy of this country for 40 years past, and a return to the policy of Protection. We have been told, both by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) and by the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd), that their proposals are only for temporary change, and that they anticipate, as the result, that foreign nations will be brought to their senses, and that the duties they now put on will be removed.

MR. ECROYD: I only spoke with regard to the duty levied on foreign food.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. and learned Member for West Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill), at all events, stated most distinctly that his proposal was only to levy these taxes as a matter of temporary emergency, and until other nations had been brought to their senses. I wish to point out that it was upon similar promises that the Protective Tariff of the United States was introduced. It was to be a temporary measure, and was to stimulate the infant industries of the country. But, although those industries have grown to manhood and have been sufficiently stimulated, we do not find the duties removed. On the contrary, they have gone on from bad to worse, increasing the duties from year to year; and the artificially-created industries have become such a power in the State that it has been found almost impossible to deal with them. I should like to carry my reference to the United States a little further. The United States is, undoubtedly, the worst case of a hostile Tariff with which we have to deal, and I would test the case now made for an inquiry by reference to it. What kind of information should we be able to obtain, and what advantage would the inquiry give us? I think it would be found that the facts of the case are already within our knowledge, and that it is only the arguments which are the subjects of discussion. The first fact that would be brought out in the inquiry would be that 90 per cent of the United States exports are food and raw materials, which are not the subject of prohibitive Tariffs at all. It follows from that, and is consequent upon it, that the foreign trade in manufactures has been practically annihilated; and the competition of American manufacturers in neutral markets is practically nothing at all. Let us consider the case of the special industries to which reference has been made. In the case of cotton the raw material is extremely bulky and costly in transit, and the Americans have the raw material. In spite of that, and of the ingenuity of the population, which ought to enable them to compete with any foreign country, not only in their own supply, but in the supply of the neutral markets, and in spite of their imposing duties of from 30 to 60 per cent, their total export of cotton manufactures is less than £2,000,000 sterling. Yet, notwithstanding what is called our one-sided Free Trade, this country exports £70,000,000 sterling, of which £3,500,000 go to the United States, while they send us only £751,000. Then, in the case of wool, America has not the same advantages that she has in respect to cotton; but she is, at least, on an equal footing. The woollen industries have been specially protected by duties of from 40 to 100 per cent. What has been the result? The total export of woollen manufactures from the United States is £45,000, while that from the United Kingdom is £20,000,000, and that at a time of great depression. What is still more striking is this—that the very industry which is specially protected by enormous duties should only export £45,000 worth of goods in the year, while the woollen imports into the United States from different countries during the year amounted to £11,000,000 sterling. In the case of iron and steel manufactures the duties vary from 40 to 60 per cent. The American export of these manufactures of all kinds is still less than £3,000,000 sterling, while this country exports nearly £30,000,000 sterling, of which £10,000,000 are sent to the United States. We find, therefore, in the case of the protected industries, that protection is accompanied by an entire absence of anything like an important foreign trade. On the other hand, the free industries of this Kingdom find their prosperity largely in their enormous exports. But I think a more startling illustration of the effect of a Tariff is to be found in the influence of the protective duties of the United States, not on the interests specially protected, but on the connected industries. I have one or two illustrations which I will venture to read to the House; although I am afraid of troubling them too long. The first case is the case of the boot and shoe trade of the United States. The boot and shoe trade is not, I am informed, a largely protected interest; but a heavy duty of from 15 to 25 per cent. has been placed upon leather. The effect upon the connected boot and shoe industry has been that the export has fallen from $1,329,000 in 1863 to $475,000 in 1869, and it has never increased since. On the other hand, in the United Kingdom, I find that the export of boots and shoes has risen from £1,406,000 in 1860 to £1,447,000 in 1870, and that sum has increased to £1,656,000 in 1880. Well, but the most striking case of all is an illustration which has already been referred to by my hon. Friend the Member for Oxfordshire (Mr. Cartwright)—the case of the shipping trade of the United States. It is a case which is in everybody's mind, and the facts are so remarkable that I will venture to quote them to the House. So long as ships were built almost exclusively of wood, the shipping trade of the United States progressed in even a more rapid ratio than that of the United Kingdom. The United States, having an enormous seaboard and an active, courageous population, there was nothing to prevent them from being the greatest carrying nation in the world, except their protective system. On iron and every article that entered into the construction of a ship, and upon the ship itself, there is a duty so onerous that the carrying trade of the world has passed away from America and has come to this country. The figures are as follows:—In the first place, I find the value of exports and imports carried in American vessels—I am dealing with the American trade, and not the general trade—fell from $344,000,000 in 1871 to $273,000,000 in 1880—that is to say, there was a fall of $71,000,000 in nine years. At the same time, the amount carried in foreign bottoms rose from $739,000,000 to $1,298,000,000, or an increase of $559,000,000. I find, also, that the building of American shipping, which was 272,000 tons annually in 1850, had remained stationary in 1870, and was still only 276,000 tons; while in 1880, 10 years later, it had fallen to 157,000 tons. At the same time, the annual tonnage building of English shipping has increased from 226,000 to 473,000—that is to say, the tonnage of English shipping built annually has more than doubled in the time during which the tonnage of shipping built in America has been diminished by nearly one-half. Well, I believe that the Americans are beginning to see—although at present perhaps slowly, and perhaps dimly—the effect of this foolish policy upon their own prosperity. My attention was called the other day to a speech delivered in the United States Senate by Senator Coke, of Texas, which shows that some, at all events, of the Representatives of the people are fully aware of the injury done by this protective policy. He said—

> "The commerce of no country in the world is so hampered, so shackled, so obstructed by legislation in the interest of the few to the injury of the mass, as in this boasted land of equal rights. . . . The Tariff under which, for 20 years past, we have lived is the most monstrous system of taxation in its burdens upon the great body of the people, and its bounties to a small percentage of the whole, that this country, in all its history, and, I believe I may add, any other country, has ever known."

What is the conclusion to be drawn from the facts that I have laid before you? I do not like to speak dogmatically on matters of this sort, because there are so many considerations that one would be afraid to arrive at too hasty a conclusion. But it certainly appears to me that what hon. Gentlemen opposite call our present one-sided Free Trade is absolutely the very best that can be devised with regard to British interests and the interests of British trade. I believe the Free Traders are perfectly right in saying, as they do, from a cosmopolitan point of view, that universal Free Trade would be the best possible thing for the world at large; but I also believe that whenever that consummation is reached, if America, especially, becomes a Free Trade nation and gets rid of the shackles which now hamper her industry and her commerce, her trade will experience such a development that she will become a more formidable competitor to our manufacturing industry than we have ever hitherto experienced. I am convinced that if there were not an actual diminution in our trade, there would, at all events, be such a displacement of particular industries as must necessarily be attended by a great deal of suffering and loss. I proceed now to consider what is the nature and what is the ground for the proposal to which, we learn, this inquiry is to lead us. Well, I say, in the first place, that we ought really to have some solid, substantial reason given for any change at all. And I want to know where is the proof of such a depression in trade, such a disturbance of industry, as would justify any change in our present system? I think we may dismiss individual cases of small importance. And I say again that, speaking generally, the great branches of our industry—always excepting the agricultural interest—are in a satisfactory condition. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) founds his Motion upon the following statement. He said, in the first place, that exports have increased recently in volume, but not in prices. I suppose the hon. Member meant not in value. Well, that is an admission which I think is absolutely inconsistent with his contention that trade had been going to the bad during the last five years. If the volume of our exports, the extent of our production, has been increasing during the whole of that period—and that I believe is the case—I do not think our manufacturers have much to complain of. The hon. Member proceeded to comment with some severity upon a Paper, written by Mr. Giffen, which has been presented by the Board of Trade. That Paper is a continuation of Papers which have been presented on two several occasions, in precisely the same form, in the time of the late Government. In that Paper Mr. Giffen points out that there has been a considerable fall in the value of the raw materials of our principal industries; and he shows that this fall accounts for a reduction in the value of our exports, and does not involve necessarily a corresponding loss on the part of our manufacturers. Well, that is a fact which I should have thought was capable of mathematical demonstration. Let us take the case of cotton. The hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) says that the raw material to the total cost of cotton is as 7*d.* to 1*s.* For the sake of argument, let us assume that it is half-and-half. Then suppose that our exports of raw cotton amounted to £1,000,000 sterling, £500,000 of that sum is a mere re-export of raw material, and it is only the remaining moiety which is the element of profit to the manufacturer and of advantage to this country. Now, supposing, what has actually happened, that the price of raw cotton is diminished by 40 per cent, then the raw material would cost £300,000 instead of £500,000; and if the exports should fall to £800,000, £300,000 of that sum would be attributable to raw material and £500,000 would remain—precisely the same sum as remains from the larger Return—and the element of profit to the manufacturer and the result to the country would be the same in both cases, although the total value of the exports would have been reduced by 20 per cent. Upon the question of exports I may say that such reduction as has occurred in exports is due wholly to a fall in prices, largely, if not entirely, to a fall in the value of raw material, and it does not represent any corresponding loss to the country. The second point made by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets has reference to the Income Tax. I have never denied that the profits of trade have been less lately than in times of extraordinary inflation, and I would go with the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd) so far as to say that perhaps the reduction is not fully represented by the Income Tax returns, which are based on the average of three years. But what I think is sufficiently shown by other figures is that the depression of trade, of which we have all been complaining, is a depression which has hit the rich rather than the poor, and which has reduced the large and excessive profits, which were made in times of inflation, without interfering with the general prosperity or the general welfare of the country. The next statement made by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) was that the consumption of articles of necessity has decreased. But in order to show any ground for such a statement the hon. Member had to pick and choose his figures in a way that is hardly justified by the facts of the case. The hon. Member said that the consumption of coffee has decreased. Well, that is perfectly true; there has been a change of taste, and, for some reason or other, the consumption of coffee has declined from 1·08 lb. per head, in 1840, to ·92 in 1880. But we have made up, and more than made up, the decrease, by an enormous increase in the consumption of tea, and by a very remarkable increase in the consumption of cocoa. Between 1870 and 1880 the consumption of cocoa increased 50 per cent per head of the population, and the consumption of tea has increased steadily from 1·22 lb. per head of the population, in 1840, to 4·70 lb. per head in 1879; and the fall to which the hon. Member referred was a fall of ·11 in 1880, when the consumption was 4·59 lb., still being a consumption nearly four times as great as that of the year 1840.

MR. RITCHIE: There has been a fall in the consumption every year since 1877.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: I can assure the hon. Member that he is quite mistaken. In 1875 it was 4·44; in 1876 it was 4·50; in 1877 it was 4·52; in 1878, 4·66; in 1879, 4·70; and in 1880 there was the small fall to which I have referred—namely, down to 4·59. The consumption of tobacco has risen steadily in the same way between 1840 and 1877, from ·86 lb. in the first of those two years to 1·49 lb. in the latter. Afterwards there came a slight fall. And what was the reason of that fall? I think the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) has good reason to know. It was due to the action of the late Government in imposing a considerable increase of duty, which had the strenuous opposition of the hon. Member. In consequence of that change the consumption decreased from 1·49 lb., in 1877, to 1·43 lb. in 1880. The consumption of sugar and spirits has enormously increased, and the importation of other articles of food has enormously increased also. The last statement made by the hon. Member was based upon the returns of the Railway Companies; and in order to bring forward a favourable case, the hon. Member said the rates per head, per train mile, had decreased within the last few years. Well, that is so. No doubt the receipts per train mile have been reduced; but why? In the first place, because there has been a reduction of rates on the whole; and in the second, what is still more important, because the lines which have been opened of late years have been feeders and branch lines, and it is impossible that the traffic upon them could be equal to the average traffic upon the great main lines of the country. When, however, the total receipts from the traffic are examined a very different story is disclosed. The total traffic receipts in 1869 were £41,000,000; in 1880, £61,958,000; and in 1881, though the official figures are not yet made up, they are about £64,338,000; and they are still increasing every month. If we take the returns of third-class railway traffic we shall find that the results are even more striking, and still more interesting, as illustrating the condition of the working classes. The receipts from third-class passengers have increased rapidly and continuously from £7,000,000 a-year, in 1869, to £15,000,000 in 1880. Thus in 11 years the travelling expenses of the poorer classes of the country have increased something like 115 per cent. There is only one other evidence of prosperity which I would offer to the House; but that also is one which is very striking. It is to be found in the entrances and clearances of shipping at ports in the United Kingdom, which afford a more accurate indication of the prosperity and business of the country than even the export or import statistics themselves, in dealing with which there are many causes of error, such as the question of prices and the way in which values are computed. The comparison of import and export values, taking one year with another, may sometimes, from changes of price, be misleading, and such statistics must be used with care. The entrances and clearances of shipping, however, are not open to the same objection. I find that between 1870 and 1880—a period of 10 years—they have increased from 36,600,000 tons to 58,700,000—that is to say that there has been an increase in our foreign export and import trade, as shown by the entrances and clearances of shipping, of 60 per cent in that short period. It is perfectly clear, from these figures, that the volume of our trade has largely increased; and although it may not be quite as profitable, compared with what it has been in former times, still it would be absurd and foolish to suppose that it was altogether unprofitable. It may well be thought that our manufacturers may for a time go on producing at a small profit, or even at a slight loss, in order to keep their machinery going; but they certainly would not go on increasing and multiplying their works and investing additional capital in them, unless they saw their way to a remunerative result. Let us test the question another way. Looking at the great seats of industry, if there is anything like stagnation of trade it would be shown in the decline of their population and in the falling-off of their prosperity. What are the facts with regard to them? According to the Census Returns, between 1870 and 1880 the population of Birmingham increased from 343,000 to 400,000; and of Liverpool, from 463,000 to 525,000; Manchester has only slightly increased, because the limits of the borough are circumscribed, and as the ground is covered with houses already no large increase is possible. But Salford, in which a large proportion of the population of Manchester resides, has increased from 124,000 to 176,000; Bristol, from 182,000 to 206,000; Leeds, from 259,000 to 309,000; Leicester, from 95,000 to 122,000; and Nottingham, which is the most remarkable case of all, has increased from 129,000 to 186,000. I have had the curiosity to inquire into the condition of Coventry, which has been quoted as an illustration of a town that has been utterly ruined by Free Trade, and I find that in the same period the population of the Parliamentary borough has increased from 41,000 to 47,000. It therefore appears that even that town has recently, at all events, got over the blow it received through a Free Trade policy. But the increase of population is not the only index to the prosperity of a borough; and taking the rateable value of property, which largely consists of mills and other productive works, in similar boroughs, I find that between the years 1872 and 1879 the rateable value of property in Birmingham has increased from £1,229,000 to £1,454,000; Liverpool has increased from £2,768,000 to £3,211,000; of Manchester, from £1,805,000 to £2,296,000; of Bristol, from £719,000 to £838,000; and of

Leeds, from £807,000 to £1,083,000. Then, I ask, where is the proof of depression? Where is the proof of stagnation in the figures I have read to the House? If we go further afield and take the newer seats of industry, like Barrow and Middlesborough, the proportionate increase has been much greater. But, whatever may have been our own progress, we are told that we ought still to be discontented because other countries have made still greater progress. That is a state of things which Fair Traders are totally unable to see with satisfaction. Now, I am very doubtful whether any proof whatever has been given that any other country has done as well during the last 10 years as we have. But even if other countries have progressed more than we have, I should have said that that proved nothing either for or against Protection; because in dealing with this matter it must be borne in mind what a multiplicity of factors we have to take into consideration in estimating the relative progress of foreign nations compared with our own. We should have to take into account the increase of population, the development of the means of communication, and many other matters besides the effect of fiscal regulations. A country in which the population is greatly increasing is likely to increase its products more rapidly than a country in which the population is stationary. Again, if, at the period which we select for our comparison, one country is without an efficient means of communication, and these have been subsequently supplied, we should expect the increase to be greater than in an older country where such means of communication have existed all along. We must consider also such special circumstances as war, famine, bad harvests, and other things which affect trade at particular times and in particular countries. Lastly, we have to take into account—and this is of particular importance in considering the difference which a calculation of percentages apparently shows—the initial condition of the country with which you make your comparison. In other words, if you were comparing a country with a trade of £1,000,000 and a country with a trade of £10,000,000, and both had increased their trade by the amount, say, of £10,000,000, it is quite clear that the increase in both cases is the same; but, calculated by percentages, the proportion of increase in the one case is 1,000 per cent, and in the other only 100 per cent. The increase is the same in amount in both cases; but the proportion in the one case is 10 times as great as it is in the other. I would gladly ask the House to listen to a comparison of the increase of the trade of this country with that of various other countries; but I feel compelled to confine myself to two. I will first take the case of France. The prosperity of France is particularly annoying to some hon. Gentlemen opposite, having regard to the negotiations for the old Commercial Treaty. Now, I find that the French exports—and I am making a concession to hon. Members opposite in dealing only with exports, for I hold that the true measure of a country's prosperity is to take both her exports and imports—during the period between the years 1850 and 1880 increased from £43,000,000 to £139,000,000, or an increase of 223 per cent. The English exports increased during the same period from £71,000,000 to £223,000,000, or an increase of 214 per cent. It therefore appears that the percentage increase in the exports of both countries has been about the same, or slightly to the advantage of France; but if we were to add the increase in what has been called our "invisible exports"—that is, in freight and shipping charges, which amounts to a considerable sum, the difference would be still less. But if you take amounts, which I contend to be the proper course, instead of percentages, the advantage is on the side of England, for while the increase in the French exports only amounted to £96,000,000 the increase in the English exports amounted to £152,000,000—that is to say that the English exports increased by more than 50 per cent more rapidly than the French exports. But, as I have stated, in all of these cases certain other circumstances have also to be taken into account in estimating the value of these figures. In the case of France the payment of the French War Indemnity has largely increased the volume of exports sent out by that country. The Indemnity had to be paid partly in bullion, but chiefly in exports, and it told upon the trade of France in the few years which immediately followed the war. The hon. Member for West Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill) has used an extraordinary argument. He admitted that a large increase of exports from France into Germany resulted from the payment of the War Indemnity; but he considered that this meant a diminution of employment to a large portion of the German nation, and was, therefore, a disastrous thing—in other words, he contended that the payment of £200,000,000 was a bad thing for Germany. It followed, therefore, that its effect upon France was to stimulate employment and to encourage industry there, and that it would be a good thing for any nation to pay a tribute of £200,000,000, and a bad thing to be forced to receive it. There is also another matter—namely, the fact that about the same time the Provinces of Alsace and Lorraine became separated from the French Empire, and all goods passing thither were thenceforward transferred from the home trade account to the export account. If these two circumstances are borne in mind, it will add still further to the satisfaction with which we must regard the increased exports of this country, as compared with the exports of France. I may also point out, in the case of France, that the period I have chosen for comparison is a period during which their policy, though not of Free Trade, was a policy more liberal than it had been previously, and that that policy has largely contributed to the condition of affairs which I have described. The other case to which I wish to call attention is the case of the United States. That is a country, of course, in which the policy has been more retrograde than that of any other country. I find in the United States that the increase in the amount of exports has been, in round numbers, from £26,000,000 in 1840 to £170,000,000 in 1880, or 554 per cent, as against an increase in this country from £51,000,000 in 1840 to £223,000,000 in 1880, being an increase of 338 per cent, the actual increase having been £144,000,000 in the case of America, and £172,000,000 in the case of England. But this amount is altogether exclusive of what Mr. Giffen, in the admirable Paper which he read before the Statistical Society, called the "invisible exports," being the amount gained by our Mercantile Marine in freight and otherwise. That amount is proved, by the most conclusive evidence—by cumulative evidence—to have increased, in the same period, in the case of the United Kingdom, from £20,000,000 to £80,000,000. It will be necessary, therefore, to add a sum of about £60,000,000 to the value of our exports; and, adding that £60,000,000 to the £172,000,000, we shall obtain £232,000,000, which is nearly double the increase in the United States in the same period. There has been no increase whatever in their shipping trade, but rather, on the contrary, a decrease. Then, as to another point, if we take the exports of the United States, not at their amount, but per head of the population, and compare them with the exports per head of the United Kingdom, the advantage will be still more striking in favour of our policy. The exports per head of the United States have risen from £1 11*s*. 1*d*. in 1840 to £3 8*s*. 1*d*. in 1880, while those of the United Kingdom have increased in the same time from £1 18*s*. 9*d*. to £6 9*s*. 5*d*. In other words, while the increase in the United States was 119 per cent, in this Kingdom it stands at 234 per cent. We must also take into account, in dealing with the question, the character of the exports of the United States. They have introduced a protective policy in order to encourage their manufactures; I have already shown with what success. But the total result is this—they exported £17,000,000 of manufactures, against £191,000,000 from this country, of which we sent £24,500,000 to the United States, or more than their total exports altogether. Under these circumstances, whether the House regards the trade of the country absolutely or relatively to the trade of other countries, there is no real ground for alarm, and no cause for the inquiry which the hon. Member proposes. I will now ask permission to examine, for a few minutes, the various proposals which have been made. The first question I have to ask is this—is the food for the country to be taxed? The hon. Member for West Staffordshire (Mr. Staveley Hill) says "No"; the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd) says "Yes." I think it is desirable that those hon. Gentlemen should come to some agreement before supporting the Resolution for inquiry. The hon. Member for West Staffordshire says, in the Amendment he has put upon the Paper, that duties are to be levied on foreign produce, provided that nothing is done to raise the price or diminish the supply of food. I do not know whether the hon. Member thinks you can tax food without raising its price. I would, at any rate, lay down the axiom, to begin with, that that is impossible, and it is only by increasing the price that the object of the hon. Member for Preston can be achieved, and that you can stimulate the growth and prosperity of our Colonies. The modest proposal he makes would raise the price of home-grown corn also, and the result would be that the British consumer would have to bear a tax of £40,000,000, £14,000,000 of which would go to the Revenue if the foreign importations continued, and £26,000,000 would go, not to the farmer or the labourer—for if anything is proved by the experience of the past, it is that it would go neither to the farmer nor the labourer—but it would go to the landed interest, to enable them to keep up their rents. All I have to say of a proposal of that kind is that it could never be adopted by the country, or if adopted it would be swept away upon the first recurrence of serious distress. But now I want to ask the House to consider whether the proposition of the hon. Member for Preston is a practical proposal on another ground. At the present moment foreign countries supply us with 82½ per cent of the total quantity of food which we import, while the Colonies only send us 17½ per cent of that quantity. If we deduct the amount which comes from Colonies like New South Wales and others, which are practically free trading Colonies, only 5 per cent of our food comes from the self-governing and highly protective Colonies. The total amount of food sent by foreign countries is £138,000,000 sterling. I ask the House, therefore, whether it is possible, or whether it is conceivable, that this enormous transfer can be made? Does the hon. Member believe that these £138,000,000 worth more food can be produced immediately in our Colonies by any artificial process; or does he for one moment believe, on the other hand, that the Colonies, which are now only able to send us £30,000,000 worth of food, will be able to send us £138,000,000 in addition, and take our manufactures to the extent of £138,000,000 in return? I say, in the first instance, that they cannot produce the amount of food required; and then, that they could not take in return our exports to the amount indicated.

MR. ECROYD: I never said they would be able to do so at once. My proposal was to institute a gradual process.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: Well, Sir, the hon. Member for Preston addressed the House for an hour and three quarters; and I certainly supposed at the end of his speech that he had put his views fully before the House. But that, it seems, is not the case. However, if the hon. Member does not think that this transfer could be effected readily with regard to the supply of food for this country from foreign countries to our Colonies, I should like to know very much what we are to do in the interval? If we are to retaliate upon foreign countries by imposing a duty on food imported from those countries into England, as a means of inducing them to alter their Tariffs, and effecting a transfer of the supply of food to the Colonies, I do not see where the food of the country is to come from; because it is impossible that in anything like a reasonable time our Colonies could produce an amount of food at all approaching to the quantity required. But even if they could, at a future period, produce it, they could not possibly accept payment for it in our manufactures. Is it conceivable that the populations of the Australian Colonies—considerably less than the population of London—and others, including Canada, the whole of whose imports from this country put together only amount to a total of £25,000,000 sterling—is it possible that they could take £138,000,000 more? And if they could not do this, look what would happen. I ask the hon. Member's attention particularly to this. If we cannot pay the Colonies for our food supply in manufactures, we must pay for it in bullion, and that would raise the "bogey" which hon. Members so dislike. Gold would be too plentiful in the Colonies, and too scarce in this country, and the consequence would be that the price of corn in the Colonies would soon rise to the price of corn in foreign countries, even with a 10 per cent duty attached. Trade will then go back into its old channels, and the only difference will be that this country will have to pay 10 per cent more all round. If, however, it were conceivable that, after a long series of years, the transfer to the Colonies could be effected, it would be only a transfer of business, and not a transfer that would be wholly to our advantage. From whomsoever we buy our food, they must take our goods in return; we cannot pay them in bullion; they must be paid in our manufactures. Foreign countries are now paid by our manufactures, although they will not continue to take our manufactures hereafter, because, upon the terms proposed by the hon. Member for Preston, we cease to find them the means of paying for them. But whereas, *ex hypothesi*, the Colonies are to produce dearer, and require the additional 10 per cent in order to produce at all, it is clear that they will send us less in return for our goods, and we shall be worse off than we are at the present time. Well, Sir, upon the supposition that we are going to make this extraordinary disturbance in trade which has been suggested by the hon. Member for Preston, I ask what it is supposed will become of the energy and capital of foreign countries now employed in the production of food? Do you suppose it will remain idle? No, Sir; the result will be that this energy and capital will be diverted from its present application, and you will simply have given an impetus to foreign manufactures, and raised up competition in other branches of trade. For my own part, I do not think we can contemplate without apprehension the possibility of a change under which America, which now exports 90 per cent of food, and only 10 per cent of manufactures, could only export 10 per cent of food and 90 per cent of manufactures; yet such would be the effect of the suggestion of the hon. Member for Preston, so far as the United States are concerned. Then there is another assumption which underlies the proposal of the hon. Member, and to which I am inclined to take exception. The hon. Member assumes that the Colonies which now levy protective duties would alter those duties in return for the increased produce which, under the proposed arrangement, we should take from them. But, Sir, I am of opinion that they would do nothing of the sort. At any rate, I am quite sure it would not be worth their while to do so, because the arrangement under which they supply us is only to be a temporary arrangement. As I understand the hon. Member, so soon as any foreign country comes to our terms we are to open our ports to it again. The hon. Member dissents from that. Then his project is one for excluding them, and is a much larger proposal than I had any idea he intended to make to the House. He proposes to exclude all food from the United States, and only to open our market to their manufactures. If the hon. Member thinks that the citizens of the United States are likely to fall in with that arrangement he must consider them much less "cute" than I do. I certainly always supposed that when the object of hon. Members opposite was attained, foreign countries which now imposed Protection were to open their ports, and that we were to open our ports in return. I should like to know what is to become of the English Protection in the Colonies which has been created. I cannot believe it possible that any Colony would allow that it would be of advantage to it to have such artificially created interests ruthlessly destroyed in consequence of some change of policy in a foreign country over which it had not the slightest control. Then I pass from the proposal of the hon. Member for Preston to that of the hon. Member for West Staffordshire, who expressly excludes food from taxation. I will not dwell on the objections which may be raised by the agricultural interest, although I would certainly say that if Protection is to be used at all, that interest has as much claim to it as any other. I cannot conceive how it can be desired to hamper that interest by adding 10 or 20 per cent to the articles required in agricultural business. But assuming that the farmers are taken in by these proposals on the part of their friends, and offer no opposition to them, then the next question I have to ask is—Are our raw materials to be taxed? And again—What are raw materials? The hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd) proceeds on the assumption that we have, at the present time, an import of £35,000,000 worth of manufactures, which, according to the arbitrary classification adopted by the Board of Trade for purposes of comparison, is perfectly true. But if the hon.

Member looks to the tables which give the details of this classification, he will find that there is hardly one of the articles enumerated which is not the raw material for one trade or another. Take, for instance, tanned leather. That is a raw material of the boot and shoe trade, and comes in free of duty; and to that fact was due the progress which that trade had made in recent times. If the hon. Member treated that as a manufactured article he would ruin the boot and shoe trade; if he treated it as raw material, then he would be forced to reduce this £35,000,000 of manufactures, and so on with other articles, until there would remain only an insignificant sum —certainly not more than one-fifth of the original amount. How, upon this remaining sum of £7,000,000 of *bonâ fide* manufactures, he is going to raise the revenue which will enable him to offer a serious reduction of the burden of taxation, for the life of me I cannot understand. I think my hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) has already dealt with another part of this subject. The hon. Baronet has pointed out with perfect truth that if we are to enter upon this game of Retaliation, it is a game at which two can play, and that we shall play at it at a great disadvantage. Our imports of manufactures and half manufactures are only £35,000,000, while we export £190,000,000, which would leave a balance of £155,000,000 on which we stand to lose in the game of Retaliation; and, therefore, I cannot but regard the proceeding as a very risky one. I may mention that France is the only important case of any foreign country whose export of manufactures to us is greater than our export of manufactures to her; and I wish for a moment to look at the case of France, because it illustrates the error into which hon. Members fall, and are likely to fall, without a knowledge of all the circumstances of the case. Although the export of French manufactures to us is larger than the amount of our manufactures imported into France, yet I believe that a great part of those manufactures which appear in our Returns are manufactures in transit. It is a curious fact in connection with this that the Italian import of our manufactures is much larger than their exports to us; and I am led to believe that there is a sort of triangular trade going on between the three countries — England, France, and Italy; and that Italian silk and wine go first to France, where they are more or less treated, and then come to us as French manufactures, whereas, in reality, they are Italian manufactures, and we pay for them, not in manufactures sent to France, but in manufactures sent to Italy. Any proposal, therefore, for a Tariff upon French goods would not only affect our trade with that country, but would be an interference with our export trade to Italy. Then, Sir, there are other serious objections to a policy of Retaliation. There is the objection that, resulting as it does in the protection of home industries, it destroys all stimulus and competition. That, undoubtedly, is a very serious matter. The hon. Member has referred to the condition of the woollen industries, and especially to the case of Bradford, which affords one of the most striking illustrations of the advantage of our Free Trade policy. Some years ago the French made great improvements in their manufacture of wool, and in consequence substituted articles of better quality and more pleasing appearance than the English goods, and the woollen trade in this country suffered. What would have happened in the absence of the policy of Free Trade which the country adopted? The English manufacturers would have had no stimulus to the improvement of their goods, and the English manufacture of to-day would have been the same as it was 25 years ago. But under the policy of Free Trade the English manufacturers have been able to look the matter in the face; they have altered their process of manufacture, and they are now competing successfully with the manufacturers of France. I was told by an English manufacturer the other day that his orders were larger than he ever recollected them to be, and that he, at least, was perfectly satisfied with the present condition of the woollen trade. Another illustration was to be found in the case of the edge-tool trade of Birmingham, which was at one time almost destroyed by competition from America. It was not that the goods were cheaper, but American makers had discovered what was the best form of edged tools for various purposes; and I must say that our manufacturers were very slow to adopt these improvements, and somewhat conservative in their objections. However, in the face of this competition with the English manufacture, Birmingham is now producing articles which are better in quality and cheaper in price than the American goods, and which are now successfully competing with them in Australia and other Colonies. Finally, Retaliation, Compensation, or Protection—by whatever name it is known—must have the effect of creating weak interests, which will have afterwards to be abandoned, and which will, in consequence, give rise to great suffering and loss. Sir, I ask the House to meet this Motion with a negative. Had it been possible, I should have desired the Amendment of my hon. Friend the Member for Oxfordshire to be accepted; but, as that Amendment cannot be put, I hope the House will vote on the Main Question, that you, Sir, "do now leave the Chair." I express that hope upon the ground that the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie) has made out no case. The condition of trade is not unsatisfactory. It is, I believe, in a state of growing prosperity. The temporary depression from which it suffered has passed away; and it has been said truly that this improved condition of things has been coincident with the advent to power of a Liberal Ministry. If hon. Gentlemen opposite are successful in their endeavours to bring about a change of Government, perhaps the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets will in the course of a few years have a much better foundation for such a Motion as this than he has at present. I remember quoting, in reference to this matter, a conversation reported to me three or four years ago, in the time of the late Government, which I might be allowed to mention once more to the House. A friend of mine was talking to a merchant in Birmingham, who happens to a Conservative, and this gentleman was expressing his alarm at the proceedings of the Radicals, and gave his idea of the evil results which would follow if my right hon. Friend (Mr. Gladstone) should ever again assume the reins of Office. My friend, out of mere curiosity, wound up by saying—"Well, but if it should happen that Mr. Gladstone should be Prime Minister, would you leave the country, or what would you do?" and thereupon this gentleman, whose candour overcame his Conservatism for a time, said—"Well, to tell you the truth, I should buy all the copper I could lay my hands on, and hold for a rise." Well, I really do not know, Sir, whether that gentleman carried out his intention; but all I can say is that if he has done so I believe he will have no cause whatever to regret it, because the price of copper has risen, and the demand for it has increased. The price of almost every article of our manufacture has also risen, and the demand increased. In the second place, I ask the House to reject the Motion of the hon. Member, because it appears to me to be undoubtedly a retrograde step in the direction of a reversal of that policy under which the prosperity of the country has so greatly increased, and its resources have been so enormously developed; under which wages have risen; under which the necessaries of life have been cheaper, which has added to the comfort of all classes of the people, which has, above all, removed just causes of discontent, and has done much to settle on a secure basis the foundations of settled government, and of social order.

SIR STAFFORD NORTHCOTE: Mr. Speaker, I will detain the House a very few minutes; but I find it necessary, of course, to rise after the special appeal which has been addressed to me by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade. Sir, I must, in the first place, remind the House what is the question before us. The question which is actually before us is that which is raised by my hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets (Mr. Ritchie), who asks that—

> "A Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the effects which the Tariffs in force in Foreign Countries have upon the principal branches of British Trade and Commerce, and into the possibility of removing, by Legislation or otherwise, any impediment to a fuller development of the manufacturing and commercial industry of the United Kingdom."

I venture to say that that demand, supported as it is by the very temperate and very well delivered speech of my hon. Friend, is one which we ought to consider well before rejecting it. The right hon. Gentleman opposite says he can hardly understand how I could support or accept such a proposal as this, consistently with what I said when, two years ago, Mr. Wheelhouse made a proposition for a Select Committee on the same subject. On that occasion I certainly did say—speaking on behalf of the then Government—that we could not assent to that proposal, because it might give a wrong impression and produce a false idea as to our commercial policy. Well, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman says—"How do you consider that circumstances differ on the present occasion from what they were then?" I say, in the first place, there is the broadest possible distinction between the proposal made by Mr. Wheelhouse, and still more the speech by which that proposal was supported, and the proposal and speech of my hon. Friend the Member for the Tower Hamlets. The Motion of Mr. Wheelhouse was for a Committee

> "To consider the Commercial Relations at present existing between England and Foreign Nations, especially with regard to the import of Manufactured Goods from Abroad, as well as the effect caused by our system of one-sided so-called Free Trade, with a view (if possible) of ameliorating the condition of the wage classes of the country."—[3 *Hansard*, ccl. 604.]

And every word of the speech of Mr. Wheelhouse was directly in favour of Protection. My hon. Friend has taken an entirely different line. He has drawn attention to certain points which I will refer to in another moment, and he has asked for a Committee which would do something very different from that which Mr. Wheelhouse proposed. But I do not rest the case simply upon the difference between the Motions of Mr. Wheelhouse and my hon. Friend. We are asked what has happened since then? Why, two things have happened. One of those things is a speech that was made by the Prime Minister himself last year, and the other is the result of the negotiations respecting the French Treaty. The House can hardly have forgotten the speech that was made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the 4th of April, in moving his Financial Statement; it has been already quoted by my hon. Friend; but I am sure the House will not be sorry to hear the words again. The Chancellor of the Exchequer paused in the middle of his Financial Statement, in order to draw the attention of the Committee to a subject which he thought required attention. He said—

> "There is another point on which I think it is necessary to say a few words, because in my estimation we have reached a period at which I think the attention of the Committee ought to be addressed to it. I think this is one of those junctures which undoubtedly renders it, if not obligatory, at least expedient, that this should be done. I wish to present to the House, in a very succinct and general form, a few figures which, I think, illustrate in a striking manner the present movement of public wealth as compared with population and expenditure. This is a subject which does not annually come under the consideration of the Committee; but, undoubtedly, it is a subject that periodically it is desirable should be brought into view, and especially so when a change has been taking place with respect to which the Minister may happen to believe, as I believe, that neither the public nor Parliament are fully aware of it. We make ground at such a rate, and for such a long time, that people begin to believe we shall never cease to make ground; but I wish Parliament to understand that we are not making ground at present. I speak of the last few years, and without reference to Party differences, and I say we are rather losing than making ground."—[3 *Hansard*, cclx. 580.]

The right hon. Gentleman then proceeded to draw attention to the various statistics which were quoted by my hon. Friend. We have had a very simple explanation given by the hon. Baronet the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock) and adopted by the President of the Board of Trade; they attribute our losing ground for some time to the fact that we have had a Conservative Ministry. But what is remarkable is that the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, when he quotes figures to show that the idea of the distress of the country is exaggerated, and that we are not losing but making ground, should take his figures from the very time of which he speaks so lightly. This very evening some of the figures which he gave us with regard to the growth of population, on which he so much dwelt, relate to the years from 1872 to 1879, of which two years belong to the one Government and four or five to the other. Well, then, I remarked in the speech which he made last year, and which he published with an appendix, that his comparative statements were made as to the progress of various branches of industry in the six years from 1869 to 1874, and the six years from 1874 to 1880, and that he showed greater progress in a large number of branches of industry during the last six years than during the previous six years.

The hon. Baronet (Sir John Lubbock)—and I heard it with surprise, coming as it did from him, who is usually so fair—stated that our troubles began when the late Government came into Office. Why, it was immediately pointed out to him that the decline began two years before—in the year 1872—and that there was a small decline in that year and another in the following year. But really, if these are the arguments used, would it not be worth the while of the Government to let us have a Committee which would bring out these important points, and which would give us the opportunity of cross-questioning a little and examining into the reality of statements of this general character, which are used so glibly, and which pass muster, no doubt, amongst those who do not know better. We want to know with regard to the difference in our position in consequence of the failure of the French Treaty negotiations. I was struck just now by one of the opening observations of the right hon. Gentleman. He stated that he gathered from the speeches which had preceded him that Protection was or was not called Protection according to the object with which any particular duty was imposed; that the duty imposed for one object would be called protective, but if imposed for another object the same duty would not be called protective. I think we may turn that observation upon the right hon. Gentleman and his Colleagues, with regard to the important question that is sometimes called Reciprocity and sometimes Retaliation. It is not Retaliation, or even Reciprocity, in what is considered the sense of the word by Free Traders. If you propose to a country like France that if she will make certain concessions you will take 6*d.* a gallon off the duty on her wines, it is not at all objectionable. But if, on the other hand, you say to France—"We intend, if you do not make certain concessions, to add 6*d.* a gallon to the duty on your wines," it is called Retaliation. I adhere entirely to the views which I have always expressed on this subject. I am as firmly convinced of the soundness of the general principles of Free Trade as I have ever been in my life; but I do not see where you are to bring about the mischief which is apprehended, if you assent to the proposal which is made by my hon. Friend for a fair inquiry into this subject. It is obvious, if you have the confidence which you ought to have in your own system, you ought not to be so much afraid of subjecting it to examination. The right hon. Gentleman did not use the words that were uttered the other day upon another subject by the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for India; he surely will not say that the Free Trade system, as it stands at present, is either so sacred or fragile that it will not bear inquiry. What I think you would gain by an inquiry would be this—that you would clear the minds of those outside who are at present agitated by what is going on. Do you suppose there is no real excitement in the country upon the subject? Do hon. Gentlemen dispute what the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd) says? Do they deny that there are, in many of the Northern manufacturing towns, large bodies of persons who are much agitated upon this subject, and who are, many of them, adopting what I think to be wild and mistaken ideas, but still ideas which are deserving attention, and which it would be most profitable that you should be able to deal with and explain? I continually hear statements made here and elsewhere which are at once contradicted, and you scarcely know how to deal with the controversy. Take a question about which a good deal has been said—I mean the question of the balance of trade. I think it would be a great advantage if we were able to follow up that question more closely than we are able to do in a debate of this kind. And so with other questions, even that suggested by the hon. Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd)—the question of a Colonial or Imperial union for the purpose of doing away with duties between the different parts of the Empire. Even that, I think, is worth consideration and discussion, though I am bound to say that, to me, it seems to be beyond reach at the present time. It would be well to discuss the difficulties which beset many of our manufacturers; it would be well if we could go into the whole circumstances to see whether—and my hon. Friend (Mr. Ritchie's) Motion is quite wide enough to cover it—to see whether there is no other method besides that of retaliatory duties which could be adopted, and adopted with advantage, to remove—

"The impediments to a fuller development of the manufacturing and commercial industries of the United Kingdom."

I believe that many questions would be raised and would be discussed before such a Committee as is now proposed which it would be extremely advantageous we should discuss. I am sorry to find that the Government do not intend to assent to the very moderate request of my hon. Friend.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Sir, when the right hon. Gentleman rose I was in hopes that he rose for the purpose of disclaiming with decision, and, perhaps, even with a little indignation, the imputation that had been cast upon him by my right hon. Friend the President of the Board of Trade, to the effect that he meant to completely reverse the course that he had taken two years ago, and that, having then refused to assent to a Committee of Inquiry into the policy of Protection and Free Trade, he now meant to support a similar proposal. Disappointments, however, are not uncommon, and our political education, as the right hon. Gentleman said the other day, is always advancing, and we are constantly hearing of some possibility which we had hitherto believed to be impossible. I propose to examine what I must call the very flimsy reasons given by the right hon. Baronet for his extraordinary change of front. The first reason given is that this Motion differs from a former one on the same subject. The present Motion is one which calls upon Parliament to inquire into the effects which the Tariffs in foreign countries have upon the principal branches of British trade and commerce, and the Motion of Mr. Wheelhouse was a Motion of which the most salient point was that it was to inquire into the system of so-called one-sided Free Trade. Now, except that there is, as I must admit, a certain improvement in the English of the present Motion as compared with that of 1880, I affirm that the substance of the two Motions is precisely the same. The question of the hostile nature of foreign legislation and high Foreign Tariffs is the basis of both, and a comparison between that hostile legislation and those high Tariffs and our own system of free imports is the subject which, in that case and in this case, the Committee was to be called upon to examine. The next reason is that I made a speech in which I stated to the House of Commons last year that whereas we had been accustomed to take for granted that we were always making ground it was doubtful whether, at this moment, we were really doing so; and my illustration, drawn entirely from the profit-making classes and not from the wage-receiving classes of this country, was drawn from the fluctuations in the value of the 1*d.* on the Income Tax. [Sir Stafford Northcote: Customs and Excise receipts as well.] And a comparison, likewise of the movements of the receipts in various years from the Customs and Excise. Aye, but not to show, as regarded those movements of receipt, that we were not making ground, but to show that we were not making ground as compared with the population and expenditure of the country, which is a different thing. But why an exhibition of a fact of that kind, which appeared to be a matter of public interest, and likely to have a salutary effect on the temper of this House in regard to public expenditure and public economy, should be a reason for adopting a measure which the right hon. Gentleman himself condemned a year before as calculated to shake the confidence of the country and propagate false impressions with respect to the intentions of the Government and Parliament as to our commercial relations, the right hon. Gentleman did not in any single word of his speech explain. And what was the third of these three reasons which I have ventured to call—but I will not use the word again. What is the third of these three most unsubstantial, most scanty, most ethereal, most transcendental reasons?—all these, I hope, are Parliamentary expressions, and have, at least, the tacit approval of the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for Bridport (Mr. Warton).

Mr. WARTON: Let me explain. ["Order!"] I did not object to the word "flimsy."

Mr. GLADSTONE: I did not intend to impute to the hon. and learned Member that he did object to the word. I meant to fortify myself against those who objected by showing that I had the sanction of the hon. and learned Member for that expression. The third reason was that we had failed in the commercial negotiations with France. Well, Sir, let that pass. Undoubtedly, at the present moment, the facts before the House are to the effect that the efforts which have been continued for many years to effect a renewal of the Tariff Treaty with France have now come definitely to an unsuccessful termination. Be that so; but why is that a reason for investigating our system of Free Trade? The speech of the right hon. Gentleman was to the effect—and I admit that a great deal is to be said in that sense—that these Tariff Treaties were doubtful and entangling instruments, and that they imparted something of, at least apparent, disparagement to the principles of Free Trade. Then, Sir, it appears that, escaping from the meshes of the Tariff Treaty, we have emerged from a murky into a clear atmosphere, and that those principles of Free Trade on which we stand in our fiscal legislation are no longer disparaged, no longer brought into any doubt or question by our having, at least apparently, made some portion of them *ultra vires*. And why is that more complete, and thorough, and rigid establishment of the principles of Free Trade, if we are real Free Traders, to be made a reason for a Parliamentary inquiry? "Oh," says the right hon. Gentleman, "do not show a mistrust of the principles of Free Trade by refusing an inquiry into them." Why, Sir, if we were to propose in this House a Committee to inquire whether it was desirable to continue the system of trial by jury, or a Committee to inquire whether it was desirable to revive the rotten boroughs extinguished by Schedule A of the Reform Act, should I be told that I was showing mistrust in the Reform Act, or mistrust in trial by jury, if I said—"I shall vote for no Committee for such a purpose?" No, Sir; the right hon. Gentleman gave us these three reasons; but in his speech there was this one fatal defect—that he did not answer the reason he himself gave in 1880. In 1880, when this same proposal was made, he said—

> "I wish distinctly to say on the part of the Government . . . . . that they think it would be wrong by any doubtful proceeding, countenanced especially by them, to raise a false idea or to produce a wrong impression as to their commercial policy."—[3 *Hansard*, ccl. 619.]

This is a proposal tending to produce a "false idea" and a "wrong impression" as to our commercial policy; and for that proposal the right hon. Gentleman is now going to vote. I do not like, at this unreasonable hour—1.10 A.M.—to detain the House; but two or three words I must say. The right hon. Gentleman on that occasion was emphatically right in the words he used, and he has not attempted to reply to those words; nor has he told us that the appointment of this Committee will not raise a false idea or produce a false impression. And why has he not told us that? Because he knows that the whole value set upon the proposal by nineteen-twentieths of those who will support it is just because it will give a false impression and raise a false idea. If this were a matter carried on with closed doors and within the walls of this country, as we have walls to this House, then I think that the excitement that might prevail here, and the false expectations that might be raised, would, perhaps, be comparatively harmless. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Preston (Mr. Ecroyd) might amuse the enthusiastic working men whom he is in the habit of addressing, and, no doubt, they would be exceedingly pleased with one another on the repetition of the occasions to which he has referred. Although I think a great deal of delusion would be propagated throughout the land, yet I admit that it, after all, would be child's play, and would never have a result, for the bubble the right hon. Gentleman is blowing would burst in the first moment of its existence. Unfortunately, the knowledge of these proceedings and the proposal for this Committee of Inquiry, and the knowledge that the proposal for such a Committee has been supported by the late Leader of the House of Commons, which I deem to be a fact far more important than the proposal for the Committee itself, cannot be confined within these walls, and cannot be confined within these shores, but will go abroad. I will not ask the Mover of the Motion whether he is prepared to face the consequences of his own success, for I take it that he is perfectly prepared to do so; but I should like to know how the right hon. Baronet would face the consequences? Does he not know, as well as I do, that the fact of such a vote having been given by the House of Commons, going forth through Europe to the civilized world, would at once become the strongest argument in favour of Protection, in favour of hostile Tariffs, in favour of those who are fighting the battle of commercial legislation, who would then be able, for the first time, to say—" See that this delusion of Free Trade, even in its stronghold, is now shaken to its base; and one, at least, of the great Parties in the country has, by the mouth of its Leader, admitted that it has become a subject for solemn inquiry, re-trial, and re-investigation whether the great struggle of 30 years ago is to be fought over again or not, and whether the system of free importation is to be reversed?" I cannot really understand by what process of mind it is that a Gentleman of a tenth part of the knowledge and experience of the right hon. Baronet could bring himself to the conclusions to which, apparently, the unfortunate necessities of his position have forced him. This I must say—I do not believe the right hon. Gentleman anticipates the success of the Motion. I must further own that, though there are no arguments for the Motion, there are some temptations to concur in it; for I should be very much interested indeed in viewing the proceedings of the Committee, considering the nature of the component parts which would make it up. There would be one Gentleman with his modest proposal of simply a retaliatory duty upon wine. There would be another Gentleman with his proposal of a 10 per cent duty upon foreign manufactures and articles of food, but not upon raw materials; and another with his proposal for a duty upon foreign manufactures and raw materials, but not upon articles of food. And, Sir, I would venture to give this advice to my hon. Friends on this side of the House, in the impossible event of the House voting the Committee, that the whole enjoyment of that Committee should be left to its supporters. If it were possible for them to secure a Committee Room within the precincts of the Tower of Babel, it would be the most appropriate site. It is not my intention, at this hour, to detain the House upon a question which I greatly regret should have already occupied so many hours of time which is wanted for purposes more urgent and more practical. The House will, I have no doubt, reject this Motion; and they will reject it on the very ground so happily stated and recorded for us by the right hon. Baronet two years ago—on the ground that the adoption of the Motion would do mischief in this country, and, to some extent, mischief in foreign countries, to an enormous extent, by propagating the false and erroneous idea that we, in the teeth of all the demonstrative evidence, of which portions have been laid before us to-night in the admirable speeches which have been delivered on this side of the House, are about to lose the fruits of the struggles of a generation of men, and about to compromise a system which has contributed largely and mainly to the unparalleled wealth, strength, and prosperity of the country, and to revert to a scheme of delusions and impostures which, happily, have been banished from these three Kingdoms.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he would not trouble the House for more than a very few minutes. It happened that some of the Irish Members were in favour of inquiry into the system of free imports; and, without wishing to criticize the admirable and able speech they had just listened to from the Prime Minister, he wished they could hit upon some system of inquiring into the working of the rule and plan we had adopted, which would not have such terrific and formidable effects at home and abroad. He would only call the attention of the House to this fact—that in the opinion of the vast majority of the Irish people the introduction of Free Trade, under the circumstances, at any rate, in which it was introduced, simply completed and assured that ruin of Irish agriculture which was at the bottom of the social and political difficulties which were now tasking the energies of both political Parties. In the second place, it was the opinion of some—[*Interruption.*]—he begged hon. Members' pardon, and could assure them that he did not intend to delay the House long, and that conversation in loud tones was not calculated to shorten the length of his remarks. Some Irish Members, at least, were of opinion that an inquiry into the defects of our present system of absolutely free imports would throw a much-needed light upon the settlement of Irish agricultural questions. He would venture to submit this to the consideration of the Prime Minister — Supposing the effect of the present system of absolutely free imports, competing with that important branch of native industry, Irish agriculture, rendered it absolutely impossible o have such a thing as a fixation of fair rents for any length of time—supposing the working of the absolutely free system of imports made the system of fair rents calculated on a duration of 15 or 20 years a system of unfair rents within five years, would it not be well worth while to have some system of inquiry by which the political Leaders on both sides of the House would know that in trying to fix rents in Ireland on the basis of a 15 or 20 years' duration they would only run the risk of insuring a fresh crop of discontent? Some safer way of arriving at facts than at present existed was badly wanted; and it was the opinion of large numbers of people in Ireland that before long, in consequence of this evil, the absolutely unchecked system of free agricultural imports into Ireland must be remedied. A collection of trustworthy statistics, which could only be arrived at by such an inquiry as was now suggested, was really necessary for the settlement of the Irish agrarian question; and if that was not the opinion of the Liberal Party, he was afraid they were not likely to succeed in administration in Ireland.

Mr. NEWDEGATE said, he wished to express the impression which the eloquent and most energetic speech of the First Lord of the Treasury had made upon him. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to feel that dwelling under a system of free imports was like dwelling in a glass house. The right hon. Gentleman continued to use the words "Free Trade;" but he varied it with the words "free imports," because no man knew better than he did that free import on one side and Protection on the other was not Free Trade. The right hon. Gentleman and his Friends must cease to call themselves Free Traders; they had no hope of becoming so, for the negotiations with the French Government had put an end to the delusion under which free imports were instituted. Yet the House was now called upon deliberately to reject a proposal to inquire into the position of this country under these altered circumstances. He had been called a "bigot;" but if ever there was an instance of bigotry, it was in the refusal of this inquiry. If ever there was a confession of weakness, it was in the refusal of this inquiry by those who longed to be called Free Traders, but knew that the system which they had maintained was no longer Free Trade. He had agreed with the Prime Minister last year when the right hon. Gentleman pointed out in his Financial Statement that the position of this country had become most grave under these circumstances; and he rejoiced that the right hon. Baronet the Member for North Devon (Sir Stafford Northcote) had had the courage to repeat the demands of the country for an inquiry into this altered position.

Mr. BIDDELL said, he was glad of the admission that the slackness of their manufacturers had, in part, arisen from the depression of agriculture. It was evident the agricultural and manufacturing industries understood each other better than formerly. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade had stated that the total imports and exports of a nation were the best test of its prosperity. Accepting that data, he would compare the two years 1872-3 with those of 1879-80. Why he had selected the former period was that wheat in it had sold higher than for 15 or 20 years past—namely, at 58*s.* per quarter; in the latter at only 44*s.* per quarter. Another reason he made the comparison was to show the manufacturers that a high price of corn was not inconsistent with their prosperity. In the first period their annual imports, in round numbers, amounted to £312,000,000, their exports to £363,000,000; together, £675,000,000; while in 1879-80 the annual imports were £267,000,000, and their exports were £392,000,000; together making a total value of £659,000,000. Their poor relief and management cost in the first period annually £14,000,000, and in the latter £16,000,000. Their Custom duties were respectively £20,500,000 and £19,500,000. The right hon. Gentleman had largely alluded to the United States. Well, how stood we with them? Why, our export trade was declining. In 1872-3 we annually sent them exports to the extent of £36,000,000; while in 1879-80 we sent only to the value of £26,000,000. As to corn, their annual growth in the first period was 11,500,000 acres; in the latter only 10,750,000. Their increasing dependence upon foreign supplies for their food was, to his mind, a most serious matter, and should, if possible, be checked by encouragement to the home grower. Not that he would place any duty on corn to maintain rents, or he might even say to uphold the tenant solely; but, looking at the general welfare, he thought a duty placed upon wheat when only it was at a low price would be beneficial to the country in maintaining the growth of corn in it. He totally denied it was a question of rent, for, whether that was reduced or increased, the land should either be used for the growth of corn or grain, whichever was found to be most profitable. One of the strongest arguments used by the right hon. Gentleman in favour of Free Trade was that if we set the example other countries would follow us; but that prognostication had been falsified, as the proposed Committee could inquire.

Question put.

The House *divided*:—Ayes 140; Noes 89: Majority 51.—(Div. List, No. 60.)

Main Question, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," put, and *agreed to.*

SUPPLY—CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

SUPPLY—*considered* in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £3,631,600, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charge for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883, viz.:—

CIVIL SERVICES.

CLASS I.—PUBLIC WORKS AND BUILDINGS.

Great Britain :—	£
Royal Palaces	7,000
Marlborough House	700
Royal Parks and Pleasure Grounds ..	20,000
Houses of Parliament	6,000
Monument to Earl of Beaconsfield (Re-Vote)	500
Public Buildings	30,000
Furniture of Public Offices	2,500
Revenue Department Buildings ..	40,000
County Court Buildings	8,000
Metropolitan Police Courts	1,500
Sheriff Court Houses, Scotland ..	2,000
New Courts of Justice, &c... ..	30,000
Surveys of the United Kingdom ..	45,000
Science and Art Department Buildings	4,500
British Museum Buildings	1,300
Natural History Museum	8,000
Harbours, &c. under Board of Trade	2,000
Rates on Government Property (Great Britain and Ireland)	70,000
Metropolitan Fire Brigade	2,500

Ireland :—	£
Public Buildings	30,000
Science and Art Buildings, Dublin ..	1,700
Shannon Navigation	2,000

Abroad :—	
Lighthouses Abroad	2,000
Diplomatic and Consular Buildings ..	5,500

CLASS II.—SALARIES AND EXPENSES OF CIVIL DEPARTMENTS.

England :—	£
House of Lords, Offices	6,000
House of Commons, Offices ..	6,000
Treasury, including Parliamentary Counsel	11,000
Home Office and Subordinate Departments	15,000
Foreign Office	12,000
Colonial Office	6,500
Privy Council Office and Subordinate Departments	4,000
Privy Seal Office	500
Board of Trade and Subordinate Departments	30,000
Charity Commission (including Endowed Schools Department) ..	5,000
Civil Service Commission	7,000
Copyhold, Inclosure, and Tithe Commission	2,500
Inclosure and Drainage Acts Expenses	1,400
Exchequer and Audit Department ..	9,000
Friendly Societies, Registry ..	1,200
Local Government Board	50,000
Lunacy Commission	2,500
Mint (including Coinage)	25,000
National Debt Office	2,500
Patent Office	5,000
Paymaster General's Office	4,500
Public Works Loan Commission ..	1,500
Record Office	4,000
Registrar General's Office	14,000
Stationery and Printing	88,000
Woods, Forests, &c., Office of ..	4,000
Works and Public Buildings, Office of	8,000
Secret Service	6,000

Scotland :—	
Exchequer and other Offices ..	500
Fishery Board	2,500
Lunacy Commission	1,000
Registrar General's Office	2,000
Board of Supervision	3,000

Ireland :—	
Lord Lieutenant's Household ..	1,000
Chief Secretary's Office	6,500
Charitable Donations and Bequests Office	300
Local Government Board	10,000
Public Works Office	6,500
Record Office	1,000
Registrar General's Office	6,000
Valuation and Boundary Survey ..	6,000

CLASS III.—LAW AND JUSTICE.

England :—	£
Law Charges	17,000
Public Prosecutor's Office	600

	£
Criminal Prosecutions	34,000
Chancery Division, and Supreme Court, Generally	26,000
Central Office of the Supreme Court, &c.	20,000
Probate, &c. Registries, High Court of Justice	16,000
Admiralty Registry, High Court of Justice	2,000
Wreck Commission	2,500
Bankruptcy Court (London)	7,000
County Courts	20,000
Land Registry	1,000
Revising Barristers, England	- -
Police Courts (London and Sheerness)	2,000
Metropolitan Police	100,000
County and Borough Police, Great Britain	1,000
Convict Establishments in England and the Colonies	100,000
Prisons, England	80,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools, Great Britain	70,000
Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum	4,000

Scotland:—

Lord Advocate, and Criminal Proceedings	10,000
Courts of Law and Justice	5,000
Register House Departments	6,000
Prisons, Scotland	20,000

Ireland:—

Law Charges and Criminal Prosecutions	15,000
Supreme Court of Judicature	15,000
Court of Bankruptcy	1,500
Admiralty Court Registry	200
Registry of Deeds	3,000
Registry of Judgments	500
Land Commission	30,000
County Court Officers, &c.	15,000
Dublin Metropolitan Police (including Police Courts)	20,000
Constabulary	300,000
Prisons, Ireland	30,000
Reformatory and Industrial Schools	25,000
Dundrum Criminal Lunatic Asylum	1,500

CLASS IV.—EDUCATION, SCIENCE, AND ART.

England:—

	£
Public Education	550,000
Science and Art Department	60,000
British Museum	25,000
National Gallery	1,000
National Portrait Gallery	500
Learned Societies, &c.	3,500
London University	2,000
Deep Sea Exploring Expedition (Report)	1,000
Transit of Venus	1,000

Scotland:—

Public Education	110,000
Universities, &c.	3,500
National Gallery	400

Ireland:—

	£
Public Education	150,000
Teachers' Pension Office	500
Endowed Schools Commissioners	200
National Gallery	300
Queen's Colleges	2,000
Royal Irish Academy	500

CLASS V.—FOREIGN AND COLONIAL SERVICES.

	£
Diplomatic Services	60,000
Consular Services	60,000
Suppression of the Slave Trade	1,500
Tonnage Bounties, &c.	1,500
Suez Canal (British Directors)	400
Colonies, Grants in Aid	5,000
South Africa and St. Helena	2,000
Subsidies to Telegraph Companies	9,000

CLASS VI.—NON-EFFECTIVE AND CHARITABLE SERVICES.

	£
Superannuation and Retired Allowances	120,000
Merchant Seamen's Fund Pensions, &c.	1,000
Relief of Distressed British Seamen Abroad	8,000
Pauper Lunatics, England	- -
Pauper Lunatics, Scotland	- -
Pauper Lunatics, Ireland	65,000
Hospitals and Infirmaries, Ireland	4,000
Friendly Societies Deficiency	- -
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Great Britain	800
Miscellaneous Charitable and other Allowances, Ireland	600

CLASS VII.—MISCELLANEOUS.

	£
Temporary Commissions	5,000
Miscellaneous Expenses	4,500
Total for Civil Services	£2,961,600

REVENUE DEPARTMENTS.

	£
Customs	100,000
Inland Revenue	100,000
Post Office	100,000
Post Office Packet Service	120,000
Post Office Telegraphs	250,000
Total for Revenue Departments	£670,000
Grand Total	£3,631,600

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON said, he was very sorry, at that late hour (1.45), to detain the Committee; but he rose for the purpose of moving the reduction of the Vote which had just been put from the Chair by the sum of £200,000. As he understood the Vote, it was a Vote on Account for two months; and he proposed to reduce the Education Vote, which amounted to the sum of £550,000, by the sum of £200,000. That would give the Government a Vote on Account for carrying on the work of elementary education in Great Britain and Wales for one month. His reason for taking this course might be stated in a very few words. The Vice President of the Council (Mr. Mundella) laid upon the Table of the House on the 6th of March a new Revised Code. That Code was laid upon the Table in accordance with certain powers given to the Education Department, and, so far as he knew, the Education Department was the only great spending Department of the State which had the power of manipulating the sums placed under its control for elementary education, because there was power given to the Privy Council to alter, annul, or revise in any way they chose, any of the conditions upon which the grant was given. Any Minute which they prepared for the alteration of the Code was made to apply to every single elementary school from one end of the Kingdom to the other. Now, this was an enormous power for any Department to exercise; and when the conditions under which the grant was made were to be officially imposed, and might vitally affect the schools, it was not too much to say that such important alterations in the Code which might affect the very existence of every elementary school in the Kingdom, no matter whether that school was Roman Catholic, Nonconformist, or Church of England, should be properly discussed before they were carried into operation. Indeed, Parliament had provided this safeguard over the spending power of the Privy Council —that the Minute of alterations made by the Privy Council should lie for 30 days upon the Table of the House. Of course, the clear intention, and the only object of that provision, was that during these 30 days any Member of the House who objected to the Code should have an opportunity of discussing it. Now, the present Revised Code was laid on the Table of the House by the Vice President of the Privy Council on the 6th of March, and it would consequently become law on the 6th of April. He (Lord George Hamilton) had asked the Government some time back to do one of two things—either to delay the coming into law of the Code until time could be given for its discussion, or to place a day at the disposal of the House for discussing it. He did not think that either of those proposals was unreasonable. He admitted that the Government must have a certain sum of money in order to carry on the elementary education of the country; and what he proposed, therefore, was that the Government should have money given to them for one month. The House would re-assemble after the Easter Holidays before that month had expired, and then the Government might provide an early day for securing the necessary discussion. He did not wish to say that the Vice President of the Council had made any unfair or improper alterations in the Code; indeed, he would go so far as to credit him with having made several decided improvements; but the matter was one that required further explanation and a good deal of criticism. When, on a previous occasion, Mr. Lowe and his noble Friend the Member for Liverpool (Viscount Sandon) laid alterations in the Code upon the Table, they afforded the House an opportunity of discussing them within the time prescribed by law. [Mr. MUNDELLA said, that was not so.] He (Lord George Hamilton) had a distinct recollection that Mr. Lowe, in reply to Mr. Disraeli, said—

> "If I wanted to play fast and loose, I should have laid the Code on the Table upon the first day of the Session, and have trusted to its passing through in the pressure of Business."

That was what really happened in this case; but, so far as his memory served him, his right hon. Friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer (Sir Stafford Northcote) acceded to the proposal of the Postmaster General when the last Code was laid upon the Table, and delayed its coming into law until an opportunity for discussing it was afforded. He wished to point out that although the Code would not come into operation until April next year, it would hardly be competent for any hon. Member to propose or to carry any alterations in it, and that it would necessarily become law unless the discussion were taken immediately after it was laid upon the Table. The principle upon which payments were made for elementary education was, that the schoolmasters and managers of every school should have 12 months in order to prepare the children for the examinations. It would be necessary, under the provisions of the Code, that every elementary school should be examined before April next year. He had received various letters, pointing out that if the Code were allowed to become law, and the discussion did not take place until some three or four months hence, no proposal could then be made to alter it, because, if such a proposal were made, the masters and managers would be placed under great disadvantage, inasmuch as they would not have had 12 months' notice. Under these circumstances, he hoped the Government would not refuse his reasonable request, which was that, so far as the Elementary Education Vote was concerned, they should only take a Vote for one month. He would move a reduction of the Vote by £200,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £3,431,600, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charge for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883."—(*Lord George Hamilton.*)

Mr. MUNDELLA said, the noble Lord who had just addressed the Commiteee had taken an extraordinary course. He thought the object of the noble Lord was not so much to criticize the Code as to obtain a little time from the Government. ["No!"] Perhaps the Committee would allow him to state why he said this. The Government had laid the Code upon the Table, and that Code was not challenged. If any discussion were to arise on any action of the Government it must be on the Motion for the rejection of the Code that the discussion arose, as no Notice, except that of his hon. Friend the Member for the University of London (Sir John Lubbock), had yet been placed upon the Paper. The noble Lord said that the Education Department had the power to alter or to annul the grant to any voluntary or other school during the year; but the noble Lord must admit that that remark would not apply to the grant for the present year. The grant up to April, 1883, must be paid according to the existing Code, as it was not affected by the new Code at all. The new Code would not come into operation until after the sums included in this Vote had been paid—namely, not until after the 1st day of April, 1883. Consequently, not one farthing of the money voted this year would be devoted to the payment of charges under the new Code. If the Committee refused this Vote—which always came before them every year, because the school payments went on every day of the year as regularly as the Inspectors made their Reports—the result would be, as the noble Lord knew very well, that the whole school machinery would be at a standstill, owing to the want of funds to pay the grants. He might further remind the Committee that there never was a Code known which had been discussed so much in advance as this, because he had made known the proposals contained in the Code in July last; and during the Recess he had received representations in regard to them from everybody who was at all interested in the question of education. The Privy Council had endeavoured to meet their wishes as far as possible, and the Council had received from school boards, from the masters of schools, and from all quarters, thanks for what they had done in the Code. He believed that the Code carried into effect the greatest improvements that had ever been introduced, and he was quite sure that when the House came to discuss the Code, nobody would give it better support than the noble Lord himself. He was quite satisfied of that. The noble Lord said that no opportunity had been afforded for discussing it. Now, 10 days ago, he had offered the noble Lord last Tuesday morning; and again, this week, he had offered him next Tuesday. There might be five hours' discussion of the Code then, if anybody cared to challenge it; and, personally, he should only be too glad to have a discussion. A discussion would undoubtedly arise some time or other; but he did not believe that it would result in any alteration or modification of the Code. Hitherto, year by year, it had always been after the Code had been laid for 30 days on the Table of the House that it had been discussed, and any modifications that were made were made by Minute after the Code had been laid upon the Table and become law. The Privy Council had no desire to say that this was a perfect Code, or that it was incapable of modification; and they would only be too happy if an opportunity were given for discussing it. He was satisfied that the noble Lord had no serious wish to delay the Code. Nobody knew better than the noble Lord that it was an improvement upon the existing Code, and that it was adapted to sweep away a great many of the imperfections which the noble Lord himself did his best to remedy when he was at the head of the Department. He (Mr. Mundella) hoped that the House would not refuse the grant upon this occasion because the Government were unable to promise a night for its discussion before the 6th of April. That was, in point of fact, the only question raised by the noble Lord.

MR. LYULPH STANLEY said, he agreed with the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) as to the importance of having a fair discussion of the Code. At the same time, much as the Code needed discussion, he did not think it was desirable to adopt the Amendment which had been moved by the noble Lord and force the hands of the Government by making provision for only one month. He wished to point out to the noble Lord that the course he suggested would have a very prejudicial effect. Many of the school boards and managing bodies met only once a month, and they wanted a little more time than this proposal would afford them for examining the Code. Many of the suggestions contained in the Code were absolutely new suggestions, and were departures from the principles laid down in the autumn. It was, therefore, absolutely necessary that a night should be fixed for a full discussion of the Code, and it should not be left to private Members to take upon themselves the responsibility of ballotting for a night. The responsibility ought to be taken by the Department itself, which ought to meet the House of Commons fairly, and give them a proper opportunity for discussing the Code. It was because he believed that the discussion should be full and minute, and because he did not believe that the consideration of the Code could be undertaken with the Easter Holidays intervening, that he objected to the Amendment moved by the noble Lord. It must be borne in mind that, after the Code had been criticized, it could always be modified by a Supplementary Minute; and no one would be prejudiced by its becoming law within 30 days. He hoped, therefore, that the money now asked for by the Government would be granted, and that they would not be asked to undertake this important discussion immediately after the Easter Holidays, before an opportunity had been afforded to the country for a full examination of the Code. Therefore, in the interests of full and free discussion itself, he should object to this Amendment.

MR. R. H. PAGET said, he hoped the Committee would take the view which had been put forward by the noble Lord, that more time was necessary for the consideration of the Education Code. It was, undoubtedly, a matter of the greatest concern and importance, so far as the voluntary schools were concerned, that those who were interested in them should have a thorough understanding of the new scheme. It was not his intention to express any opinion as to whether this was a good or a bad one, because, as yet, there had been no opportunity of seeing how it was likely to act; and he challenged any hon. Gentleman, however well he might be acquainted with the details of the scheme, to say in what manner it would affect the elementary schools. As to the Board schools, their position was a very different one; and, however it might result, the new Code was a matter of little importance to them. But he repeated that, in the case of the voluntary schools, and especially those of the poorer class, it was a matter of importance, and, so to speak, of life and death to them, to know how they would be affected; and, therefore, he asked that a sufficient time should be allowed for a thorough and ample study of the Code, for the purpose of ascertaining its probable effect upon the finances of these schools. Up to the present time, certainly, there had been no opportunity of doing this. The Easter Holidays were close at hand; and he contended that it was but reasonable that the Vote should be postponed till the time suggested by the noble Lord, for the purpose of consulting with those interested in the schools as to how the new scheme would apply to their work, and whether or not they would be able to survive it. He did not say they would not be able to do so; but he contended that it was not right to force this matter upon them until its effect upon their finances was ascertained.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said, the whole question, so to speak, lay in a nut-shell. The speeches of the hon. Member who had just sat down, and of the right hon.

Gentleman the Vice President of the Council, were proofs not only that the new Code would be made the subject of criticism in that House, but that such criticism was necessary. It seemed to him quite clear that the provisions of the new Code would be most properly discussed at the time when the Education Estimate was brought forward. The right hon. Gentleman had not said anything, in the course of the observations he had just made, in reply to the argument of the noble Lord, that schoolmasters should have, as nearly as possible, a year's notice of the Code under the provisions of which they were to come at the end of the year. That was the actual substance of the argument of his noble Friend, and it had received no attention at the hands of the Vice President of the Council. Since, then, it followed that there must be criticism, and that it must come soon, hon. Members could not insure an opportunity for this purpose unless they limited the amount asked for by Government to one month's Supply.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, the question of the new Education Code was one of vital importance to the Roman Catholic schools throughout Ireland, and he had listened with extreme surprise when the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council intimated to the Committee that the Roman Catholic clergy had expressed to him their satisfaction at the provisions of the new scheme. [Mr. Mundella dissented.] He certainly understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that they had expressed to him their thanks for the new Code. But, however that might be, he could assure him that a very different feeling prevailed amongst the great body of the Catholic people in Ireland, and that they viewed the probable consequences of the Code with sentiments of the greatest alarm. The question, however, was a large one, and involved too many points of importance for it to be discussed with propriety at 2 o'clock in the morning. In leaving the subject, therefore, he would remark that the right hon. Gentleman had no right to complain of the noble Lord for raising the question of the Code on the present occasion, because he believed it would be in the recollection of the Committee that the noble Lord had given Notice that when these Estimates came forward he should bring up the subject of education. But the Education Vote was only one of 142 Votes on the Estimates, and its discussion must necessarily take up a considerable time. How, then, could the Committee be reasonably expected to pass the whole of this sum of £3,631,000 without any discussion whatever? If hon. Members would glance down the list of Votes, it would be seen that there were a number of items which many Members sitting on that side of the House could not be supposed to allow to pass without every form of challenge which it was in their power to offer. For instance, there was the Vote for the Office of Privy Seal, which he would never allow to pass without a division. Then there was the Vote for Secret Service money, which Irish Members would certainly not allow to pass without a full inquiry into its application and working. Then, again, there were the Votes for Convict Establishments and Prisons in Ireland, besides a number of others which it was then not necessary for him to point to, because those he had mentioned were quite sufficient to show the utter unreasonableness of the Government expecting them to vote this money at so late an hour. Under the circumstances, he should move to report Progress.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Arthur O'Connor.*)

Lord GEORGE HAMILTON said, the reasonable proposal he had made to the Government with reference to this Vote was entirely in the interest of education. He had no wish to force on a discussion with regard to the Code, and he was now quite ready to make even a more reasonable proposal to the Government than he had made before. He was willing to agree to a Vote for two months' Supply if the Government, on their part, would undertake that before the two months expired a day should be appointed for the discussion of this question.

Mr. THOMAS COLLINS said, he hoped the noble Lord did not mean that the question should be discussed at a Morning Sitting. The House had been placed in a position of great difficulty by the debate on the Procedure of the House being put off until after the Easter

Holidays, and hon. Members found themselves, after sitting for 10 hours, called upon at past 2 o'clock in the morning to go through a long series of Votes and discuss important questions with reference to education. He was prepared to admit that the new Education Code was an improvement upon its predecessor; but, at the same time, it raised questions of such magnitude that they would have to be fully discussed by all those Members who took an interest in the great question of education. He could see no reason why a Government night should not be set apart for this discussion. This would have been a perfectly easy matter had the Government not blocked the whole Business of the House, and consumed two months of the Session, by the unnecessary conflict which they had raised between the two Houses of Parliament, and by their mischievous proceedings with reference to the *clôture.*

MR. HEALY said, the noble Lord the Financial Secretary to the Treasury could not suppose that Irish Members would allow the items in this Vote for Secret Service, County Court Offices, Constabulary, and Prisons in Ireland to be taken on that occasion. He therefore thought the noble Lord should allow them to understand distinctly the particular Services for which the money was required. For his own part, he took a very great interest in the Education Vote, and he desired an opportunity of expressing his views upon the English educational system. For instance, he believed that it required four or five times as long to teach a child to read under the system in force in England than it did under the systems in operation in France and Germany; and, therefore, he should like to take the English system and contrast it with the system in foreign schools. Further, it was his intention to ask the right hon. Gentleman the Vice President of the Council to grant a Select Committee for the purpose of inquiring into that subject. He asked the noble Lord to say for what particular Services he required this Vote on Account.

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he wished to point out that this Vote on Account was necessary for carrying on the whole Civil Service of the country. Hon. Members would be aware that it was clearly understood that no money would be taken except for purposes previously sanctioned by Parliament, and the money now asked for was simply for carrying on the Service of the country until the Estimates of the year came forward and were passed. The present Vote on Account appeared to be the smallest ever asked for the Civil Service. He entirely agreed with the noble Lord opposite that the Education Code should be discussed; but he did not understand that it could make any difference to the noble Lord whether or not it should be discussed exactly within the period he had named. The discussion, which he admitted to be necessary, could take place, without any loss to the public, after this Vote was taken. It had already been promised that the Votes for the Army and Navy should be taken at an early date; and, although he was not in a position to say when the Education Vote would be brought forward, he could assure the noble Lord that it was the wish of Her Majesty's Government to place it amongst the earliest Votes to be discussed.

MR. REDMOND said, that the fact of the noble Lord not asking for money in respect of any new Services, as he had just informed the Committee, was not of the slightest importance in dealing with this Vote on Account. The noble Lord was asking, on that occasion, for money in support of the Secret Service, which, amongst other things, was being used in Ireland to demoralize the Irish people as far as possible. Further, it had been used for the purpose of carrying out a rule in Ireland, against which he and his hon. Friends were bound, on every occasion, to protest. It was all very well for the Government to tell the Committee that the money asked for was for purposes which had received the sanction of Parliament; but his complaint was that the Government were carrying on new proceedings in Ireland under cover of the old Services. He objected to the present Vote being taken in its entirety, because it included sums on account that would be applied to various Services in Ireland which would necessarily be the subjects of discussion on the part of Irish Members. If, however, the noble Lord the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, in asking for money on account, would exclude all contentious matters with reference to Ireland, he should not object in the slightest degree to the Vote being taken. But, unless he was able to exclude from this lump sum the money demanded in respect of the following Services, in the way of which Irish Members felt it their duty to place every obstacle in their power, he should certainly oppose the Vote. They protested against any money being voted on the present occasion for the Establishment of the Lord Lieutenant, and in respect of the Office of the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant; they objected to the voting of money for the maintenance of Prisons and Convict Establishments in Ireland as they were at present managed, to the mismanagement of which institutions Irish Members had, over and over again, called attention in that House; they objected to money being taken for the Local Government Board in Ireland, for reasons that had been frequently explained; for the Queen's Colleges, against which they had protested on every occasion when the question came under the consideration of the House. Then there was the Secret Service money, that was doing so much to demoralize the Irish people, as he had already pointed out. Irish Members protested against the use to which this money was being applied; and they were, moreover, bound on every occasion to object to any money being taken on account of the Post Office Service in Ireland until the recent proceedings in that Department had been explained and justified. Finally, there was the money asked in respect of Criminal Prosecutions in Ireland. They were told that no money was required in respect of any new Services; but, as he had already explained, it was under the cover of the old Services that new proceedings were being carried on against persons in Ireland. They might have allowed this Vote for Criminal Prosecutions to pass, had it not been for the novel character of the proceedings which had been carried on under this guise; but Irish Members now felt it their duty to protest against the Vote. If there was a subject upon which they were bound to protest, it was that of the Constabulary in Ireland. The proceedings of that force were a disgrace to the Government of any civilized nation; the proceedings of the Constabulary in Ireland to-day were a disgrace to the Government of England; and he was convinced that if only in this country of England the proceedings of the Irish Constabulary were properly exposed, if only their protest in the House of Commons could reach the English public, and if they could understand that the forces of the Crown and the Constabulary were being used in a barbarous manner to carry out a barbarous rule, he believed that very much indignation would be felt amongst a large class of English people who to-day gave a tacit assent to the government of Ireland. That assent was now given because the people of England were ignorant of the manner in which the government of Ireland was being carried on. He did not believe very much in English public opinion on Irish questions; but he was convinced of this—that if once they could reach the public ear of England, if they could once impress on the English people the true manner in which the government of Ireland was being carried on, a large section, at any rate, of the English people would rise in revolt against the Government of the country. The government of Ireland to-day presented, in many respects, the worst features of a despotism. The money which they were asked to vote for the Secret Service provided a means whereby the Government could suborn false witnesses, whereby they could pay men to swear away the lives and liberties of the people he (Mr. Redmond) and his hon. Friends represented. They would be false to those who sent them to represent them in the House of Commons if they did not oppose every obstacle in their power to the passing of a single Vote, or one farthing of money, to perpetuate the system at present carried out in Ireland. In his heart he believed the Secret Service money was at the bottom of a large portion of the crime and the outrage which to-day, unfortunately, existed in Ireland. He presumed the money which was given to informers, and which was given under the recent Police Circular to men who came forward and gave evidence of crimes which in their opinion were about to be committed, was supplied out of the Secret Service fund; consequently, it was palpably their duty to protest against this Vote. English Members, no doubt, viewed the opposition of hon. Members in his quarter of the House to Votes of this kind with great impatience. That was but natural, because they were ignorant of the manner in which the rule of their nation was carried out in Ireland. ["Hear, hear!"] He ventured to ask any hon. Member who by his cheers accused them of unduly prolonging the discussion on Votes of this kind, whether he understood the manner in which the Secret Service money was being expended in Ireland? Did he know that recently a Police Circular was issued by Colonel Hillier, offering rewards to men who might offer evidence of crimes which were to be committed, and that policemen had been instructed by that Circular to go, in a friendly manner, amongst the people and worm themselves into the confidence of the people, and thus endeavour to obtain evidence from men who might be cognizant of crime about to be committed? He asked hon. Members, in a spirit of fairness, was it likely that such a system of government could tend in any other direction than in the creation of outrage? What was the effect of a Circular of that kind upon the people? The police were anxious to show their dexterity in the detection of crime, and they were able, under Colonel Hillier's Circular, to tell the men that if they gave them information about crimes which were about to be committed, even though they themselves instigated the commission of the crimes, they would obtain from the police large monetary rewards. Furthermore, the Circular went on to say that the man who gave the information would not even not have his name given to the public, but he would be treated in every way that his identification should not be arrived at. For the reasons he had given, amongst others, he considered they were bound to protest against this Vote. He had said that he believed that to the issue of the recent Circulars to the police many of the crimes and outrages which were happening in Ireland were to be attributed. He wanted, before he voted a single farthing in support of the Secret Service in Ireland, to hear some justification for the issue of those Circulars. It was all very well to tell them that the fund was required for the Public Service, and that they were not asked to vote any money in respect of Services which had not already been approved in this House; but he cared not if majorities of the House of Commons had, Session after Session, approved of the institution of the Secret Service; it still remained the duty of himself and hon. Friends to oppose it by every means in their power. If the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) could by any means exclude from the bulk sum now proposed those sums which were required in respect of the contentious Irish matters, and would bring those sums up separately, he would have no further opposition to offer; but unless the noble Marquess would do something of the kind, he should conceive it to be his duty to prevent, by every obstacle the Forms of the House allowed him to avail himself of, the Government obtaining the money they now asked for.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he thought hon. Members scarcely understood the position of affairs. The Vote asked for was simply to carry on the government of the country for two months, and until the Committee should have an opportunity of fully discussing the questions, amongst others, raised by the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond). To enter into a discussion at the present moment, which the hon. Member now invited them to do, would really rather tend to defeat than to promote the object in view. If there were to be a discussion now on the Constabulary or Secret Service Votes, the decision arrived at might be held to prejudge the opinion of the Committee when it came to vote the whole sum.

MR. W. H. SMITH said, he hoped hon. Members below the Gangway would see the force of the observations which had just fallen from the noble Marquess, and not persist in a discussion which would prejudice the position even from their own point of view. He understood that the Educational Estimates would be put down amongst the first of the Civil Service Estimates, so as to secure a full discussion upon educational matters without further waste of time. Desultory discussions like the present only resulted in a waste of time; and, upon the understanding that the Votes he had referred to would be taken early in May, he and his hon. Friends would withdraw their opposition.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he admired the tactics of the right hon. Gentleman (Mr. W. H. Smith). It had been the right hon. Gentleman's task, on previous occasions, to ask for money, and he, therefore, knew the difficulties he had to face. He (Colonel Nolan) did not wish to occupy much of the time of the Committee; but the present was a fitting opportunity to ask one or two questions of the Officials of the Irish Government. The first question was in regard to the provision of new potato seed. In four or five years time the value of Champion seed now being used would be spent. Some time ago a resolution was arrived at to take steps to obtain new seed, and he would like to know whether any provision was made in the Estimates in this respect? The second question was in regard to a grievance that was brought before him by a constituent of his. It was the case of a Mr. Newman, who was "reasonably suspected" by the Chief Secretary of having signed a "no rent" notice. The gentleman denied it; he had never done anything of the kind, and he had promised that he would never do anything of the kind again. He (Colonel Nolan) hoped the Committee would give him the whole of the credit of that "bull," for certainly Mr. Newman never said anything of the kind; it was entirely his own invention. Mr. Newman was a national school teacher, and by his having been imprisoned on suspicion, his result fees were greatly affected. An attempt had been made to suspend him from his position; but it appeared to him (Colonel Nolan) that to do this, when the man had not been tried, would be most unfair. They were entitled to an assurance from the Chief Secretary that unless Mr. Newman were brought to trial and convicted, his position as a school teacher should not be interfered with. In his opinion it would be well if Mr. Newman were released and allowed to return quietly to school.

Mr. HEALY said, he thought the course of instruction which the noble Lord (the Marquess of Hartington) had given them might very well have been delivered earlier, because he told them that it pledged the Committee in no way if they passed the Vote on the present occasion. He should have pointed that out at the outset. The noble Lord the Member for Middlesex (Lord George Hamilton) had moved the reduction of the Vote by £1,000,000; but the noble Marquess waited until an Irish Member got up, and then he opened a fusillade at the Irish Benches. He told them if they voted the money now they would not be pledged to the principle of the Vote. How was it the noble Marquess did not impart that information to the Committee as soon as the noble Lord the Member for Middlesex rose? The noble Marquess did not give his very excellent instruction to the noble Lord on the Front Opposition Bench. It appeared to him the position of the noble Marquess was somewhat incongruous. Now, let them make up their minds what they were going to do? Were they going to make a night of it, or were they going to make up their minds at once? As far as he was personally concerned, he was not going to allow 1*d.* of the Constabulary, or the Prisons, or the Secret Service Votes to be taken to-night. Notwithstanding the charge of Obstruction, he should resist the Votes to the utmost of his power. Of course, when the Government had got the *clôture*, there would be no more Obstruction; it was intended to put an end to it, so that he and his hon. Friends could not be charged with it again. The present position of affairs appeared to be this. Irish Members were determined that the Government should give them ample time to discuss various matters relating to Ireland; the Government, upon their part, had determined that they would absorb all the time at the disposal of the House by discussions on the *clôture* and the House of Lords, about which questions no one cared anything. Owing to this determination of the Government, the House could not at reasonable times discuss many important Irish subjects; but at the fag end of a Friday Sitting they were asked to give their assent to a Vote for the Constabulary, Prisons, Secret Service, Local Government Board, and many other important matters. That sort of thing did not hang. Because the Government chose to take up all the time of the House by the consideration of the action of the House of Lords and a discussion on the *clôture* Resolution, he did not see why they should be asked to vote £3,000,000 at a quarter past 2 o'clock in the morning. They intended to avail themselves of every opportunity to discuss the Irish policy of the Government. They meant to sicken the Government of Ireland; they would raise Irish subjects in season, and out of season, until the Government would be sick of Ireland and of their coercive policy. He noticed that last night, when he and his hon. Friends were discussing a very important matter relating to their imprisoned friends, the hon. Member for Gateshead (Mr. W. H. James) and the hon. Member for Middlesbrough (Mr. J. Wilson) endeavoured to organize a "count out." Why did not the hon. Member for Gateshead, when the Business of his own Party was under discussion, try to "count out?"

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman must address himself to the Chair, and keep to the question before the Committee.

MR. HEALY said, if the Chairman said he was not addressing himself to the Chair, of course he was not; he intended to do so. He would ask Mr. Playfair, if, under all the circumstances, it was unreasonable that Irish Members should desire full discussion of Irish questions? They knew very well that the Government endeavoured to shirk Irish questions. They gave no opportunity for their discussion; they, time after time, refused days for the consideration of Irish matters, and the consequence was that the Irish Members had to seize opportunities as they arose. These opportunities arose largely on Motions to adjourn the House and on the Estimates; therefore, when they got a chance like the present, it was too good to be lost. They found Her Majesty's Ministers wanted money to carry on their nefarious system of government in Ireland. They wanted £8,000 for Secret Service; £8,000 to debauch public opinion in Ireland; and £300,000 to enable them to turn decent people out on the road sides for not paying hardly possible rents. Then they required money to pay the Local Government Board for dismissing innocent public servants like Dr. Kenny. They wanted money to enable them to carry out the Coercion Act, and to enable them to keep in prison men in every way as respectable as anyone on the Treasury Bench. The Irish Members would make the Government give them the opportunity they wanted, and the matter had better be decided one way or the other, and that at once. It did not matter to him whether or not the Government decided to go on with the discussion of these Estimates. He would as soon stay up all night as not. He had in his portfolio, outside, valuable documents relating to all these Irish subjects, which they would take *seriatim.* The noble Marquess considered that if they allowed these Votes to pass now, they would not be pledging themselves to support them in the future; but that was not the view of the Irish Members. The Government had better say whether they were now going to take the discussion. ["Order!"] Gentlemen who cried out "Order!" should learn something about Order before they commenced to interrupt.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must remind the hon. Gentleman that the Committee is not discussing the items in the Votes now, but the Motion to report Progress.

MR. HEALY: Very well, as the Motion is to report Progress, it would be as well that we should divide and report Progress.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he had put a couple of definite questions to the right hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney General for Ireland, and he thought he had a right to ask for a reply.

MR. METGE said, the Government should give them a guarantee that they would not bring on another Vote on Account before the Whitsuntide Holidays, and then bring on the residue of the Estimates late in the Session, without giving the Irish Members a chance of discussing them. The *clôture* Rules might be in force when the Estimates were finally brought on for consideration; and the Government would then be able to close the mouths of the Irish Representatives, and prevent them from discussing those questions that they looked on as so important to the country.

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, that, under all the circumstances, it was impossible for him to say what progress would be made in Supply. He could only assure hon. Members that the Government would be anxious to bring on the discussion of the Votes on the earliest possible day. With regard to what had fallen from the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for County Galway (Colonel Nolan), he must say that a Vote on Account was hardly the time for discussing the matters he had raised. So far as he could catch the meaning of the hon. and gallant Member, he had referred to something which concerned a new Service. He could tell the hon. and gallant

Member, if that was so, that no part of a Vote on Account was ever applied to a new Service.

Mr. DALY said, he was perfectly aware that the Business of the country must be carried on; but, at the same time, this sheet of Votes that he had in his hand was before him now for the first time. He was asked to vote a sum on account for the Constabulary of Ireland. When he compared the Vote for the coming year with that for the past year, he found an increase in the former over the latter of £114,000. In common with many other Members, he had a strong feeling that the Constabulary of Ireland were not doing so much the work of the country as the work of cruel and heartless landlords; and he did not think he should be called on to affirm, even in part, a Vote of that kind. He would put it to the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington) that they should not, as it was now within 12 minutes of 3 o'clock in the morning, be called on to affirm, either in whole or in part, any such Vote as that. There were other Votes down which he would not refer to at this late hour; but he certainly did think that, as a matter of principle, this was not the time when these Votes should be submitted to the approbation or disapprobation of the Committee, because they could not receive that treatment at the hands of the Committee their importance deserved. The Constabulary Vote he should have thought of sufficient importance to have induced the Government to agree to report Progress.

Colonel NOLAN said, his constituency paid from £15,000 to £20,000 under this Vote alone, and he thought it was, therefore, only right that he should avail himself of the Forms of the House for, at least, extracting information. This new charge on the Estimates was asked for last year, and was nearly refused—for he thought they would have beaten the Government with regard to it had it not been for the support given to Her Majesty's Ministers by the Conservatives and some few Irishmen. He had only just seen the Estimates and did not know where to look for the amount to which he referred. Where was he to find it? And how was he to discuss it unless he received this information? No one on the Treasury Bench seemed to know anything at all about it; but he hoped he should hear an explanation of some kind from someone. They might, at least, tell him whether or not it was in the Estimates. Surely, this was a very moderate request. As to the second request, about Mr. Newman, he was sorry the Chief Secretary for Ireland was not in his place to give the necessary information. There ought to be two Chief Secretaries for Ireland, one—an Assistant Chief Secretary—in Ireland, and another in the House of Commons to answer questions. He wished to know if Mr. Newman was to be allowed to resume his position, seeing that he had not been put upon his trial? This was a reasonable question, to which he was entitled to receive an answer.

The CHAIRMAN: The question is that I report Progress, and ask leave to sit again.

Colonel NOLAN said, he had repeated his question, and he wished to have an answer.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, there was no Vote such as the hon. and gallant Member had mentioned in these Estimates. The subject had not been brought under his notice.

Colonel NOLAN said, he did not mean to refer to these Estimates alone, but to any Estimates.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, this lump sum was taken to carry on the entire Service.

Colonel NOLAN wished to know whether any attention had ever been paid to the Resolution of the House of last year as to seed potatoes? If no money had been paid in respect——

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. and gallant Member has no right to discuss a question that is not within these Estimates. If the subject is not within these Estimates it cannot be discussed.

Mr. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that if they looked through the Estimates they would find there were two Votes under which this question as to school teachers could be raised.

The CHAIRMAN: That was not the point on which I spoke; it was with reference to an entirely different subject not in the Estimates before the Committee.

Colonel NOLAN wished to know how the Chairman could say that the Vote he had referred to was not down in these Estimates? If he (the Chairman) could assure him that the Vote was not down in these Estimates, of course, he was out of Order in referring to it.

THE CHAIRMAN: The noble Lord the Financial Secretary to the Treasury distinctly stated it was not in the Estimates; therefore, not being in the Estimates, it is not before the Committee.

MR. HEALY said, the Vote for the Chief Secretary for Ireland and for the Lord Lieutenant was in the Estimates, and surely the question could arise upon those.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, these were Votes under which the case of these school teachers could properly be raised.

THE CHAIRMAN: Order. The point is, whether the Vote for seed potatoes is in the Estimates, and not as to the school teachers.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, he had understood the hon. and gallant Member (Colonel Nolan) to be talking about something else. With regard to the position in which they now were, he would point out to the House the very great danger they stood in of entering upon proceedings which could not reflect credit on the House, and which were not at all likely to render the course of Business in future Sessions either more pleasant or more profitable. The noble Lord said it was absolutely necessary to vote this money. Well, he (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) thought he could show that it was not absolutely necessary to vote it—or, at any rate, that there was a great deal that the Government did not require at all. There was, for instance, "Vote 4. A. Monument to Lord Beaconsfield." He was not going to oppose that Vote, but it would serve as an illustration of the point he wished to enforce. There was £2,100, voted in the present financial year for that monument, which had not been expended. The Government had some of that money in hand, and they did not propose to spend it until the end of the year, and then they would have it re-voted to them. That was perfectly unnecessary. Then, take Secret Service money. Anyone would suppose that the Government was dependent on the Estimates for Secret Service money, but that was not the case; £10,000 was charged for Secret Service on the Consolidated Fund, and the Government had as much control over that portion of the Consolidated Fund as they had over that which went to pay the Judges' salaries. Besides, the Government did not want so much Secret Service money as they used to, because out of the £23,000 voted in the past only £13,000 had been expended, and thousands were handed back to the Exchequer. As to the question raised by the hon. Member for Meath (Mr. Metge), in regard to bringing forward these Votes on Account, if they granted the Votes they would be finding the Government in ample funds for carrying on every department until June; and then in June they might find Her Majesty's Ministers coming forward again for a second Vote on Account, as they did last year—the Government telling hon. Members that it was absolutely necessary that they should have the money, and that the discussion could be taken on a future occasion. When did that discussion that the Government promised come on last Session? Why, it came on when it was hardly possible to keep a quorum together, when hon. Members were hardly physically able or willing to keep a House. Anxious as he was as a Member to do his duty, he protested against this system of doing away with all fair opportunity of canvasing the Public Expenditure as it ought to be canvassed. He would ask the Government to say whether, having regard to the very ample provision they proposed to make for their immediate requirements, they had not sufficient margin to enable them to dispense with some of the items on the long list in the hands of hon. Members. He would ask them whether it was absolutely necessary to take £500 for the Privy Seal Office; whether they conscientiously said they required £6,000 for the Secret Service; and whether they could not dispense with the items for the Lord Lieutenant's Household, and for the Office of the Chief Secretary for Ireland? He would put it to them, also, whether the Vote was absolutely necessary just now for Prisons and Constabulary in Ireland? Though there were some other Votes which, under other circumstances, he should certainly oppose, so far as he was concerned he should be content to withdraw his personal opposition if the Government would consent to eliminate from the present Votes the items he had mentioned.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON: I can hardly believe, in spite of what has fallen from hon. Members, that there can be a determined intention on the part of any Member of this House to obstruct the obtaining of money which it has been stated is absolutely necessary for the Public Service. The hon. Member who last spoke wishes to know if all the sums asked for are absolutely necessary? Our reply is in the affirmative, because we cannot discriminate in a Vote on Account between the various items. If we did do so, we should have to enter into long discussions, and have to waste a great deal of time in regard to matters that are really urgent. If we were to discriminate between the importance of one Vote and another, we should be declaring an opinion which might be of the utmost possible importance, and might be very inconvenient. We, therefore, ask the Committee to do what it always has done—namely, to enable the Government to continue the Services for a limited period—until the time when the Committee will be able to discuss all the Votes irrespective of their importance. I hope hon. Gentlemen will re-consider the intention announced by the hon. Member for Wexford (Mr. Healy), and will not think it necessary to enter into one of those contests which do not reflect credit on the Assembly.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, the noble Lord hardly perceived the force of the temperate and moderate intimation of the hon. Member for Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor), and the noble Lord had seen that there were many matters in this Vote which the Irish Members could not allow to pass without discussion and protest. What they hoped to do was to impress upon Parliament and upon the English people their objections to these Votes, which ought not to be taken at this hour of the night; and they wanted to know what security they would have, if they allowed the Votes to be passed, that there should be an opportunity for discussing the Votes? As the hon. Member had said, many months hence there might be a further Vote on Account asked for, and a full discussion on these Votes might be put off almost to the Greek Kalends, or to the end of the Session, when there would be no chance of discussion, and when it was supposed the Government would have the *clôture*, under which the Chairman could bring the discussion to a close at any moment. Could the noble Lord, to whom he gave great credit for manhood and fair play, say it was reasonable to expect them to allow these proposals to pass now without some genuine assurance that they would have an opportunity for a fair discussion?

MR. SCLATER-BOOTH said, he hoped the noble Lord would adhere to the statement he had made to the Committee, and not distinguish between one of these Votes and another. It had been the practice for many years for the House to take Votes on Account which were absolutely necessary at this time of the year; but the practice had also been to take the Civil Service Estimates on the first day after the Easter Vacation. Could the noble Lord say that an early discussion would be taken on these Estimates?

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH wished to remind the Committee that a promise had been given that the Army Estimates should be taken on the first day after the Easter Recess, and the Navy Estimates on the earliest opportunity after that. He did not think any further pledges could be given.

COLONEL NOLAN said, he should not assume that, this being a Vote on Account, there would be no discussion; but he wished to obtain an answer from the noble Lord upon the question he had raised, and if the Government were determined to give no answer, and to take £18,000 from his constituents alone, he should protest against that; and he believed he should be right in doing all he could to prevent the money being so obtained.

MR. SEXTON said, the hon. and gallant Member for Galway (Colonel Nolan) had been shut out from discussing the question of seed potatoes; but would not the hon. and gallant Member be entitled to discuss the grant administered by the Local Government Board, Ireland, under Class II.?

THE CHAIRMAN: As I understand it, the hon. and gallant Member desired a Vote to be put in the Estimates this year for seed potatoes; but that has not been done, and therefore it is not a matter for the Committee.

MR. HEALY asked whether the hon. and gallant Member would not be entitled to ask why a certain item was not put in the Vote, and why the Local Government Board had failed to put that item on the Paper?

THE CHAIRMAN: That is not before the Committee at all. The hon. and gallant Member will have a right to ask that question in the House; but it is not before the Committee.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. W. M. JOHNSON) said, he had made two or three efforts to answer the hon. and gallant Member; and he put it to the Committee whether it was not rather unreasonable that he should unexpectedly be asked to specify the position in which a particular individual, of whom he (the Attorney General for Ireland) could know nothing, was? All he could say was, that if the hon. and gallant Member would give him Notice, he would take care to inform himself upon the matter and give the result. [Colonel NOLAN: On Report?] He could not say he would do so to-morrow or Monday, but he would at the earliest opportunity. If the hon. and gallant Member could state that this person would promise not to do anything that was objectionable, he thought he could say there would be no difficulty about the matter.

MR. HEALY said, the noble Lord had asked whether there was any intention to carry on these principles of Obstruction. There was no such intention; and the only thing the Irish Members claimed was an opportunity to discuss these Estimates. They required time to do that; and he himself had several questions which he intended to raise. It did not matter much to him whether he did so at 3 in the morning or at 3 in the afternoon, and he could not see how the noble Lord could consider his action Obstruction. The Motion for Progress might be withdrawn, and the items taken *seriatim.* The Chief Secretary for Ireland was not in his place; and it was a remarkable thing that when there were a number of Irish questions to be considered, the right hon. Gentleman was away enjoying himself in Dublin Castle or elsewhere. The Irish Members intended to discuss these items; and the noble Lord could not consider that there was any Obstruction in discussing them now, any more than at 4 o'clock in the afternoon. Owing to the extraordinary position of the Gentlemen on the Front Bench, they could not expect to get on without Obstruction, and he thought the Committee had better enter into the matter with full heart. For instance, there were 600 suspects; and a question could easily be raised upon every one of those cases, and upon the salary of the Chief Secretary for Ireland; and the Prisons Board, &c. There were a number of questions as to the Prisons. He required to know something as to the conduct of the Governors, and the detention of suspects' letters. These things would be raised; and the Committee need not suppose that because the noble Lord brought on his Estimates at this hour, that was any reason for not discussing them. He intended to discuss them, and his only regret was that the Chief Secretary for Ireland was not in his place. Of course, they had great respect for the Attorney General for Ireland, who gave them all the information in his power; but when they came to discuss these matters, he would tell them that these matters were not in his Department, and they had better wait for the Chief Secretary for Ireland to return from Ireland. When a number of items were proposed—including his own salary, and £6,000 for his Office—that right hon. Gentleman ought to be in his place. He, therefore, protested against the interpretation the noble Lord had placed upon his remarks.

SIR R. ASSHETON CROSS said, he thought it would be much better to discuss these items once for all. It would be no use discussing them partly now and partly on some other day; and, no doubt, the noble Lord could state that there would be some early opportunity of discussing these Estimates before the Vote on Account passed away, so that there might be one discussion, and not two.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he would be glad to give every assurance that was possible; but a great deal of time had already been promised, and it was impossible to say on what precise day there should be this discussion. It would be desirable, no doubt, to bring on these Estimates on the earliest opportunity, to give hon. Members a fair opportunity of discussing them; but it was impossible to fix the day.

SIR HENRY HOLLAND asked whether, as the Committee was anxious to get out of this difficulty, the noble Lord would say that the Irish items should take the first place?

The Marquess of HARTINGTON: It is impossible to say that.

Mr. O'DONNELL said, he thought nothing like a definite response had been made either to the appeal of the Irish Members, or to the appeal of the late Home Secretary. The doctrine apparently laid down by the noble Marquess, that the Government could escape all criticism by bringing in their Votes at 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, was not a proposition which should commend itself to the Committee. He regretted that the noble Marquess had assumed that there was a disposition on the part of the Irish Members to do more than to legitimately discuss the items in which they were interested. The hon. Member for the Queen's County (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) had no other purpose in moving to report Progress than to obtain an assurance that an early day would be given for the discussion of these Estimates, feeling that they had no alternative but to discuss the items now if that assurance was not given. He did not think that course was convenient, or ought to be forced upon the House by the Government; and if the noble Marquess was not himself responsible for this state of affairs, but had been simply sent there to represent the Government without any instructions, and without any power to give a definite engagement, he thought those Members of the Government who had placed the noble Marquess in that position had hardly been fair to the noble Marquess, or to the Committee. He did not know whether his hon. Friends intended to go to a division on the Motion; but he certainly could not see that they had any alternative, in view of the nebulous response they had received, but to take advantage of the information they possessed regarding these items, and expose, at proper length, their objections. If the Government were not prepared with the requisite information, that was their own fault; and to bring forward demands for public money at this hour, without explanation and without definite statements when inquiries were made, was a most extraordinary mode of doing Business, and was not a mark of careful economy with regard to the time of the House.

Mr. BARRY said, if these were ordinary Estimates, it would be startling for the House to be called upon to vote them at this hour; but several of these items were of a specially contentious character. There were the Irish Prisons Vote, the Law Charges, and other Votes, which called for a great deal of investigation and discussion. Under the head of Public Works there were 10 or 20 cases of gross injustice which he intended to bring before the House. One was the case of a magistrate in Wexford. No one would suspect him of undue sympathy with magistrates; but here was a case of peculiar hardship on the part of the Board of Works in Ireland. He was very anxious that this case should be fairly sifted and inquired into; but there was very little chance of that being done at this hour of the night in a satisfactory manner. The noble Marquess stated that some time in the Session there would be an opportunity of discussing these Estimates; but, for himself, he would lose no opportunity now, or at any other time, of putting any obstacle he could in the way of Supply being granted to carry out the present infamous system in Ireland. It was very well for the noble Marquess to say there would be an opportunity; but he had consented before to Votes on Account, and then he had found, to his sorrow, that the opportunities for discussion were very limited indeed. He was inclined to think, on the present occasion, that the Irish Members should not consent—and he hoped they would not consent, if they stopped till next week—to money being granted to carry on the present evil system of rule in Ireland. The chance of future discussion would be very limited indeed; and he hoped the Irish Members would persist in their determination to oppose the Votes for Secret Service, and the Constabulary, and several other items in these Estimates.

Mr. BIGGAR said, the present Government had introduced what seemed to him to be very much of an innovation—namely, a system of forcing on Votes of money at a very late hour. The late Government, as far as he recollected, never insisted on Supply after 1 o'clock in the morning; but the present Government had introduced what he held to be the unconstitutional principle of insisting on large sums of money being voted at a time when there was no possibility of a proper discussion. For this reason, he thought the Government should either have agreed to report Progress and bring this Vote forward at some reasonable time, say, at a Morning Sitting, or some day next week; or have given a substantial and *bonâ fide* promise that an opportunity would be given for the discussion of Irish Estimates before the *clôture* came into operation, because it would be perfectly absurd to say they were to discuss the Irish Estimates with a power in the hands of the Government of stopping discussion at any time they liked before the Irish Members had pointed out their objections to particular Irish items. If the Government would undertake that before the *clôture* debates were finally ended time should be given for discussing these Irish Estimates, they might save a great deal of time and trouble; or, if they would agree to report Progress now, and bring forward these Votes at a reasonable hour, that would very much facilitate the progress of Business. But if the Government said they must have this money at 3 o'clock in the morning—these Votes not having been proposed until after 2 o'clock—he thought that was most unreasonable; and he must point out that the argument of the right hon. Gentleman who recommended the Irish Members to submit to this Vote on Account, that it was not the practice to divide Votes, was not consistent with the action of a Member of the Government who had moved to leave out the Education Vote until he got a promise of an opportunity of discussing that Vote. He did not wish to bind the Government to a particular day; but he thought that before Easter, before the discussions on the *clôture* came to an end, an opportunity for discussing these items should be given; and nothing would be lost by the Government through that course.

MR. T. D. SULLIVAN said, he thought the proposal to report Progress at 20 minutes past 3 o'clock in the morning, a very fair and reasonable one. There could be no doubt, looking at the headings of the Votes, that there were a number of items here which Irish Members could not allow to pass without challenge. They were bound to criticize these items on the earliest opportunity. They were told that "the Business of the country must be carried on." Well, what was the Business of Ireland? What sort of business was being carried on there, and what was this money wanted for? It was wanted for the eviction of tenant farmers, for the payment of informers, and so on; and Irish Members were bound to meet the proposal for its appropriation on the very threshold, and challenge it. This Vote for Secret Service they objected to, holding that the application of the money was a fruitful cause of crime and outrage in the country. It tended to demoralize the people and create confusion and disorder in every part of Ireland. Similarly, the Irish Members had an objection to urge as to the payment of the Police Force, who were employed in harrassing ladies of the Land League, and taking up people without the shadow of a reason, except the whisper of some informer—of some magistrate or magistrate's man. The Irish Members were bound to meet this thing and arrest it at the outset. What could be fairer than to say to the Government—"Give us a reasonable and early day, give us a reasonable hour, and we will accept the offer; but to force us to go into a criticism of these Votes, which are so important to our country, at such an hour as this, is a course which is neither fair nor reasonable, and we protest against it."

MR. HEALY said, he had not read the *clôture* Rules, and he did not care whether they were passed or not, either in their present form or 10 times more strongly worded. They did not affect the Irish Members in the slightest degree, and the Irish Members did not wish to talk about them; and he had no doubt, if the Government would give them a few hours on Monday, they would be easily able to say all they had to say and settle the whole matter as to these Votes. The Irish Members wished to expose the weakness of the proceedings of the Government in Ireland, and to do it in daylight. There should be daylight let into these proceedings; and the Irish Members, therefore, did not wish to discuss them at 3 o'clock in the morning, when what was said could not be reported. If the Government would give them Monday evening for the discussion of these matters, the Irish Members would agree not to debate them beyond 10 o'clock. By that time, no doubt, all who wanted to speak would have said their say. So far as he was concerned he should not say a word upon the *clôture*, or do anything with regard to it until the division was taken. He ventured to say that his proposition was a reasonable one to make to the noble Marquess (the Marquess of Hartington).

Mr. SEXTON said, he thought the noble Marquess should by this time have fully appreciated the strange and embarrassing situation in which the Committee found itself. ["No!" *and laughter.*] That seemed to be amusing to hon. Members; but it would not be later on, if that which promised to be a bitter struggle was beginning. He would urge upon the noble Marquess the desirability of considering most carefully whether he should press on this Vote at the present time. The Government asked for £3,600,000—sufficient to carry on the Services for three months—sufficient to carry on the government of Ireland to the month of June; and the Irish Members had no means of knowing what facilities, if any, would be afforded them up to the end of the Session for discussing the agencies of misgovernment and oppression at work in Ireland, and which they felt bound to denounce on every occasion in their power. He could not accept the theory proposed to them by the Front Opposition Bench—that it was sufficient for them to discuss these matters once in a Session. He rather accepted the theory of the hon. Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond), that the time for discussing these Estimates, and the spending of money for purposes Irish Members denounced, was whenever the opportunity offered itself. He should like to discuss these matters every day, if possible. He could not forget how futile were the opportunities granted them; nor, that when they put questions at half-past 4, they received offensive answers; nor, that when they put Notices of Motion on the Paper and held them over for months, when at last they got a few hours discussion, they were voted down by the House. He could not forget that it was impossible to get adequate attention paid to the Business of Ireland. He would remark that at this hour of the night, or morning, everything that they might say was lost within the walls of the Chamber, and had no effect, either on the Committee or on Ireland. What was it they were asked to do? They were asked to give into the hands of the Government the money required to carry on every possible misgovernment in Ireland; and he considered it would be a gross breach of public duty and breach of trust on the part of the Irish Members to sit there tamely, and in cowardly spirit allow this money to be taken. It was their highest, their inevitable duty, to protest against it on every possible occasion. The amount they were asked to vote was £3,600,000; two-thirds of which, probably, was for the misgovernment of Ireland. Take the Vote for Secret Service money—£6,000. How did they know to what purposes this money might not be applied? How did they know it would not be spent in stimulating the production of perjured evidence? How did they know that it would not be spent in paying people who came up at the request of Colonel Hillier—a base brood of informers that infested every country, and his poor country worst of all.

The CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member will be perfectly in Order in discussing any particular item when the Estimate is under consideration. At present, however, we are on the question of reporting Progress, and specific items cannot be discussed.

Mr. SEXTON thanked the Chairman. He wished to say that this Vote for Irish purposes would enable the Government to carry on the maladministration of Ireland till the beginning of next June. He saw nothing in the words of the noble Marquess to enable him to hope that he would give them an early opportunity of discussing these matters; but he could not wonder that the noble Lord had treated their appeals as he had done, seeing that the appeals of the regular Opposition who sat on the Front Opposition Bench had fallen on a heedless ear. No doubt there had been nothing objectionable in the tone of the noble Marquess; but he had listened with attention to what had fallen from him, and had failed to discover in it anything like a firm ground on which to resist the appeals of the Irish Members. The principle of the course adopted by Her Majesty's Government was radically vicious; and if there was anything more vicious it was the theory put forward from the Front Opposition Bench, that discussion was not proper when Votes on Account were taken. When Irish Members of Parliament were in prison for having committed no other crime than having been too strong opponents of the Government, and the demand was made for money to pay the cost of that imprisonment, could the Irish Members in the House be expected to sit still silently and vote that money? No; and he would say this—that, though he was not disposed to push the Committee to extremes, on his conscience —["Question!"]—this was the question—on his conscience, he should not feel himself entitled to desert a Member of the Irish Party to what extent soever, and in what mode soever he might push his opposition to this Vote. The money would go to pay those who harassed and pursued the ladies of the Land League, who were engaged in charitable work in every town and village of Ireland. Did the Committee think he and his Colleagues were going to sit tamely by and agree to a Vote on Account which would enable the Constabulary to continue this sort of thing? Certainly not. If they passed this Vote without the utmost protest it was in their power to make, they made themselves accomplices in the guilt of the Government—accomplices in a guilt which, in the minds and consciences of the Irish people, they would never be able to wipe out. He would close, as he began, by saying that he should to his utmost support any Member of the Irish Party in whatever mode he might at such an hour oppose the granting of this money.

MR. GIBSON said, that, so far as he could find out, there seemed to be a great deal of anxiety exhibited to ascertain whether it would be possible, consistently with the due progress of Public Business, to obtain an opportunity for the discussion of some of the important representative charges of this Vote before another Vote on Account was taken. So far as he could gather, if there was any such opportunity possible—and he was sure he did not know whether there was or not—the granting of it would meet the objections taken. He did not himself pretend to be in the slightest degree acquainted with the mysteries of Supply; but he would venture to ask this question—would it be possible, before the expiration of the two months for which, he believed, this Vote on Account was taken, to put down one or two of the Votes which were most likely to lead to conversation or debate as the first items some night when Supply was taken? He would not now specify the items; but probably they would be those relating to the Lord Lieutenant or the Chief Secretary. He did not know whether his suggestion would be consistent with the claims of Public Business; but, if it was, it might get the Committee over a difficulty.

LORD FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, the Government were most anxious to meet the wishes of hon. Members; but as to taking the Votes out of their order, he had repeatedly pointed out that nothing was more inconvenient than taking a Vote here and a Vote there. He could assure the Committee that the only anxiety of the Government would be to take the Votes in the manner and at the time that would be most convenient to the Committee.

MR. O'DONNELL said, he would remind the Government that they had been asked to give an opportunity for a four hours' discussion on these Votes, but had refused. They had been asked not to fix a day, but to give an assurance that the Votes would be discussed before another Vote on Account was taken. This, however, they had not done, and there was no resource now left to the Irish Members, in the face of the attitude of the Government, but to discuss the Votes now, item by item. He hoped his hon. Friends would go to a division on this Motion for reporting Progress, to mark their sense of the conduct of the Government in bringing forward such Votes as these at this hour of the morning; but he hoped that, after that division had taken place, hon. Members would settle down to their work, and devote whatever energies they might have left to the discharge of their duties to their constituents. They must examine these Votes item by item, not at any excessive length, but fairly and sufficiently. He expected, of course, that the officials of the Government would give all the information which might be required on these items.

MR. METGE said, he hoped the Government would see their way to accepting some of the suggestions which had been made. He, for one, did not wish to challenge, much less to defy, on these matters; but he must say it was a point of duty which none of them could refuse to follow, the course pointed out by the hon. Member who had just spoken. It would have some effect on the public, even though they might not read reports of what was now taking place; because if the Government were kept in the House until Tuesday or Wednesday, or even Thursday—and it was not impossible for the Irish Members to do that, for they were young and strong—it would form a spectacle that would attract all eyes. It would be a spectacle that Europe would gaze upon. Who would be in the worse position before the world if such a thing occurred—the Irish Members who were contending for what they believed to be their Constitutional rights, or the Liberal and Radical Members who, despite their pledges to their constituents, repeated over and over again, were proceeding to force the Committee to pass a money Vote, at the same time refusing to allow them to discuss it? The effect of the Government policy would be to produce results of the most undesirable character, and he should say that the impression upon the public mind in England would be that there was something rotten in the affairs of a Government which proceeded by such means. Therefore, he should consider it his duty to oppose any of those Votes which came forward.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, he was extremely anxious to arrive at some reasonable understanding which would meet the views of hon. Members opposite. As the Committee would be aware, he had already put in a protest against the practice of making use of the time at which Votes on Account were brought forward, for the purpose of entering into discussions upon the details of the Estimates to which those Votes on Account related. Now, the hon. Member for Dungarvan (Mr. O'Donnell) stated that the Government had been asked for a period of four hours certain for the purpose of discussing certain Votes, and refused it. But he would point out that the question which hon. Members desired to raise could be quite as well discussed upon the Report of the Vote, as upon the Vote itself; and, therefore, if it would meet their views to enter such protests as they desired to make on Report, he proposed that there should be a Morning Sitting on Tuesday for taking the Report, and this would place at the disposal of hon. Members more than the space of time which the hon. Member for Dungarvan said would satisfy them. He made that proposal, of course, subject to an understanding being arrived at that the Government would be allowed to obtain the Report of the Vote within the limits of the Morning Sitting.

MR. HEALY said, he thought it would be better to take the Report of the Vote on Wednesday.

THE MARQUESS OF HARTINGTON said, that the time within which this Vote ought to be taken was becoming extremely short; were it otherwise, he should have been willing to adopt the suggestion of the hon. Member for Wexford. Under the circumstances he trusted the proposal he had made would receive the assent of hon. Members opposite.

MR. ARTHUR O'CONNOR said, that the noble Lord had said that Irish Members could make their protests, and any other observations they had to put forward on Report; meanwhile the Government were to be allowed to have this Vote on Account. But he could assure the noble Lord that their protests were not meant for the air only; on the contrary, they intended to oppose the Votes in reality. The protest he had made, and intended further to make, did not apply to Irish Votes alone, but to the general system of taking all Votes at an hour when it was too late to bestow upon them the amount of attention and discussion which their importance demanded. He objected to the system altogether, and he trusted that the House would come to an understanding upon the question as to whether there was to be another Vote on Account asked for this Session, because, if that were to be the case, he wished it to be perfectly understood that he should do everything in his power to prevent its being taken. If necessary, he should divide the Committee against each Vote. But the noble Lord had made no concession to Irish Members. His proposal was merely that they should consent to the Vote, and go through the formality of protesting on Report at a Morning Sitting on Tuesday next. To suppose that they could do justice to the multitudinous matters they had to bring under the notice of the House within the limits of a Morning Sitting was simply to laugh at the wishes of Irish Members. The noble

Lord was entirely mistaken if he supposed that the offer he had made contained anything for which Irish Members ought to be grateful. On the contrary, Irish Members perfectly appreciated the littleness of the offer made to them; but, inasmuch as he (Mr. Arthur O'Connor) did not wish to be unreasonable, or to detain the Committee unnecessarily, and in view of the fact that, however long they might remain, the discussion at that hour would be of no practical value, he should be willing, with the concurrence of his hon. Colleagues, to ask leave to withdraw his Motion for reporting Progress.

MR. JUSTIN M'CARTHY said, he thought his hon. Friends could not do better than accept the offer of the noble Marquess. He hoped, however, that the right hon. Gentleman the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant would be in his place on Tuesday morning, because he alone could answer and explain the points which would probably be proposed on that occasion.

MR. BIGGAR said, he wished to detain the Committee for one moment before the Motion to report Progress was withdrawn. He believed the noble Marquess had said that there should be an understanding that the discussion should terminate within the limits of the Morning Sitting—that was to say, before 7 o'clock on Tuesday next. Now, although it was most probable that the discussion would end within the time named, he could not but regard this as an unreasonable pledge, which the Government sought to exact from Irish Members. No one Member of the House could bind others to such a limitation. Although, as he had said already, the probability was that the discussion would terminate before 7 o'clock on Tuesday, yet there was no possibility of any hon. Member knowing what others would have to say, and how long the discussion would be prolonged. He made these remarks for the purpose of showing that there was no formal pledge upon this point, one way or the other.

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Question again proposed,

"That a sum, not exceeding £3,431,600, be granted to Her Majesty, on account, for or towards defraying the Charge for the following Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending on the 31st day of March 1883."

Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Original Question put, and *agreed to.*

Resolution to be reported upon *Tuesday* next, at Two of the clock.

Committee to sit again upon *Monday* next.

PARTNERSHIPS BILL.—[BILL 27.]

(*Mr. Monk, Mr. Gregory, Mr. Barran, Mr. Lewis Fry.*)

SECOND READING. ADJOURNED DEBATE.

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [22nd February], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Question again proposed.

Debate *resumed.*

MR. WARTON wished to know why the Bill was brought forward on that occasion?

MR. MONK explained that, with the consent of the President of the Board of Trade and the concurrence of the hon. Member for Liverpool (Mr. Whitley), it was about to be sent to a Select Committee, and it was now proposed to read it a second time, after which it would be committed *pro formâ*, in order that Amendments might be inserted, and the Bill be re-printed.

Question put, and *agreed to.*

Bill read a second time, and *committed* for *Monday* next.

DUKE OF ALBANY (ESTABLISHMENT) BILL.

Resolutions [23rd March] *reported*, and *agreed to*:—Bill *ordered* to be brought in by Mr. PLAYFAIR, Mr. GLADSTONE, Secretary Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT, and Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH.

Bill *presented*, and read the first time. [Bill 112.]

MOTIONS.

ARKLOW HARBOUR BILL.

NOMINATION OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

Motion made, and Question proposed,

"That the Select Committee on the Arklow Harbour Bill do consist of Five Members, Three to be nominated by the House and Two to be nominated by the Committee of Selection."—(*Lord Frederick Cavendish.*)

MR. REDMOND said, he desired to alter this Resolution to the extent of making the number of Members six instead of five. His object was to include amongst the Members of the Committee the senior Member for the County of Wicklow (Mr. Corbet), who was largely interested in this matter.

Amendment proposed, to leave out the word "Five," in order to insert the word "Six,"—(*Mr. Redmond,*)—instead thereof.

Question proposed, "That the word 'Five' stand part of the Question."

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he thought that the number five, which was uneven, was more desirable than the number proposed by the hon. Member opposite. However, if great importance was attached to the proposal that the number should exceed five, he would suggest that it be accepted.

Mr. HEALY remarked, that his hon. Friend the Member for New Ross (Mr. Redmond) cared nothing whether the number of Members on the Committee was five or seven, so long as the hon. Member for Wicklow was amongst them. If the hon. Member opposite would agree to this there would be no further objection that he was aware of.

Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE said, there would be no objection to seven.

Mr. R. POWER said, if the Committee of Selection appointed the hon. Member for Wicklow (Mr. Corbet) there would be no necessity to make an alteration.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH said, he could give no such assurance.

Amendment and Motion, by leave, *withdrawn.*

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Select Committee on the Arklow Harbour Bill do consist of Seven Members.—(*Mr. Redmond.*)

Motion *agreed to.*

Mr. REDMOND said, he should, on a future day, move that Mr. Corbet and Mr. Barry be Members of the Committee.

Lord FREDERICK CAVENDISH pointed out that Committees were not only of a representative but of an impartial character. The Government, however, would have time to consider what they would do.

Ordered, That the Select Committee on the Arklow Harbour Bill do consist of Seven Members, Five to be nominated by the House and Two to be nominated by the Committee of Selection.

Ordered, That all Petitions against the Bill be referred to the Select Committee on the Bill, provided such Petitions are presented two clear days before the meeting of the Committee, and that such of the Petitioners as pray to be heard by themselves, their Counsel, or Agents, be heard upon their Petitions, if they think fit, and Counsel heard in favour of the Bill against the said Petitions.

Ordered, That the Committee have power to send for persons, papers, and records.

Ordered, That three be the quorum.

Ordered, That Mr. HERBERT GLADSTONE, Mr. M'COAN, and Sir GEORGE BALFOUR be Members of the Committee.

STATIONERY OFFICE (CONTROLLER'S REPORT).

1. *Resolved,* That the present system, under which this House employs for its ordinary work a separate printer, working independently of, and without reference to, other Government contracts, is inexpedient, and be at the first convenient opportunity discontinued.

2. *Ordered,* That the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury be authorised to make preliminary arrangements, and, at the proper time, to lay open to public competition, and enter into contracts to provide, in such manner as they may think best, for all the printing of this House, other than the printing of the Votes and Proceedings and Journals: provided that such contracts made, either separately or in connection with other printing for the Public Service, shall be laid before the House not less than forty days, and shall then take effect, unless disapproved by the House.

3. *Ordered,* That all Papers printed by order of this House, or presented by Command of Her Majesty, other than those required for the use of Members or officers of this House, be placed under the custody of the Stationery Office; all such Papers to be as far as possible made easily accessible to the public by purchase, and the proceeds to be paid into the Exchequer.—(*Lord Frederick Cavendish.*)

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE.

Resolved, That whenever the House shall meet at Two of the Clock, the Sittings of the House shall be held subject to the Resolutions of the House of the 30th day of April 1869.—(*Lord Frederick Cavendish.*)

House adjourned at Four o'clock
in the morning till
Monday next.

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LONDON: CORNELIUS BUCK, 22, PATERNOSTER ROW, E.C.

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TO

HANSARD'S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES,

VOLUME CCLXVII.

SECOND VOLUME OF SESSION 1882.

Explanation of the Abbreviations.

In Bills, Read 1°, 2°, 3°, or 1ª, 2ª, 3ª, Read the First, Second, or Third Time.—In Speeches, 1R., 2R., 3R., Speech delivered on the First, Second, or Third Reading.—*Amendt.*, Amendment.—*Res.*, Resolution.—*Comm.*, Committee.—*Re-Comm.*, Re-Committal.—*Rep.*, Report.—*Consid.*, Consideration.—*Adj.*, Adjournment or Adjourned.—*cl.*, Clause.—*add. cl.*, Additional Clause.—*neg.*, Negatived.—*M. Q.*, Main Question.—*O. Q.*, Original Question.—*O. M.*, Original Motion.—*P. Q.*, Previous Question.—R. P., Report Progress.—*A.*, Ayes.—*N.*, Noes.—*M.*, Majority.—1*st. Div.*, 2*nd. Div.*, First or Second Division.—*l.*, Lords.—*c.*, Commons.

When in this Index a * is added to the Reading of a Bill, it indicates that no Debate took place upon that stage of the measure.

When in the Text or in the Index a Speech is marked thus *, it indicates that the Speech is reprinted from a Pamphlet or some authorized Report.

When in the Index a † is prefixed to a Name or an Office (the Member having accepted or vacated office during the Session) and to Subjects of Debate thereunder, it indicates that the Speeches on those Subjects were delivered in the speaker's private or official character, as the case may be.

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Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty for Copies or extracts of all correspondence between the Secretary of State for India and the Governor General in Council, from the 1st of January 1878 to the present time, respecting the prosecution, firstly, of productive public works by means of borrowed funds; secondly, of works designed for protection against famine and commonly described as protective works; and thirdly, of measures taken for the purpose of famine insurance" (*The Earl of Lytton*) *Mar* 10, 579; after short debate, Motion agreed to

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l. Presented; read 1ª* *Mar* 10 (No. 34)

Interments (Felo de se) Bill
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c. Ordered * *Mar* 8
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Seizure of the "Irish World" Newspaper, Questions, Mr. Healy, Mr. Lewis; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster; Question, Mr. Redmond; [no answer] *Mar* 10, 593; Questions, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster, The Attorney General for Ireland *Mar* 13, 746

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Promotion, Questions, Major O'Beirne, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *Mar* 21, 1434

Sub-Constable Forbes, Questions, Mr. Metge; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland *Mar* 24, 1810

Ireland—County Cess

Moved, "That a Select Committee be appointed to inquire into the manner in which a County Cess of 8*s.* 1½*d.* in the pound was imposed at the summer assizes on the townlands of Ballintubber, Brackloon, and Brockagh, in the county of Galway, and the manner in which a heavy County Cess was imposed on Cool, Raheen, and other townlands in Queen's County" (*Colonel Nolan*) *Mar* 21, 1533; after debate, Question put, A. 25, N. 79; M. 54 (D. L. 56)

Ireland—Major Bond, Stipendiary Magistrate

Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Mar* 16, To leave out from "That," and add "this House regrets that the Chief Secretary to

cont.

Ireland—Major Bond, Stipendiary Magistrate— cont.
the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland did not exercise more care and better discretion in appointing Major Bond to the responsible office of a stipendiary magistrate in Ireland" (*Mr. Callan*) *v.*, 1030; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put, A. 78, N. 14; M. 64 (D. L. 49)

Irish Land Commission
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Appointment of Solicitor, Questions, Mr. Healy, Mr. Sexton; Answers, The Attorney General for Ireland, Mr. W. E. Forster *Mar* 20, 1280
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(*Mr. Monk, Mr. Norwood, Mr. Anderson, Mr. Corry, Mr. Reid, Mr. Serjeant Simon*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 15, 944
After short debate, Amendt. to leave out "now," and add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Callan*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after further short debate, Question put, and agreed to; main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2° [Bill 44]

"*Jumbo," Removal of the Elephant*
Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Gill; Answers, Mr. Evelyn Ashley *Mar* 10, 591

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The Land Court—State of Business, Questions, Mr. T. A. Dickson, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Mr. W. E. Forster *Mar* 20, 1285

Land Law (Ireland) Act, 1881—*Operation of the Act*
Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [27th February], that the Question then proposed, "That Parliamentary inquiry, at the present time, into the working of the Irish Land Act tends to defeat the operation of that Act, and must be injurious to the interests of good government in Ireland" (*Mr. Gladstone*), be now put; Previous Question again proposed, "That the Original Question be now put" (*Mr. Gibson*); Debate resumed [Third Night] *Mar* 6, 227; after long debate, Moved, "That the Debate be adjourned until To-morrow" (*Mr. Butt*)
After further short debate, Amendt. to leave out "To-morrow," and insert "Thursday next" (*Mr. Warton*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That 'To-morrow,' &c.;" after further short debate, Amendt. withdrawn
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c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 15, 952; after debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Mitchell Henry*); after further debate, Question put; A. 171, N. 86; M. 85 (D. L. 48); debate adjourned

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Law and Justice — Dormant Funds in Chancery
Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Mar* 10, To leave out from "That," and add "future lists of the Dormant Funds in Chancery be strictly alphabetically arranged, with cross references to the sub-titles, together with the names and last-known addresses of the persons originally entitled, the date of the last decree or order, and the amount unclaimed" (*Mr. Stanley Leighton*) *v.*, 628; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after short debate, Question put, A. 47, N. 28; M. 19 (D. L. 44)
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[See title *London Parochial Charities and Parochial Charities (London)*]

Metropolis Management and Building Acts Amendment Bill
(*Sir James M'Garel-Hogg, Admiral Sir John Hay, Sir Andrew Lusk*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 21 [Bill 107]

Metropolis Management, Building, and Floods Prevention Acts (Amendment) Bill (by Order)
c. Read 2° * *Mar* 10, 582

Metropolis (Rating of Footways) Bill
(*Mr. Torrens, Sir Andrew Lusk, Sir James Lawrence, Mr. William M'Arthur, Baron Henry De Worms, Mr. Boord*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 22 [Bill 110]

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(*Mr. Hibbert, Mr. Dodson*)
c. Read 2° * *Mar* 10 [Bill 92]
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Transport of Troops from Natal, Question, Mr. Carbutt ; Answer, Mr. Trevelyan *Mar* 20, 1298
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Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, it is detrimental to the public service, fatal to the efficiency of our war ships, and unjust to the Fitters in Her Majesty's Dockyards, that superintending leading men should be placed in authority over workmen with whose trades they have no practical acquaintance, or that men should be put to execute work for which they are unsuited either by training or experience" (*Mr. Broadhurst*) *Mar* 14, 8 ; after debate, Motion withdrawn

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O'Beirne, Major F., *Leitrim*
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OTWAY, Sir A. J., *Rochester*
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PAGET, Mr. R. H., *Somersetshire, Mid*
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Questions, Sir H. Drummond Wolff; Answers, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 6, 181; *Mar* 20, 1273

Parish Churches Bill
(*Mr. Albert Grey, Mr. Buxton, Mr. Courtauld, Mr. Cropper, Mr. Stanley Leighton, Mr. William Henry Gladstone*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 9 Bill 99]
Read 2°, after debate *Mar* 21, 1548

Parliament
LORDS—
Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices)—Reported Magistrates—Macclesfield—The Case of Captain Pearson, Question, Observations, Lord Stanley of Alderley; Reply, The Lord Chancellor *Mar* 14, 871
The Easter Recess, Question, The Earl of Redesdale; Answer, Earl Granville *Mar* 20, 1254
Private Bills, Ordered, That no Private Bill brought from the House of Commons shall be read a second time after Thursday the 15th day of June next [and other Orders] *Mar* 24, 1784

Parliament—Business of the House
Moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, the sittings for public business should commence at Four P.M. instead of at Five P.M." (*The Earl of Camperdown*) *Mar* 24, 1784; after short debate, Motion amended, and agreed to
Resolved, That, in the opinion of this House, the sittings for public business should commence at a quarter past Four P.M., instead of at Five P.M.

Parliament—Claims of Peerage, &c.

Select Committee re-appointed (*The Earl of Galloway*) *Mar* 6; List of the Committee, 166

Moved, That there be laid before this House, Copies of the Scottish Acts of Parliament of 1567, entitled "Ratification of the Erledom of Mar," "Ratification of the Baronie of Blyth;" also Copies of the Scottish Act of 1587 entitled "An Act in favor of the Erle of Mar," as well as all other Scottish Acts ratifying grants or *re*-grants of Peerages with lands under Royal Charter, with a view to their being translated into modern English for the use of the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the state of the law respecting the claims and assumptions of titles of Peerages in Scotland, &c.

That the Act 10th and 11th Vict., chap. LII. (52.) (passed 25th June 1847), in reference to "dormant or extinct" Peerages in Scotland, be re-printed with a view to the correction of a misprint in line 10 of the preamble on the first page, which recites erroneously the words of intitulation of the Act 6th Anne, chap. 23 (*The Earl of Galloway*) *Mar* 13, 727; after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Parliament—Claims to Vote for Representative Peers for Ireland—Standing Order LXXX.

Moved, "That Standing Order No. LXXX. be amended by inserting after the words ('admitted by the House of Lords') the following words; viz., ('or by virtue of any Peerage in which the limitations in the Irish Patent, the Petitioner being a Peer of England, Great Britain, or the United Kingdom, shall be the same as the limitations in the Patent in right of which the Petitioner sits in the House of Lords as a Peer of England, Great Britain, or the United Kingdom" (*The Earl of Redesdale*) *Mar* 16; Motion agreed to

COMMONS—

Order—The Parliamentary Oath, Questions, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. Callan; Answers, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 8, 440

Rules of Debate—Rights of Seconders, Observations, Question, Viscount Folkestone; Reply, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 14, 893

Privilege—New Writ for Northampton (*Mr. Bradlaugh*), Questions, Mr. Labouchere; Answers, Mr. Speaker; Explanation, Mr. Thomas Collins *Mar* 24, 1820

Private Bills—Sale of Canals to Railway Companies, Question, Mr. Salt; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *Mar* 16, 1025

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Arrangement of Public Business, Questions, Sir John Hay, Mr. Gorst, Sir R. Assheton Cross; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 7, 384; Questions, Baron De Ferriers, Mr. Mac Iver; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 9, 467; Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone; Questions, Mr. Pell, Mr. Thomas Collins; Answers, Mr. Dodson *Mar* 9, 560; Questions, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, Mr. O'Donnell, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Mr. W. H. Smith, Sir Stafford Northcote, [*cont.*

PARLIAMENT—COMMONS—*Business of the House*—cont.

Mr. Gorst, Mr. Joseph Cowen; Answers, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Childers *Mar* 13, 753; Questions, Mr. Goschen, Mr. J. R. Yorke; Answers, Mr. Chaplin, Mr. Gladstone; Observations, Mr. W. H. Smith, Lord Henry Lennox, Mr. Gladstone; Questions, Sir Charles W. Dilke, Mr. H. Samuelson, Sir Stafford Northcote, Sir Walter B. Barttelot, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Mac Iver, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Warton *Mar* 16, 1026;—*Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill*, Questions, Mr. Salt, Mr. R. H. Paget; Answers, Mr. Dodson *Mar* 9, 455;—"*Counts-Out*," Questions, Mr. Monk, Mr. Onslow, Mr. Healy; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 14, 895;—*Committee on Public Accounts and Sessional Committee on Printing*, Question, Mr. Monk; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *Mar* 16, 1010;—*The Ways and Means Bill*, Questions, Mr. Shield, Mr. B. Samuelson; Answers, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 16, 1021;—*The Votes in Supply*, Questions, Mr. Raikes, Earl Percy; Answers, Lord Frederick Cavendish *Mar* 17, 1146

Parliamentary Representation—The Vacant Seats, Questions, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Onslow; Answers, The Attorney General *Mar* 14, 881; Question, Mr. Warton; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 16, 1019

Corrupt Practices at Elections Act—The Boston Bribery Commission—The Scheduled Magistrates, Questions, Mr. Labouchere, Mr. Thomas Collins; Answers, Mr. Speaker, The Attorney General; Question, Mr. Healy [no answer] *Mar* 16, 1000

Messages from the Crown—Rule 298, Observations, Questions, Mr. Lewis, Mr. O'Donnell; Answers, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 23, 1669

The House of Lords, Questions, Mr. Schreiber; Answers, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 7, 388

Palace of Westminster—The House of Commons—The Electric Light, Question, Mr. Donaldson-Hudson; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Mar* 13, 741

The Houses of Parliament—Meeting of the Reform Club, Question, Captain Aylmer; Answer, Mr. Shaw Lefevre *Mar* 24, 1817

The Easter Recess, Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 20, 1297

Parliament—Business of the House (Putting the Question)

Notice, Lord John Manners *Mar* 9, 450;—*The Clôture*, Question, Mr. Anderson; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 14, 891; Question, Mr. Sclater-Booth; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 16, 1020; Question, Observations, Sir Stafford Northcote; Reply, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 17, 1145; Notice, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 20, 1301

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Amendt. proposed to Question [20th February], "That when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, during any Debate, to be the evident sense of the House, or of the Committee, that the Question be now put, [*cont.*

Parliament—Business of the House (*Putting the Question*)—cont.

he may so inform the House, or the Committee; and, if a Motion be made 'That the Question be now put,' Mr. Speaker, or the Chairman, shall forthwith put such Question; and, if the same be decided in the affirmative, the Question under discussion shall be put forthwith: Provided that the Question shall not be decided in the affirmative, if a Division be taken, unless it shall appear to have been supported by more than two hundred Members, or unless it shall appear to have been opposed by less than forty Members and supported by more than one hundred Members" (*Mr. Gladstone*)

And which Amendt. was, to leave out from the first word "That," and add "no Rules of Procedure will be satisfactory to this House which confer the power of closing a Debate upon a majority of Members" (*Mr. Marriott*) *v.*; Question again proposed, "That the words 'when it shall appear to Mr. Speaker,' stand part of the Question;" Debate resumed *Mar* 20, 1301; after long debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Beresford Hope*); Question put, and agreed to; Debate further adjourned

Debate resumed [Third Night] *Mar* 23, 1704; after long debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Sir Hardinge Giffard*); after further short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Debate further adjourned

Parliament—Call of the House

Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Mr. Gladstone *Mar* 23, 1671

Moved, "That this House be called over on Thursday, the 30th March" (*Mr. Sexton*) *Mar* 23, 1770; after short debate, Question put, A. 22, N. 90; M. 68 (D. L. 59)

Parliament—Sittings of the House

Resolved, That whenever the House shall meet at Two of the Clock, the Sittings of the House shall be held subject to the Resolutions of the House of the 30th day of April 1869" (*Lord Frederick Cavendish*) *Mar* 24

Parliamentary Oath—Mr. Bradlaugh

Moved, "That this House, having ascertained that Mr. Bradlaugh has been re-elected for the Borough of Northampton, doth re-affirm the Resolution made on the 7th of February last, and doth hereby direct that Mr. Bradlaugh be not permitted to go through the form of taking the Oath prescribed by the Statutes 29 Vic. c. 19, and 31 & 32 Vic. c. 72" (*Sir Stafford Northcote*) *Mar* 6, 190

Amendt. to leave out from "That," and add "it is desirable that the provisions of the 29 Vic. c. 19, and 31 & 32 Vic. c. 72, should be so modified as to permit every elected Member of this House to take the Oath or to make the Affirmation prescribed under those Statutes at his own option" (*Mr. Marjoribanks*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 257, N. 242; M. 15 (D. L. 37); main Question put, and agreed to

Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Mr. Speaker *Mar* 7, 389

Parliamentary Reform

Moved, "1. That, in the opinion of this House, it would be desirable, so soon as the state of public business shall permit, to establish Uniformity of Franchise, throughout the whole of the United Kingdom, by a Franchise similar in principle to that established in the English boroughs" (*Mr. Arthur Arnold*) *Mar* 21, 1443

Amendt. to leave out from the first word "That," and add "no change should be made in the Electoral Franchise or the distribution of political power until full and accurate information has been laid before this House with respect to the relative advantages of various systems of Election, including proportional representation, the Cumulative Vote, and the Limited Vote, and that a Select Committee be appointed to inquire what system of Election is best calculated to secure the just representation of the opinions of all classes of Electors" (*Mr. Blennerhassett*) *v.*; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after long debate, Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Mr. Salt*); after further debate, Question put; A. 137, N. 192; M. 55 (D. L. 55)

Original Question again proposed, 1532; Moved, "That this House do now adjourn" (*Mr. G. W. Elliot*); after short debate, Motion withdrawn

Original Question again proposed, 1533; Moved, "That the Debate be now adjourned" (*Sir H. Drummond Wolff*); Motion agreed to; Debate adjourned

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF LORDS

New Peer

Mar 9—William Ulick Tristam Earl of Howth in the Peerage of Ireland, created Baron Howth of Howth in the county of Dublin in the peerage of the United Kingdom

PARLIAMENT—HOUSE OF COMMONS

New Writs Issued

Mar 14—*For* Carnarvon District, *v.* William Bulkeley Hughes, esquire, deceased

Mar 22—*For* East Cornwall, *v.* the Hon. Thomas Charles Agar-Robartes, called up to the House of Peers

New Member Sworn

Mar 9—Charles William Miles, esquire, *Malmesbury*

Parliamentary Declaration Bill [H.L.]

(*The Earl of Redesdale*)

l. Presented; read 1^a, after short debate *Mar* 7, 317 (No. 32)

Petition presented, The Earl of Redesdale *Mar* 14, 869

Observations, The Earl of Redesdale *Mar* 17, 1126

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a" *Mar* 23, 1624

Previous Question moved (*The Earl of Shaftesbury*); after debate, Previous Question put, Whether the said Question shall be now put? resolved in the negative

Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices) Bill
Question, Mr. Arthur Arnold; Answer, The Attorney General *Mar* 3, 30; Question, Mr. Ashmead-Bartlett; Answer, The Attorney General *Mar* 17, 1143; Questions, Mr. Lewis, Mr. Thorold Rogers; Answers, The Attorney General *Mar* 20, 1279

Parochial Charities (London) Bill and London Parochial Charities Bill
c. Ordered, That the Report of the Commissioners appointed by Her Majesty to inquire into the Parochial Charities of the City of London, which was presented to this House in the year 1880, be referred to the Select Committee on the Parochial Charities (London) Bill and the London Parochial Charities Bill *Mar* 13

Partnerships Bill, 1880—*Legislation*
Question, Mr. Monk; Answer, Mr. Whitley *Mar* 6, 185

Partnerships Bill (*Mr. Monk, Mr. Gregory, Mr. Barran, Mr. Lewis Fry*)
c. Adjourned Debate on Question [22nd February], "That the Bill be now read 2°" resumed *Mar* 24, 1958; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2° [Bill 27]

Patents for Inventions (No. 2) Bill (*Sir John Lubbock, Mr. William Henry Smith, Mr. Compton Lawrance*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 15 [Bill 104]

Patrick, Mr. R. W. Cochran-, *Ayrshire, N.*
Civil Service Estimates, 1018

Payment of Wages in Public-houses Prohibition Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl Stanhope*)
l. Presented; read 1ª * *Mar* 16 (No. 41)

Pease, Mr. J. W., *Durham, S.*
Boiler Explosions, Comm. Schedule, 576
North Eastern Railway (Additional Powers), 2R. 354

Peddie, Mr. J. Dick-, *Kilmarnock, &c.*
Acrington Extension and Improvement, 2R. 344
Law and Justice (Scotland)—Sasine Office Clerks, 1814

Peek, Sir H. W., *Surrey, Mid.*
Customs—New Warehousing Scheme, 177

Peel, Mr. A. W., *Warwick Bo.*
Regent's Canal, City, and Docks Railway, 2R. Amendt. 360, 374

Pell, Mr. A., *Leicestershire, S.*
Parliament—Public Business, 560

Percy, Right Hon. Earl, *Northumberland, N.*
Army Estimates—Land Forces at Home and Abroad (Exclusive of India), 858, 864, 866
Army Organization—Militia Officers' Uniforms, 380
Parliament—Business of the House, 1147
House of Lords, 388
Parliamentary Oath—Mr. Bradlaugh, Res. 220
South Wales—Superintendent of Roads, 663

Pilotage Provisional Order (Tees) Bill
(*Mr. Evelyn Ashley, Mr. Chamberlain*)
c. Report * *Mar* 7 [Bill 1]
Read 3° * *Mar* 8
l. Read 1ª * (*Lord Ramsay*) *Mar* 9 (No. 33)
Read 2ª * *Mar* 20
Committee *; Report *Mar* 21
Read 3ª * *Mar* 23

Places of Worship Sites Bill
(*Mr. Summers, Mr. Richard, Mr. William M'Arthur, Mr. Alderman Cotton*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 6 [Bill 97]
Read 2° * *Mar* 16

Playfair, Right Hon. Mr. Lyon (Chairman of Committees of Ways and Means and Deputy Speaker), *Edinburgh and St. Andrew's Universities*
Accrington Extension and Improvement, 2R. 343, 348
Army Estimates—Land Forces at Home and Abroad (Exclusive of India), 851
Bills of Sale Act (1878) Amendment, Comm. *add. cl.* 1415
H.R.H. Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, Marriage of—Message from the Queen, Comm. 1692, 1694, 1695
Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 1937, 1938, 1940, 1941, 1944, 1945, 1952
Grants for Civil Services (Excesses), 1243, 1248, 1249, 1251, 1252
Irish Land Commission, 99, 115
Post Office Services, &c., 141, 142
Post Office Telegraph Service, 145, 149
University Education (Ireland), 2R. 1602, 1603

Plunket, Right Hon. D. R., *Dublin University*
Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment (No. 3), 2R. 954
Municipal Franchise (Ireland), 2R. 925

Porter, Mr. A. M. (Solicitor General for Ireland), *Londonderry Co.*
Ireland—Lunatic Asylums — Derry Lunatic Asylum, 173
Ireland — County Cess, Motion for a Select Committee, 1546
Ireland—Major Bond, Stipendiary Magistrate Res. 1042, 1043
Judgments (Inferior Courts), 2R. 950

PORTER, Mr. A. M.—*cont.*
Land Law (Ireland)—Operation of the Act, Res. 491
Supply—Irish Land Commission, 112
University Education (Ireland), 2R. 1611

Post Cards (Reply) Bill
(*The Lord Thurlow*)
l. Committee*; Report *Mar* 7 (No. 23)
Read 3ª* *Mar* 9
Royal Assent *Mar* 13 [45 *Vict.* c. 2]

POST OFFICE
MISCELLANEOUS QUESTIONS
Colonial Money Orders, Question, Mr. Monk; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 9, 465
Contracts for Clothing (Ireland), Question, Mr. W. J. Corbet; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 7, 383
International Parcels Post, Question, Mr. Whitley; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 9, 465
Letter Carriers, &c. in Rural Districts, Question, Mr. George Russell; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 9, 450
Mail Service in the Levant, Question, Mr Gourley; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 7, 382
Postal Convention of Paris — Article 6 — Seizure of Articles passing through the Post, Question, Mr. Healy; Answer, Mr. W. E. Forster *Mar* 14, 882

Telegraph Department
Reply Telegrams, Question, Mr. Alderman W. Lawrence; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 16, 987
Secrecy of Telegrams, Question, Mr. Sexton; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 9, 460
Telegraph and Sorting Clerks, Question, Mr. Arnold Morley; Answer, Mr. Fawcett *Mar* 16, 988

POWER, Mr. J. O'Connor, *Mayo*
Ireland—Miscellaneous Questions
Land Law Act, 1881—Sec. 58—Town Parks, 12, 13
Protection of Person and Property Act, 1881—Prisoners under the Act, 26
Relief of Distress—Seed Potatoes, 458

POWER, Mr. R., *Waterford*
Arklow Harbour, 2R. 1768; Nomination of Select Committee, 1959
Ireland, State of—City of Waterford, 1651, 1807
Municipal Franchise (Ireland), 2R. 919
Parliamentary Reform, Res. 1531
Public Offices Site, Leave, 1783
Supply—County Court Officers, Magistrates in Ireland, &c., 1235, 1237
Grants for Civil Services (Excesses), 1251

PRICE, Captain G. E., *Devonport*
Navy—Armament of H.M. Ships, 884
Channel Squadron, 888

Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany—Marriage of His Royal Highness
LORDS
Message from the Queen *Mar* 21, 1417
Her Majesty's Most Gracious Message considered *Mar* 23, 1622
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty, to thank Her Majesty for the most gracious communication which it has pleased Her Majesty to make to this House respecting the approaching marriage between His Royal Highness Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, and Her Serene Highness Princess Helen of Waldeck and Pyrmont, and to assure Her Majesty that this House, always feeling the most lively interest in any event which will contribute to the happiness of the Royal Family, will concur in those measures which may be proposed for the consideration of this House to make such a provision for His Royal Highness as may be suitable to the dignity of the Crown;" Address ordered nemine dissentiente to be presented to Her Majesty

COMMONS
Message from Her Majesty; Question, Mr. Lewis; Answer, Mr. Speaker; short debate thereon *Mar* 21, 1442
Message from Her Majesty considered in Committee *Mar* 23, 1671
(1.) Moved, "That the annual sum of ten thousand pounds be granted to Her Majesty, out of the Consolidated Fund of Great Britain and Ireland, towards providing for the establishment of His Royal Highness Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, and of Her Serene Highness Princess Helen of Waldeck and Pyrmont, the said annuity to be settled on His Royal Highness for his life, in such manner as Her Majesty may think proper, and to commence from the date of the Marriage of His Royal Highness with Her Serene Highness Princess Helen, and to be in addition to the annuity now enjoyed by His Royal Highness under the Act of the thirty-eighth year of Her present Majesty" (*Mr. Gladstone*); after debate, Question put; A. 387, N. 42; M. 345 (D. L. 58)
(2.) Moved, "That Her Majesty be enabled to secure to Her Serene Highness Princess Helen of Waldeck and Pyrmont, for the support of her dignity, in case she shall survive His Royal Highness Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, an annual sum not exceeding six thousand pounds during her life" (*Mr. Gladstone*), 1703; after short debate, Question put, and agreed to

Public Offices Site Bill
(*Mr. Shaw Lefevre, Lord Frederick Cavendish*)
c. Motion for Leave (*Mr. Shaw Lefevre*) *Mar* 23, 1783; after short debate, Motion agreed to; Bill ordered; read 1°* [Bill 111]

Public Offices, The New—The Site and Plans
Question, Lord Lamington; Answer, Lord Sudeley; Observations, The Earl of Redesdale; Question, Earl Stanhope; Answer, Lord Sudeley *Mar* 24, 1794

Puleston, Mr. J. H., *Devonport*
H.R.H. Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, Marriage of—Message from the Queen, Comm. 1695
Inland Revenue—Income Tax, 1667
Navy—Victualling—The Royal Marines, 1057
Navy Estimates—Men and Boys, &c., 1107, 1111

Queen, The—Attempt upon the Life of Her Majesty
Lords
Moved, "That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty to express our horror and indignation at the reckless and wicked attempt made on Thursday last against Her Majesty's Sacred person, and our heartfelt congratulations to Her Majesty and the country on Her Majesty's happy preservation from danger; and to assure Her Majesty that we make it our earnest prayer to Almighty God that, as He has long preserved to us the blessings that we enjoy under Her Majesty's beneficent government, He will continue to watch over a life so highly prized by Her Majesty's loyal subjects" (*The Earl Granville*) *Mar* 6, 163; after short debate, Motion agreed to, nemine dissentiente, and a message sent to the Commons to communicate to them the said Address and to desire their concurrence therewith
Message from the Commons that they have agreed to the Address and have filled up the blank with the words ("and Commons): Ordered, That the Lord Steward do wait upon Her Majesty humbly to know what time Her Majesty will please to appoint to be attended with the said Address
Ordered, That the Lord Steward and the Lord Chamberlain do present the Address on the part of this House *Mar* 9, 441
Message sent to the Commons
Message from the Commons, 449
The Queen's Answer to the Address reported *Mar* 10, 577

Commons
Question, Sir Stafford Northcote; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 3, 29
Message from the Lords,—That they have agreed to an Address to be presented to Her Majesty, to which they desire the concurrence of this House
The Message of the Lords taken into Consideration *Mar* 6, 223; after short debate, resolved, nemine contradicente, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said Address to be presented to Her Majesty
Ordered, That a Message be sent to the Lords, to acquaint their Lordships that this House hath agreed to the Address to which the Lords desired the concurrence of this House, and have filled up the blank with the words "and Commons;" and that the Clerk do carry the said Message
Message from the Lords *Mar* 9, 469
Ordered, That Mr. Gladstone, Secretary Sir William Harcourt, the Comptroller of the Household, and the Vice Chamberlain of the Household do go with the Lords mentioned in their Lordships' Message
Message sent to the Lords
Her Majesty's Answer to the Address reported *Mar* 10, 625

Raikes, Right Hon. H. C., *Preston*
Lower Thames Valley Main Sewerage Board, 3R. 1798
Parish Churches, 2R. 1554
Parliament—Business of the House, 1146, 1147
Parliament—Business of the House (Putting the Question), Res. 1302, 1313, 1315, 1319

Railways (Continuous Brakes) Bill [H.L.]
(*The Earl De La Warr*)
l. Read 2ª, after short debate *Mar* 20, 1254 (No. 21)

Railways (7 & 8 Vic. c. 85)—Artizans' Trains
Question, Mr. Buxton; Answer, Mr. Chamberlain *Mar* 24, 1807

Redesdale, Earl of (Chairman of Committees)
Parliament—Business of the House, Res. 1791
Parliament—Claims to Vote for Representative Peers for Ireland—Standing Order, LXXX., 985
Parliamentary Declaration, 1R. 317, 319, 869, 1126; 2R. 1624, 1647
Public Offices, The New—Site and Plans, 1796

Redmond, Mr. J. E., *New Ross*
Arklow Harbour, Nomination of Select Committee, Amendt. 1958, 1959
Army—Case of Michael Flynn, 1283
Ireland—Miscellaneous Questions
  Board of National Education—Mr. Boylan and Captain L'Estrange, 1652
  Criminal Law—Mr. Michael Davitt, 1275, 1276
  Law and Police—Constable Molloy, 1652
  National Exhibition — Subscription for Shares, 732
  Post Office—"Irish World" Newspaper, 595
  Prisons—Armagh Gaol, 587
  Royal Irish Constabulary, 458;—Alleged Excess of Duty at Cappamore, Co. Limerick, 25;—Resignations in the, 736
Ireland—Protection of Person and Property Act, 1881—Miscellaneous Questions
  Arrests under the Act, 176, 741, 880, 881
  Dr. J. E. Kenny, 897
  Ennis, Mr. J. A., 9
  Letters between Persons Arrested under the Act, 1283
  Mangan, Mr., 735
  Maloney, Mr. W. F., 587
  Rorke, Mr. J., Arrest of, 606, 609
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  Treatment of Prisoners under the Act, 785, 786, 789, 1277, 1428; Motion for Adjournment, 1429, 1434
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REDMOND, Mr. J. E.—*cont.*
  Ireland, State of—Miscellaneous Questions
    Alleged Assault on Mr. Boylan, 173
    Castlecomer Ladies' Land League, 10
    Wicklow County, Carrickbyrne Lodge, 1809, 1810
  Land Law (Ireland)—Operation of the Act, Res. 252, 523
  Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 1930
    Post Office Telegraph Service, Motion for Adjournment, 146, 154
    Report, 289, 292, 308

REED, Sir E. J., *Cardiff*
  Navy—Launch of H.M.S. "Edinburgh," 1670
  Navy Estimates—Men and Boys, &c. 1108, 1112
  Parliamentary Oath—Mr. Bradlaugh, Res. 222

Regent's Canal, City, and Docks Railway Bill (*by Order*)
c. Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2°" *Mar* 7, 360
  Amendt. to leave out "now," and add "upon this day six months" (*Mr. Arthur Peel*); Question proposed, "That 'now,' &c.;" after debate, Question put; A. 244, N. 50; M. 194 (D. L. 40)
  Mar 13—Error in reporting number of Ayes, Tuesday, March 7
  Ordered, That the Clerk do correct the said error in the Journal of this House by stating the number of Ayes as 244 instead of 254
  Main Question put, and agreed to; Bill read 2°
  Ordered, That the Bill be committed to a Select Committee, to consist of Nine Members, Five to be nominated by the House, and Four by the Committee of Selection (*Mr. Chamberlain*) *Mar* 8, 393

REID, Mr. R. T., *Hereford*
  Criminal Law Amendment, 2R. 437

RICHARD, Mr. H., *Merthyr Tydvil*
  British North Borneo Company (Charter), Res. 1184, 1187, 1189

RICHARDSON, Mr. J. N., *Armagh Co.*
  Irish Land Commission—Return of Judgments, 463
  Irish Railways, Acquisition and Control of, 651
  Land Law (Ireland)—Operation of the Act, Res. 247, 250
  Land Law (Ireland) Act (1881) Amendment (No. 3), 2R. 955, 956
  Supply—Irish Land Commission, 116

RIDLEY, Sir M. W., *Northumberland, N.*
  North Eastern Railway (Additional Powers), 2R. 359

RITCHIE, Captain C. T., *Tower Hamlets*
  Accrington Extension and Improvement, 2R. Motion for Adjournment, 348
  British Trade (Foreign Tariffs), Res. 1823, 1833, 1890
  Customs—New Warehousing Scheme, 624

Rivers Conservancy and Floods Prevention Bill
  Question, Sir Baldwyn Leighton; Answer, Mr. Dodson *Mar* 13, 749; Question, Mr. Heneage; Answer, Mr. Dodson *Mar* 24, 1810

Roads Provisional Order (Edinburgh) Bill
(*The Lord Advocate, Mr. Solicitor General for Scotland*)
c. Read 3°* *Mar* 10 [Bill 93]

ROBERTSON, Mr. H., *Shrewsbury*
  Regent's Canal, City, and Docks Railway, 2R. 367
  Swansea, Oystermouth, and Mumbles Railway, 2R. 1423

ROGERS, Mr. J. E. Thorold, *Southwark*
  Parliamentary Elections (Corrupt and Illegal Practices), 1279

ROUND, Mr. J., *Essex, E.*
  Customs — The New Warehousing Scheme, 1282

RUSSELL, Mr. C., *Dundalk*
  Land Law (Ireland)—Operation of the Act, Res. 227, 256

RUSSELL, Mr. G. W. E., *Aylesbury*
  Parliament—Business of the House (Putting the Question), Res. 1726
  Post Office—Letter Carriers, &c. in Rural Districts, 450

Russia—Persecution of the Jews
  Amendt. on Committee of Supply *Mar* 3, To leave out from "That," and add "this House, deeply deploring the persecution and outrages to which the Jews have been subjected in portions of the Russian Empire, trusts that Her Majesty's Government will find means, either alone or in conjunction with other Great Powers, of using their good offices with the Government of His Majesty the Czar to prevent the recurrence of similar acts of violence" (*Baron Henry De Worms*) *v.*, 30; Question proposed, "That the words, &c.;" after debate, Amendt. withdrawn
  Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 23, 1661

Russia and Persia
  The Boundary Treaty, Question, Baron Henry De Worms; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 14, 894
  The Frontier Question—Sarakhs, Question, Mr. Jerningham; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 23, 1647

RYLANDS, Mr. P., *Burnley*
  British North Borneo Company (Charter), Res. 1211
  South Wales—Superintendent of Roads, 660
  Supply—Grants for Civil Services (Excesses), 1245
    Zulu, &c. Wars, 1239

ST. AUBYN, Sir J., *Cornwall, W.*
  Criminal Law—Suspected Poisoning, 1141

SALISBURY, Marquess of
  Egypt—Foreign and European Residents and Employés, 1126
  Endowed Schools Act, 1869, and Amending Acts, Motion for an Address, 1133
  England and France—The Channel Tunnel Scheme, 1268, 1270
  Her Majesty the Queen, Attempt upon the Life of—Address to Her Majesty, 164
  H.R.H. Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, Marriage of—Message from the Queen, 1417, 1623
  Parliament—Business of the House, Res. 1793
  Parliamentary Declaration, 2R. 1644
  Universities of Oxford and Cambridge Act, 1877—The Statutes, Motion for a Paper, 167, 171

SALT, Mr. T., *Stafford*
  Law and Justice—Dormant Funds in Chancery, Res. 632
  Parliament—Private Bills—Sale of Canals to Railway Companies, 1025
    Public Business, 455
  Parliamentary Reform, Res. Motion for Adjournment, 1525
  Regent's Canal, City, and Docks Railway, 2R. 373

SAMUELSON, Mr. B., *Banbury*
  City of London—The Livery Companies and Technical Education, 383
  Parliament — Public Business — Ways and Means Bill, 1025

SAMUELSON, Mr. H. B., *Frome*
  H.R.H. Prince Leopold, Duke of Albany, Marriage of—Message from Her Majesty, 1443
  Parliament—Business of the House, 1028

School Boards Bill
  (*Mr. Reginald Yorke, Colonel Kingscote*)
c. Ordered; read 1° * *Mar* 15 [Bill 103]

SCHREIBER, Mr. C., *Poole*
  Customs—New Warehousing Scheme, 623
  Parliament—House of Lords, 388
  Parliamentary Reform, Res. 1500
  Protection of Person and Property (Ireland) Act—Attempted Murder of Mr. Carter, 1148
  Supply—Post Office Services, &c. Motion for reporting Progress, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142

Science and Art Department
  The Hall of Science, Old St., St. Luke's—Dr. Aveling and Mrs. Besant, Question, Sir Henry Tyler; Answer, Mr. Mundella *Mar* 21, 1441
  The Transit of Venus, Question, Sir John Hay; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *Mar* 20, 1288

SCLATER-BOOTH, Right Hon. G., *Hants, N*
  Accrington Extension and Improvement, 2R. 343, 348
  Army Estimates—Land Forces at Home and Abroad (Exclusive of India), 850, 855, 856, 861
  Boiler Explosions, Comm. *add. cl.* 568
  Irish Railways, Acquisition and Control of, 650
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  South Wales—Superintendent of Roads, 657
  Supply—Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 1944
    Grants for Civil Services (Excesses), 1244, 1246

Scotland
  Law and Justice
    Sasine Office Clerks, Question, Mr. Dick Peddie; Answer, Lord Frederick Cavendish *Mar* 24, 1814
    Sentences of Penal Servitude on Children, Question, Dr. Cameron; Answer, Sir William Harcourt *Mar* 3, 11

SEELY, Mr. C., *Lincoln*
  England and France—The Channel Tunnel Scheme, 187

SELWIN-IBBETSON, Sir H. J., *Essex, W.*
  Metropolitan Fire Brigade, Res. 915

Servia, The Kingdom of—Recognition of King Milan
  Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Sir Charles W. Dilke *Mar* 10, 589

Settled Land Bill [H.L.]
  (*The Earl Cairns*)
l. Read 2ª * *Mar* 7 (No. 19)
  Committee *; Report *Mar* 14

SEXTON, Mr. T., *Sligo*
  Ireland—Miscellaneous Questions
    Blessington Road Sessions, 988
    Criminal Law—Case of Peter Dunne, 1651
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    Land Commission—Appointment of Solicitor, 1281
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  Ireland—Protection of Person and Property Act, 1881—Miscellaneous Questions
    Devine, Mr., and Mr. J. O'Connell, 1019
    Letters to Mr. Parnell and Mr. Dillon, 585
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